We noticed some fine buildings in Spartanburg. Here we spent the day by our fire with nothing to eat, having eaten the last of our corn bread during the night. That evening we started out, and after more unsuccessful attempts at three or four plantations to get something to eat, I said to the last slave that I saw, “Is there any plantation where we will probably be able to get something to eat?”

To my surprise, he answered, “Dis is de las’ plantation on dis road.” I asked if there were no other colored folks living any farther up the road. He answered that there was a fine colored man named Henry Martin living some three or four miles ahead, but a little distance off the main road. I asked for directions and he told me to go on that road for over three miles and after crossing the second stream, we should go on about a quarter of a mile where we would see a path leading off to the left, which would lead to his house. Without difficulty, we found the path, and on reaching his house about 11 o’clock we rapped him up. The only thing he had to give us to eat was some cold sweet potatoes, and then we inquired about the roads through the mountains, we being now among the foothills of the Blue Ridge. He told us that the roads through the passes in the mountains were all guarded.

Finding that this would necessitate an entire change of plans, we asked him whether he could pilot us up into the mountains to where we could reach the Union white men. He answered that he could not, as he was farming on the shares for a rebel and if he left home he would suspect something wrong. But he advised us to stop there for a few days and he would find us a guide. This idea struck us rather favorably, as it would give us a chance to rest and to get our feet

*After September 1, 1964 Dr. Harmon will be Professor of History at Millersville State College.—Ed.
(which had become very sore and greatly inflamed) in better condition for travelling. He took us out about a half mile from the house into a thick wood, and helped us to build a fire. Leaving us, he told us that he would bring our breakfast out in the morning and in the meantime see what he could do to secure us a guide. We had now been just two weeks on the way, having escaped Oct. 5th and reaching Henry Martin’s Oct. 19th, and had made a distance of about 160 miles on our route, but had travelled between 175 and 200 miles in accomplishing that. While these were two weeks of great hardship and exposure, yet we felt greatly encouraged with our success. We now lay down and enjoyed the first night’s rest since our escape.

The next morning our colored friend brought us out our breakfast and told us that he knew a deserter named Ray from a S.C. regiment living a few miles from there that he believed we could secure as a guide to pilot us up into N.C. and also stated he was going to have a “corn shucking” that night and that he was going into that neighborhood that day to ask some hands to his shucking and would see what he could learn about him. At noon Martin’s wife, who was a white woman and another white woman, Mrs. Jones, brought us our dinner. Mrs. Jones, who was apparently about 70 years of age, we found to be an enthusiastic Union woman. She told us that her first husband was a man by the name of Hickock from Connecticut, whom she seemed to have almost idolized. To use her own language, “he was a heap smarter than our folks here.” Seeing our destitute condition (we having neither overcoats nor blankets and I had only a pair of canvas shoes without any hose), Mrs. Jones went home and returned with a good heavy bed comfort, and a pair of home knit woolen half hose which she presented to me. We assured her that her kindness was very highly appreciated.

Towards evening Mr. Martin came through the woods on horseback on his return home, and told us that he had been at Ray’s house, had seen his wife, but that Ray was not at home, but was concealed in the woods. But that his wife expected him in two or three days, as he would be compelled to come for supplies of provisions. He further told us that he had a brother-in-law named Hal who was a slave, living in the same neighborhood as Ray, that Hal’s wife (who was a sister of Martin’s) was a free woman, and together with her mother owned a small farm on which they lived, that Hal lived on a plantation nearby, and that he would come over to his corn shucking that evening,
and after the shucking would take us over to his place and keep us there until they could find Ray.

About 10:30 o'clock that night Martin came out and took us to the house where we found Hal, all other slaves having gone home. Mrs. Martin had killed a chicken and prepared a very good supper for us. After supper we started with Hal and after travelling about four miles, we were taken into a piece of woods, where Hal assisted us to build a fire, just beside a little stream of pure spring water. Hal then left us saying "de gals will bring out your breakfas' in de mo' nin'." It was now nearly one o'clock in the morning, so making a bed of leaves, we lay down, spreading over us the comfort that kind Mrs. Jones had given us, and slept soundly until morning. It was nearly ten o'clock before "de gals" put in an appearance; when they did they proved to be Hal's wife and mother-in-law. They had two baskets which they handed to us and telling us that Hal would be out that evening, they at once returned home. When we opened the baskets we found a nicely cooked chicken and plenty of biscuits, corn bread and butter. So we had plenty for that day.

During the afternoon Hal's wife and two white women came out to see us. These white women, we learned, were Ray's wife and sister. As soon as we learned who they were, we suspected the purpose of their visit. They feared we were rebels trying to entrap Mr. Ray, therefore appearing to understand their purpose, we made it a point to convince them that we were indeed "Yankees." And they seemed to go away convinced that we were all right, and left us promising to find Ray as soon as possible. Taking advantage of the pure fresh water we bathed our feet quite frequently, thus soon allaying the inflammation. That night Hal came out with a supply of provisions for the next day, and remained with us for several hours. Like all slaves, he showed an intense desire for freedom.

The next morning after breakfast, feeling like taking a little exercise, I took a stroll down through the woods keeping close to the stream. When I had gotten some distance from my comrades, on looking around, I discovered a man in a rebel gray suit with gun and accoutrements sitting on a log not more than eight or ten rods to my right. I merely gave him a glance and turned my face in another direction, and walked on as if I had not seen him. My first impulse was to pass on down stream until out of sight and then make a flank movement through the woods and go back to my comrades, but on reflection, I found to attempt that, I would run the risk of
losing my bearings, and not be able to find my comrades, and again if he was a rebel soldier and wanted me he would not let me get out of his sight.

Having noticed that he was of small size, I decided that my best plan was to face the situation at once and if he proved to be a rebel, I would surrender to him and watch my chance to seize his gun and turn the tables on him. It also occurred to me that he might be our man Ray. While determining my course I had not walked more than four or five rods. I then looked again in that direction and saw him still sitting there watching me. I stood for a moment looking at him as if I had just discovered him, then started toward him. He sat still until I got within about two rods of him, when he got up brought his gun to a ready and called out "Halt!" Well, of course I halted. He then asked "Who are you?" I replied "I want to know who you are first." I then asked "What's your name?" To which he replied, "My name's Ray." I then said "I guess you are just the man I am looking for." He then said, "Are you one of the Yankees?" Answering him that I was, I started toward him when he again brought his gun to the position of ready and called out, "Halt!" very sharply, and then added, "Just keep a little distance away." Well, there is something very persuasive about a loaded musket, when the muzzle is pointed toward you. He then inquired where my comrades were and pointing up stream, I asked him if he would go along with me. He replied, "Well, I reckon I will." As we walked along talking, I kept, thoughtlessly, getting a little closer to him, when he again ordered me to keep at a little distance saying, "There's plenty of room here." On reaching our comrades, I introduced Mr. Ray to them, at which they both got up and advanced to shake hands with him. Again bringing his gun up, he said, "Just stay where you are. Don't come any closer."

A few minutes later Ray's wife and sister came to us. We then learned that Ray had been home the night before, and they had arranged to meet him that morning at the point where I found him and pilot him to us. We then discussed the question of his piloting us up into the mountains of N.C. He stated that he was well acquainted with the mountain country for about fifty miles, in the direction we were going, and would pilot us provided we would pay him for it. Our finances were at such low ebb that we could not pay him any money, but I had a silver-cased watch worth about twenty or twenty-five dollars which I agreed to give him if he would act as our guide for
fifty miles and then leave us in communication with Union white men. To this proposition he readily assented. When that arrangement was made, I asked him if he could start with us that evening. He answered, “No, I can’t start before Monday evening.”

This being Saturday morning, and being now well rested, we were anxious to be moving on. I therefore, said to him, “You are not able to do anything here, having to keep concealed, why not go at once?” He answered, “I must get my family a supply of winter meat before I go, as I may not come back for some time.” I suggested that he might make arrangements that day for his supply of meat. His reply was, “I must get it at night.” My curiosity prompted me to ask what kind of meat he was going to get, to which he replied, “I know where there is some nice fat sheep, but I can’t get them in daytime, but must get them at night.” We then began to catch on to how he got his “supply of winter meat.” So it was arranged that we would start on Monday evening. During this meeting Ray’s wife urged him very strongly to go on with us to Knoxville, and remain there until the war was over, as he was in daily danger of being killed there, but he would not consent, being anxious I thought to drive as good a bargain as he could with us.

That evening Hal came out again with a supply of provisions, and spent about half the night with us. During Sunday forenoon, Ray came out again and brought with him some cooked mutton for our dinner, and said, “I got along pretty well last night, but it will take me another night to get enough.” Hal spent most of Sunday with us again bringing us a supply in the evening.

On Monday Ray reported to us that he had had good success again last night and would be ready to start with us at dark that evening. In the meantime we had become thoroughly rested; our feet had gotten well and having had a good supply of provisions for several days, we were feeling strong and anxious to be moving on. That evening Hal brought us some more provisions and Ray a piece of roast mutton, his wife and sister coming out with him. After eating our supper, Ray said that he wanted to leave the watch with his wife. So I handed it over to him and he gave it to his wife, after which Mrs. Ray took me to one side and asked me to try to have Ray go on with us, and stay inside the Union lines until the war was over as she feared if he stayed there that he would be killed. I promised her that I would use my influence with him.

After bidding our colored friend Hal and the two ladies goodbye
with many thanks especially to Hal for his kindness, we started. Our course for the first fifteen miles was along the crest of the Blue Ridge. About daylight we halted just over the crest of the Blue Ridge, which is quite a high mountain at that point, having travelled about twenty-five miles. Before our rest at Hal’s we had never been able to make more than 15 miles in a night, and often before we had gone that far we were too much fatigued to go farther; but now we had travelled 25 miles over hills and up a mountain, and scarcely felt fatigued. We only now began to realize how much we had been benefitted by our rest. We stopped that morning in the woods near a small mountain farm owned and occupied by a man named Stanton, in Polk County, North Carolina, just over the crest of the Blue Ridge.

Our guide left us there and went to the house. In about two hours, he and Mr. Stanton brought us out our breakfast. During the day Mr. Stanton brought out to us his two sons, young men about 18 and 20 years of age, who as we learned were compelled to keep in hiding to escape the conscription, which prevailed through the Confederacy and included every man able to do military duty. Mr. Stanton suggested that his sons join us and go with us to Knoxville, saying that he thought it would be best for them to get inside the Union lines and remain there until the close of the war. He also said that he thought it would be an advantage to us, as the boys’ grandfather, Mr. Bishop, lived about thirty-five miles from them in Henderson County, and another Mr. Bishop, an uncle of theirs, lived about 30 miles farther in Transylvania County, and in about the direction we should travel. It was therefore decided that they should join us. By this time Ray had decided to go with us to our lines. So about four o’clock that afternoon, having first been supplied with provisions, we started under the pilotage of the Stanton boys, our party now numbering six. Leaving the roads we travelled through the woods and by roads until after dark, when we again took to the roads and travelled steadily until after daylight, when we halted in the woods near Mr. Bishop’s, the grandfather of the Stanton boys. About daylight it commenced to rain quite heavily, so that by the time we stopped, we were quite wet.

The Stanton boys went to the house, and in a short time came out and took us in, where we were received very kindly, and our wants provided for. Mr. Bishop, who was quite old, we soon learned had been a soldier in the war of 1812 and was a very zealous Union man. This being a small mountain farm through which a public
highway passed, Mr. Bishop thought that it would be entirely safe for us to spend the day there, which we did by the open fire. It continued to rain very heavily all day. It was our intention to travel that night to the other Mr. Bishop's, the boys' uncle, but the rain continued so heavy that we decided not to travel that night. As we feared to sleep in the house, we went out and made our bed in a stable among some corn fodder. Before daylight the family had our breakfast ready and after partaking of it, bade our kind host and his family goodbye, and with many thanks for their kindness, we started, the rain having now ceased. Avoiding all public roads, we travelled all day, much of the time through the woods, until a little after dark we reached the home of Mr. Bishop in Transylvania County. There we were received very kindly and given our supper, but as he lived along a public highway he said it would be unsafe for us to stay at his house, but said that about a mile from there two brothers (whose names I cannot now recall) had built a shanty in the woods and were staying there to avoid the conscription, that he would take us there.

Under his guidance we reached the shanty and woke up the occupants. Mr. Bishop then told us that he had heard that there were a couple of recruiting officers in that county securing recruits for the Second N.C. Union Regiment, which was organizing at Knoxville, Tenn., and that the place of rendezvous, before starting would probably be about 25 or 30 miles farther on in the direction we were going. But he advised us to remain where we were until he could secure for us the necessary information, and that he would furnish us corn meal, potatoes and apples, but said that he had no meat. He said, however, that deer were very plenty in the mountains, and that he would send us a noted hunter the next morning, and also furnish us with an extra gun and that we should go out and kill a deer. The Stanton boys had brought their own guns with them. So with the one Mr. Bishop found and those belonging to the Stantons, we were able to raise six guns. After breakfast the next morning, Mr. Bishop came out bringing his hunter with him. We at once set out, one hunter, the two Stanton boys, Capt. Dawson, Lieut. Davidson and myself. The gun given to me was an old rusty Austrian rifle. I didn't have much confidence in it but was willing to try it. We deployed and travelled about three miles through the mountains without seeing a deer, but then came upon two hogs feeding upon chestnuts.

Deciding that pork would suit us just as well as venison, we undertook to kill them. I was not surprised that my gun would not go
off. One of the Stanton boys killed a hog the first shot, but all the other guns proved to be of the same kind as mine. But one gun out of the six being discharged. Stanton loaded his gun again and shot the other hog. We then dressed the two hogs (by skinning them) and, tying each one on a pole, two men took each hog, and the other two the guns, and travelled back to our camp. Here we gave our hunter part of the hog, and also some to our friend Mr. Bishop. We now settled down to camp life. Mr. Bishop brought us a large Dutch Oven, which would at least hold a half bushel and had a cast iron lid. This was our only cooking utensil. In this we baked our corn bread and cooked our pork and potatoes. Three times a day we put on a supply of pork and while it was cooking we would pare enough potatoes to fill it and when cooked, we would set it down and our whole company, now eight in number (including the two men who owned the shanty) would surround it. We seasoned with salt and cayenne pepper in pods. Having no plates, knives or forks, or spoons we made forks and spoons of wood, and with them we all helped our selves from the Spider, or Dutch Oven, as we call it in Pennsylvania. The Stanton boys, with Mr. Bishop's permission would go to the orchard everyday and bring us a good supply of apples. So with corn bread, pork and potatoes, and apples we were able to live very well.

After dark on Saturday evening (we had been there 48 hours) Mr. Bishop came out to our camp and reported that a company of rebels was scouring the entire neighborhood, and that for our safety, we should retreat several miles back into the mountains. While here we had learned that every Union man who was liable to military duty, and hence subject to conscription kept himself in hiding. Many of them, like the ones we were stopping with, had built little shanties in secluded spots in the woods, and spent most of their time there. Mr. Bishop told us to be ready to move before daylight the next morning, and he would have a guide there for us. The next morning before daylight Mr. Bishop and the same man who had gone hunting with us came out, and we prepared to start. Mr. Bishop said that as soon as it was safe for us to return he would send for us. Loading up our stock of corn meal, potatoes, pork and apples, and our spider, we started and after travelling six or seven miles, we stopped at what our guide called a “rock house,” which was simply a large overhanging cliff, but which would furnish shelter for about 20 men. In this movement we had crossed the crest of the Blue Ridge into S.C. The two brothers who owned the shanty accompanied us.
On leaving us, our guide said that he would come back for us soon as Mr. Bishop thought it would be safe. The imagination could scarcely picture a more lonely spot. It was a place where there seemed to be a buck in the mountain. At the point where the “rock house” was located there was near it the base of a very precipitous mountain; indeed so steep was this mountain, that it required the greatest care to keep one’s feet. About four or five rods below, the Saluda River flowed over a rocky bed with a succession of falls which kept up a constant roar. On the opposite side of the stream, the mountain rose almost perpendicularly for several hundred feet. There was no habitation for several miles. Here we spent that day with nothing to do but cook our food and eat it. But we could make ourselves comfortable by building our fire at the outer edge of the cliff. On Monday morning the second day we were there one of the Stanton boys shot another hog, which we dressed so we had a good supply of meat.

On Tuesday morning our guide came and told us that Mr. Bishop had sent for us to return. After we got back to our camp, Mr. Bishop came out to see us and told us that the recruiting was going to start in a few days, and he thought our best policy was to join them, as they would have guides who were familiar with the route, and would also have some arms in case of attack. Believing the idea was a good one, we agreed to follow his advice. He then told us that we should go at once to Ex-Sheriff Hamilton’s in Transylvania Co., and there we would get all the information we desired, that the next morning he would furnish us a guide to show us the way, the distance being about 20 miles. The next morning it was raining quite heavy, but soon after daylight Mr. Bishop and a middle aged woman came to us. Mr. Bishop informed us that this lady was to be our guide. By this time, the two brothers with whom we had been stopping, decided to join our party and go through to the Union lines. Bidding our very kind friend, Mr. Bishop, goodbye, with many acknowledgments of his kindness, we started through the woods, our clothing soon drenched with the rain. When we had travelled about 12 miles, all of which was through the woods our guide told us to stop until she went to a farm house nearby. She was not gone long until she returned with a gentleman with her, whom she introduced as “Mr. Fisher.” Mr. Fisher asked us to go to the house, and our guide started back the way she had come. On reaching the house, we found a family which showed more evidence of culture than any we had met with on our route. Mrs. Fisher prepared us a very good dinner, Mr. Fisher having
informed us that he was to act as our guide after dinner. When we were ready to start, Mrs. Fisher informed us that her daughter was upstairs just recovering from an attack of diphtheria, and that she was very anxious to see a Yankee, and asked whether one of us would take the risk of going to see her. Not feeling that I could refuse after all their kindness, I told her that I would go up. On entering her room I found her sitting before an open fire, dressed in a neat white wrapper; her face almost as white as the wrapper. I soon discovered that she was a young lady of culture and refinement. She informed me she had a brother who had been forced into the rebel army, and at that time was a prisoner of war at Camp Douglas, Chicago, and asked me to write him and tell him how the family were, and ask him, for her, to take the oath of allegiance to the U.S. and remain North until the close of the war. I promised her that I would do just as she requested me. A promise which I fulfilled at the earliest possible date after reaching the lines. I never heard from him after.

Bidding the young lady goodbye I came down stairs and we at once started on our way with Mr. Fisher as our guide. We travelled between four and five miles when we came to a ferry over the French Broad River. Here Mr. Fisher left us and returned soon after with an old gentleman whom he introduced as Mr. Orr, telling us that Mr. Orr would ferry us across the river and then act as our guide, Mr. Fisher returning home. Mr. Orr had a large canoe or "dugout" in which he took us over the river and tying it up at the opposite side of the river, he went with us until we came in sight of ex-sheriff Hamilton's house, then bidding us goodbye, he returned to his home. The rain seemed to increase as evening approached. Sheriff Hamilton lived in a large log house standing back some distance from the road. Leaving the rest of my party concealed in the woods, I went to see whether the coast was clear. Approaching the house, I rapped at the door. Instantly I heard some persons moving quietly about the room, which continued only for a moment, when all became quiet. I waited outside for about ten minutes, I thought, when I again heard footsteps in the house, and soon the door was opened by a young lady addressing whom, I asked, "Is the Sheriff Hamilton at home?" To which interrogatory, she made no reply, but leaving me standing in the rain, she turned around, leaving the door open, and passed through another door. I stood for at least five minutes more, when the door through which she had passed was again opened, and a middle aged lady, who proved to be Mrs. Hamilton, entered, and, as
she did so, asked me to walk in. As I did so, I saw a large fire burning in the big open fireplace. This was most agreeable to me, as my clothing was thoroughly drenched with the cold rain. Stepping in front of the fire, I asked her the same question I had asked the young lady. She proved to be her daughter, but, like the daughter, she made no reply. Seeing she was in doubt about who I was I said to her, "I am what you call in this country a Yankee. I have escaped from a rebel prison and am trying to make my way to the Union lines. The Sheriff has been recommended to me as a reliable Union man. That is why I am here."

While thus addressing her, she seemed to be scrutinizing me from head to foot, then turned around and walked out, without making any reply. After standing by the fire probably five minutes longer, the door opened again and to my great surprise stepped Capt. C. S. Aldrich of the 85th N.Y. United States Infantry. We recognized each other at a glance. I exclaimed: "Capt. Aldrich, are you here?" Behind him came a gentleman, apparently about 55 years of age, whom Capt. Aldrich introduced to me as Sheriff Hamilton. Capt. Aldrich stepped back and opened the door, and called out: "This is all right." To my further surprise, in came Capt. D. A. Langworthy and First Lieut. J. E. Terwilliger of the 85th N.Y., Capt. G. H. Starr of the 104th N.Y., and First Lieut. G. S. Hastings of the 24th N.Y. Independent Battery, all of whom I was well acquainted with except Capt. Starr. The other four belonged to our garrison at Plymouth, N.C. and were captured when I was, and we had all been together in prison.

After an exchange of greetings, Sheriff Hamilton asked me whether there was anybody else with me. I informed him that I had two comrades, four North Carolinians and one South Carolinian with me. He asked, "Are the North Carolinians and South Carolinians all right?" Upon assuring him that they were, "Then," said he, "bring them in." Going to the door, I beckoned to them, and they came in. I then learned that the five officers whom I met there had escaped from Columbia the same night that we passed it, their camp being on the south west side of the Broad river, whilst we passed Columbia on the north east side of the river. Their route to the mountains lay considerably to the west of ours. While we were stopping at Bishop's they coming by a different route reached Hamilton's two or three days ahead of us, and were waiting there to join the same recruiting party we were. I also learned that when I rapped at the door, the only persons in the room were these five officers, having just come in from
the woods, were sitting around the fire drying their clothes, having their coats and shoes off. When they heard the rap, they hastily gathered up their effects, slipped quietly out and going behind the kitchen (which was a separate building) a few feet away sent the young lady in to see who was there. Here we learned that two other officers, Capt. Cady of the 24th N.Y. and Lieut. Masters of the 2nd N.C. Union, who had escaped from the same train they had, were stopping a few miles from there in a deserted cabin in the mountains, which they had named "The Pennsylvania House." Mrs. Hamilton and her daughter prepared supper for us, and after supper, Sheriff Hamilton put on a rubber blanket and travelled about two miles to a neighbor's to ascertain whether there was any danger from rebels in the neighborhood.

Returning, he told us that all was safe, and as it was still raining heavily, he said that we could sleep on his floor before the fire. We found the Sheriff to be a very earnest Union man, who was willing to assist the Union cause in every way that he could. Though like many of his neighbors who were past the age for military duty, he was, however, compelled to serve in a company of home guards, whenever called upon to do so. He told us that whenever they called on him to turn out he always responded. As their principal duty was to hunt deserters, he said he always tried to manage to send word ahead that they were coming. On one occasion he said that they surrounded a house where it was supposed a deserter was concealed. He, with one or two others were taken by the captain to search the house. While the others were in other parts of the house, he searched one room and in doing so, discovered the man hiding under a bed. Without disturbing him, he passed out, and at the door met the captain, who asked him if he had searched that room. Answering that he did, they left the house with the deserter still under the bed. We found both the sheriff and his family of more than the average intelligence and thoroughly Union. The evening was pleasantly passed, our five comrades relating to us their experiences and we ours to them. From this interesting family we learned much of the hardships suffered by the Union men in this mountainous district, and of their being hunted as deserters and persecuted in every way by their rebel neighbors, being robbed of almost everything they had. Their houses had been confiscated, and many of them were compelled to work their milch cows in order to raise a little corn and a few potatoes to supply their families.
Before retiring, it had been decided that our party of eight should go the next morning to the "Pennsylvania House" and remain there until Sunday morning, at which time it had been arranged that the party would start. The next morning our breakfast was ready and eaten before daylight, and under a guide furnished by the sheriff, we proceeded to this mountain cabin, where we found Capt. Cady and Lieut. Masters. This was Thursday morning, Nov. 3rd and just three days before the time for starting for Tennessee. We were now informed that it would be necessary to secure five days' rations before starting as we would not be able to get any for that time. So we spent our time among the Union families in that neighborhood, with most of whom we became acquainted soon. We found them to be rugged, stalwart, mountaineers; most of them had little culture, but answering Union proclivities, most of them seemed to be determined to die rather than serve in the rebel army. All the men who were liable to military duty and consequently to conscription spent most of their time in the woods, only coming home for supplies. All of them were heavily armed. I met a number of men here who carried each, two guns and two revolvers. Posses of rebels had frequently been sent in there to hunt up these people, but had almost invariably met with defeat, as these mountaineers would band together and ambush them. We were told that they also tried to capture them with bloodhounds, but that also proved a failure; as not one bloodhound brought in ever got out alive. I went one afternoon to the home of a Mr. Case, living near, and was invited to stay for supper. There were three brothers of the Cases and a brother-in-law named William Perry, but who was familiarly called "Bill Perry." While there Mr. Case described to me a fight that he and his two brothers and "Bill" Perry had had with the rebels. By previous arrangement all four of them and their wives met there on a certain night.

Next morning, just as day was breaking, having secured a supply of provisions, the men were about to start when they discovered that the house was surrounded by a company of rebels. Bolting the door they opened fire through loopholes that had been purposely made between the logs. As the men fired, their wives loaded their guns, and in a very short time the rebels began to retreat, seeing which, the besieged opened the door, stepped out and fired on them from the yard, as they retreated. When the fight was over, seven or eight of the rebels lay dead about the house. The company of rebels was said to number about thirty. I have never anywhere else known such
bitterness, as existed between neighbors here. The persecution and hardship that the Union men had been subjected to, very naturally brought a spirit of retaliation. It was not unusual, as we learned for persons to be waylaid, and assassinated when passing along the public highways. During the three days of our stay there we succeeded in getting a supply of corn bread and a little meat for the next five days. In order to make ourselves as comfortable as possible, while there, we gathered in some corn fodder that stood in a field nearby and made our beds of it. On Saturday evening Sheriff Hamilton brought over the five officers that were stopping with him, and we all slept in the cabin that night. Sheriff Hamilton remained with us all night. The next morning when we woke up there was about an inch of snow on the ground, but it soon melted away when the sun came up.

After breakfast we started to the place of meeting which was about a mile away. We of the "Pennsylvania House" now numbered fifteen, and we were joined by fourteen others, making a company of twenty-nine men, including Sergt. Hamlin, who was one of the recruiting officers for the 2nd N.C., who now informed us that we would now proceed to the place of general rendezvous, which was about twelve or fifteen miles further on, and that there it was expected that a company of recruits numbering thirty or thirty-five would meet us there, most of them would be armed, and with whom would be a Lieutenant, who would be our guide. We started at once, taking by-ways. When within about a mile of the place of rendezvous, three of the recruits stopped at a farm house to get some more corn bread, the rest of us going on to the place appointed, which we found to be a secluded spot, in a very narrow valley, little more than a ravine, between two high and very steep hills. Here we unloaded our stuff and built a fire. We had been there probably an hour and a half when we were startled by a volley of musketry, apparently not more than three or four hundred yards down the ravine below us. At the same time we heard a scream, which we believed to be that of a wounded man.

Under direction of our guide, Sergt. Hamlin, we gathered up our supplies and keeping together, reached the top of the hill east of us as quietly as possible. Here we formed a skirmish line with all the arms we had, consisting of four guns and three revolvers, while the rest of us formed in line in rear of the skirmishers and advanced to ascertain what the trouble was. He had only gone a few rods when the skirmishers came in sight of a company of rebels. Our guide hailed them and
asked who they were. The answer was Capt. (whose name I do not recall) Company. This company was known to our guide as a company of home guards. Hamlin at once ordered the skirmishers to fire, at which the rebels retreated. At the same time we could see a company of about thirty, all armed, marching down the road on the opposite hill, and scarcely a quarter of a mile from us. Sergt. Hamlin and the ten officers held a hasty consultation. The appearance of the company we saw coming down the hill, indicated that they were rebels, and if so we were not prepared to meet them. On being assured by our guide that he was sufficiently acquainted with the route to act as guide, we decided not to wait for the other squad. Accordingly we faced back into the mountains, it being now about sunset. After travelling about four or five miles, and until it was quite dark, we descended a very steep mountain, at the foot of which we came to a rapid mountain stream. Pulling off our shoes and hose, and rolling up our trousers we waded it. On the opposite side of this stream we found a level place several rods wide and covered with a thick growth of rhododendrons. This grew up and seemed to branch at a height of about five to six feet from the ground, forming a complete canopy overhead. Here we lay down for the night, believing that no human being could find us there. During the night, it commenced to rain and by morning we were thoroughly wet. While the clouds were dark and lowering so that our guide had difficulty in taking any bearings, yet he appeared to be confident that he could find the way. We travelled all day through the woods up and down mountains, it continuing to rain most of the day. As night approached we halted in a ravine in the mountains, and built up a fire, and lay down to sleep, while the cold November rain came down in torrents.

With the break of day, Tuesday morning, we again started out and travelled again up and down steep, rugged mountains, avoiding all settlements, until between two and three o'clock when we halted, and our guide told us, that we had now a choice of routes. If we would cross the valley, which lay in front of us, about fifteen miles to the mountain on the opposite side, instead of following the mountain around, it would save us a distance of about twenty-five miles. We decided to risk the shorter route. Descending to the foot of the mountain, we halted and built a fire. It had been raining nearly all day and our clothing was wet. This was the day of Lincoln's second election. About nine o'clock we started. Moving carefully we crossed the valley that night and about three o'clock next morning, we reached
the summit of the mountain very tired, it having rained nearly all night. There we rested until morning, and after a hasty breakfast of cold corn bread, started out again and travelled all day following the mountains and avoiding all settlements. We stopped for the night just at the base of Mt. Pisgah, one of the highest mountain peaks in that part of N.C. It had rained at intervals all day and as night approached the rain increased. We built up fires and tried to make ourselves as comfortable as we could under the circumstances. Towards morning the rain ceased and that (Thursday) morning the sun came out brightly, the first sunshine we had that week. From Sunday night until this time our clothing had never been dry. Our comforter that kind Mrs. Jones had given us had been thoroughly soaked every night, and each morning we would wring it out. Thus by frequent wringing it had become so much torn that it was of little use to us so this morning we threw it away.

Near the eastern base of Smoky Mountains, we came to where once had been a small farm, but which apparently had been abandoned for years. The buildings were in a tumble down condition, but near the house stood several large apple trees, and under one of them there lay several bushels of good ripe apples. This was a treat. We stopped and ate all that we could and filled our pockets. That afternoon we crossed Smoky Mountains, the boundary between N.C. and Tennessee. While in N.C. we had passed through Polk, Henderson, Transylvania, Jackson, and Haywood Counties. We entered Tenn. in the southern part of Cook Co. About sunset that evening we approached the first farm house we had seen in Tenn., our guide having informed us that a Mr. Davis lived there and that it would be a good place to stop for the night, our stock of provisions being now exhausted and it was necessary to look for something to eat. As we approached the house we saw a man come out at the rear door and run for the woods. As we reached the fence in front of the house a lady appeared at the front door, evidently much excited and gesticulating wildly with her hands called out: "Don't come in here. Just clear out with you; we don't want any rebels in here." Stopping outside the fence, we said to her: "Madam, we are not rebels, we are all Union men, and part of us are escaped Union prisoners." Her reply was: "I don't believe it. I believe you are rebels, and we don't want anything to do with you." After some delay, we succeeded in convincing her that we were all right, when she told us to come in. She afterwards told us that the first thing she did when she saw us coming was to hide her
knives, forks and spoons. She had little to give us but corn bread, but she gave us enough of that to satisfy our hunger.

After she had become satisfied that we were all right she sent a couple of children to hunt for her husband, and bring him home. They found him at a neighbor's two or three miles from home, but he would not risk to come home. That night we slept on her kitchen floor, the ten officers doing guard duty by turns. Before retiring, we told Mrs. Davis that she should not get us breakfast the next morning, as it would be asking too much of her, but that we would start out at daylight and take the risk of finding breakfast on the way. So at daylight we bade our kind hostess goodbye with many thanks. It may be said that we were now between the lines but not out of danger. Stopping among the small mountain farmers we all succeeded in getting breakfast. During the day while crossing some fields, we came upon two men who were digging in the field while two others with guns stood guard. When we approached them, we learned that they were digging a grave for an old man who had been cruelly murdered the day before, by some rebel cavalry. As told us a company of rebel cavalry came to his house, and asked him to show them the road to some point a short distance and as he walked before them to comply with their request he was shot down.

After passing over this farm, and while passing through the next one, near the house a woman came out and said to us: "You are going the wrong way. You should go this way." Pointing further to the right. But our guide answered: "This is the way we want to go." But she continued to insist on our going the other way, until we had gotten some distance past her. Her conduct was a mystery to us. We could not understand why she was so much interested in us as we had not asked for information. When we reached the woods, as our guide informed us, we found a path leading through the woods. We had not gone more than thirty rods along this path leading through the woods, when we saw a man ahead of us, without hat or coat, running, as if his life depended on the speed he made. When we reached the point where we first saw him, we found a small board shanty, about six by eight feet; in the end opposite the door was a mud chimney with a bright fire burning. On the ground was a shoemaker's bench and beside it lay the shoemaker's strop and a half-finished shoe; on two nails in the side of the shanty hung his coat and hat. To our minds this solved the mystery of the woman's great anxiety as to the route we should take. He was in all probability her
husband, who, in order to escape conscription, was pursuing his calling at this lonely spot, and she, supposing we were rebels, and fearing for his safety, undertook by that ruse to change our course.

After examining his shanty, we proceeded without disturbing anything in it. Towards evening we passed an old mill and as we approached it we noticed a rather fine looking old gentleman sitting on a mule in front of the mill talking to the miller. He seemed to be scrutinizing us as we approached, and when we got within 15 or 20 feet of them the old gentleman called out: "I'm for Lincoln. I don't know who you are for." Something in our appearance probably our uniforms must have convinced him that we were not rebels. We assured him that we most heartily agreed with him in sentiment. He told us that he was a practising physician, and been a Union man from the first. From inquiry as to where we could find a safe stopping place for the night, he advised us to go to Jones' Cove about three miles distant where there were only four or five families and all Union families. He directed us how to find it and told us to call on Kilt Spurgeon; that he was a good Union man and he would take care of us. About sunset we entered the cove through a gap in the mountains and were making our way to the nearest house and while doing so, we noticed a man in a field some distance from the house, who seemed to be driving hogs toward the house. Presently he saw us, and giving a yell, he turned and ran for the mountains. Instantly the women commenced to sound the alarm. The cove was small and cleared from one end to the other. Inside of two minutes we could see men from every house running to the mountains and all appeared to be converging at a certain point.

Seeing that we had created alarm, we halted and sent two men to the nearest house to try to convince the women that we were Union men. But they would not believe our story. They believed that we were rebels trying to entrap their men. Finding our efforts with the women futile the only thing left was to find the men. For this purpose, we sent Capt. Aldrich and our guide to find them. The cleared land extended, at the point for which they steered, to the base of a steep bluff. The top of the bluff was heavily wooded. When the two men got within 40 or 50 feet of the base of the bluff, they were halted by a man who had taken his position behind a large tree. He asked who they were and what they wanted. On being told, he at first refused to believe. They called his attention to their blue uniforms. He answered: "Your clothes look all right and you talk all right,
but if you are not all right, I've got enough men up here to blow you all to h—.

After considerable parleying he agreed that one of us might go up to him unarmed. At that Capt. Aldrich went up and soon convinced him that we were all right, and he gave permission for us to come up to him. When we reached him, he proved to be Milt Spurgeon. But, up to this time, none of the others would venture out. Mr. Spurgeon called to them, but they would not come. It was then suggested that the few guns we had be handed over to Mr. Spurgeon. He then called to them to come on that he had all the guns. At this they began to move toward us with a great deal of caution. After they had all gotten there and began to feel satisfied that we were all right, the next thing was to make arrangements for the night. After some discussion it was agreed that we should all go to the house of a man named Long as his house was in a secluded spot, and the others would bring corn meal there and have it baked. Mr. Long said that he had one hog in the pen and he would kill that in order to give us some meat. We protested against his doing so as it was his only hog, but he insisted on doing it. We started with him while the others returned home to send us corn meal.

In going to his place we followed a path which led for some distance through a large thicket of rhododendrons passing under the branches. When we reached there we found a small log cabin, with the spaces between the logs all open — no chinning. Here he had a wife and two small children. We learned from him that he had built there so that the conscription officers would not find him. As soon as we arrived at his place, he made preparations to butcher his hog, while his wife commenced to bake corn bread. It was nearly midnight before she had enough corn bread to satisfy the twenty-six hungry men. In the mean time they had put on a large pot boiled enough of the pork to satisfy the party. We built up large fires not far from the house and spent our time around them until midnight when we lay down near them. During the night a log rolled off one of our fires and fell on Lieut. Master's ankle, injuring it so much that he was unable to walk the next day. One of the men in the cove who had a mule agreed to let him ride for about ten miles, he going along to take the mule back. With two forked sticks we made him two crutches, and he travelled the balance of the distance on them. A little before noon we emerged from the mountains into the beautiful valley of the Little Pigeon River, a most fertile valley. Here we found a fine plantation. We scattered
among these and secured some dinner. About 2 o'clock we reached Sevierville the county seat of Sevier Co. Here we found it necessary to cross the Pigeon River. At a mill near the village, we found a customer of the mill with two horses. He agreed to assist us in crossing. There was there also a large canoe used as a ferry. With the canoe and the horses we were soon over.

Up to this time, Knoxville had been our objective point, but learning that Strawberry Plains, sixteen miles further up the Holston River, was nearer than Knoxville, and it was occupied by our troops, we changed our course toward that place. During the afternoon we met a rebel major in full uniform armed with sabre and revolvers. He bade us the time of day and passed. What he was doing alone in that locality we did not know. About sunset we reached the Branch Broad River, having travelled a little over thirty miles that day. A citizen ferried us across in a large dug-out, taking eight or ten at a load. As soon as all were over, most of the party secured entertainment at several houses near by. Capts. Dawson, Langworthy and Aldrich and Lieut. Terwilliger and myself pressed on further. After going about a mile we met a man and inquired of him where we could find a good stopping place. He told us about a mile ahead there lived a Mrs. Jones, a widow, who was a good Union woman, where he thought we could stop. From him we learned the first news of the result of the presidential election held the Tuesday before, this being Saturday evening Nov. 12.

We stopped at Mrs. Jones' and had a very good substantial supper. Mrs. Jones very kindly offered us the privilege of sleeping before her fire in her sitting room, which offer we decided at first to accept, but about 9 o'clock we asked Mrs. Jones whether the rebels ever made raids in there, and being answered that they did sometimes, and being now only about eight miles from our lines, we thought that we had better not take the risk. Having seen a rebel major that afternoon we feared that there might be more rebel cavalry in the neighborhood, and decided to go on as near as possible to our lines that night. Mrs. Jones gave us directions and told us that just outside of the picket lines, we would come to an old mill, and the miller, whose name was Thompson, was a Union man; that we should stop there, and he could tell us whether we could get through the picket lines that night. Bidding Mrs. Jones goodbye we started. The night was cold and frosty, and we travelled briskly, reaching the old mill about half past eleven. We woke up the old miller and asked
him whether we could get through the picket lines that night. He replied that he didn't think that we could but said: "You can stay here till morning and sleep on my floor." We accepted his offer; when he got up and dressed, and bringing some wood built up a good fire in his capacious fire place. We had travelled about 40 miles that day. He proved to be an odd character. He entertained us for about two hours, with a recital of his adventures during the war and with several songs. There was not much music in his voice but being his guests, we felt compelled to show some appreciation of his proficiency as a vocalist.

Between one and two o'clock he got us out some army blankets which he said some cavalrmyen had left there and we lay down before his fire and slept until daylight, when we arose and thanking our kind host we bade him goodbye. Passing through the timber for a short distance, we came out into the beautiful open valley of the Holston River. Just beyond the river on a gentle rise of ground, we saw the white tents of the 10th Mich. Cavalry, and over the camp floated the Stars and Stripes. It was the first sight we had of the old flag for nearly seven months. Reaching the pickets, and telling them who we were, they passed us through and directed us to the tent of Maj. Newell of the 10th Mich. Cavalry, commandant of the rest of the troop there being part of the 10th Mich. Cavalry. On reaching his tent we found him enjoying a morning nap. On learning who we were, he got up and received us very kindly, set out the "apple jack" and ordered breakfast for us. We found the major as well as all the other officers of the regiment, very gentlemanly and courteous. About 9 o'clock the balance of our party came in. After Sunday morning inspection, the officers of the post all called to see us, and invited the escaped prisoners among the different officers' messes for dinner. The writer and two or three others took dinner with the Quarter Master and Chaplain. About the middle of the afternoon Maj. Newell furnished us each a horse and an escort to go to Knoxville that evening, which place we reached soon after dark. We were now within the Union lines having reached our outpost on Sunday morning Nov. 13, 1864, that being the fortieth day since our escape. While we were now within the Union lines, we were yet more than a thousand miles by rail from our commands. At Knoxville we reported to the Provost Marshal, who ordered us to our commands. With the order we reported to the Quarter Master who gave us transportation.
Thus terminated one of the most daring adventures of the Civil War. It is a little short of miraculous for three escaped prisoners of war to travel such a long distance through enemy country without being captured, either alive or dead. The record reveals, however, one of the more important reasons why the South lost the Civil War, that is, the Confederacy was unable to command the complete support of its people. Captain Conley presents vividly the attitude of the slaves and the position taken by thousands of white mountaineers in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee in regard to the War. Without their aid and cooperation, the successful escape of Conley and his two companions from eastern South Carolina to Knoxville, Tennessee, would have been impossible. Southern Unionists, therefore, played an important role in the preservation of the Union.

CAPTAIN DAWSON AND LIEUTENANT DAVIDSON

The regimental roster of the 101st Pennsylvania Regiment says of Captain Dawson: "Must. into serv. Nov. 9, '61; pro. to 1st Sgt., Sept. 1, '62; to 1st Lieut., Jan. 20, '63; to Capt., Mech. 1, '63; Capt. at Plymouth, N. C., Apr. 20, '64; paroled Dec. '64; disch. Jan. 7, '65; exp. of term" and of Lieutenant Davidson: "Must. into serv., Nov. 4, '61; pro. to 2nd Lt., Nov. 6, '62; to 1st Lt., Jan. 1, '63; Capt. at Plymouth, N. C., Apr. 20, '64; disch., Dec. 8, '64; exp. of term."

Search for further data concerning these officers has proved difficult beyond expectation. The quest has been of value, however, if only because it has demonstrated a need for a biographical dictionary of soldiers of the Civil War. Materials for such a compendium are disappearing day by day, and action therefore should not be postponed.

Captain Dawson moved from Western Pennsylvania to Chicago about 1869 and to Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1871. He "engaged in the sale of agricultural implements until 1881" and subsequently represented
the Davis and the Household sewing machine manufacturers in the same area. *The Andreas History of Nebraska* reports that he married a Miss Miller of Chicago in 1870 and mentions that his wife joined him in the work of the Independent Order of Good Templars. He also was a member of Farragut Post, No. 25, Grand Army of the Republic, Lincoln, organized 1879. The Nebraska State Historical Society has record of him as a resident of Sidney, Cheyenne County, from 1890 to 1897. He died at Laramie, Wyoming, October 23, 1917, and was buried in the Wyuka Cemetery, Lincoln.

Lieutenant Davidson likewise went into business after the war. His name appears in the Pittsburgh directories of 1869-1873, during a portion of which time he was a partner of O. H. Woodworth as a produce and commission merchant at 201 Liberty Street. The designation “gent” is applied to him in 1873, and his place of residence was given as St. Clair Hotel, Penn Avenue at Sixth Street.

Further information regarding these officers will be printed if it becomes available.—J.W.F.