

**PRIVATE DAN WRIGHT.**

**A Modest Hero at the Battle of Cedar Mountain.**

**He Received a Promotion But Didn't Want to Accept It Until After the Fight—A Soldier's Romance That Was Never Completed.**

The history of the great civil war is full of incidents of startling and heroic character. But few, comparatively, of the brave deeds performed or sufferings endured are ever recorded. They remain a sort of family treasure, and are told at the fireside on winter evenings. When we remember that over two million soldiers were mustered into the union army between 1861 and 1865 we are struck with wonder that such a mighty volunteer army could be marshaled. We are apt, however, to look at it as an entirety, as a whole, or at most we individualize only so far as to note the character and conduct of its great leaders. The names of Grant, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan and a few more are on our lips, while the hundreds of thousands who performed the duties of private soldiers, and are now at their homes performing the duties of private citizens, or are sleeping in the quiet graves where they fell in battle, are hardly thought of.

My theme is the private soldier, and "Dan Wright" is my hero. He was a quiet, retiring boy. In the summer of 1862 he came into my office and wanted to learn the trade of a printer. We talked together a few minutes, and I was satisfied that he would answer my purpose. I needed a "devil." The boy who had filled that important place had been promoted, and so it was agreed that he should come into the office as an apprentice and remain three years. He began work. Nothing of special interest transpired during his apprenticeship. He was quiet, industrious, thoughtful, and that was all. His term of service expired on Saturday, April 13, 1861, the day after the fall of Sumter. On the evening of Monday following a public meeting was held at Citizen's hall. Speeches were made. The excitement was intense.

At the close of the meeting there was a call for volunteers. Among others, Dan Wright came forward. I watched him as he came up. There was a quiet look and manner about him quite in contrast with most of those who signed their names to the enlistment roll. He did it just as he would perform any duty about the office. I said: "Why, Dan, are you going?" I thought that, as you are just through with your apprenticeship, you would like to remain with me awhile. You would make a good foreman and, what is more, you could begin to lay by a little money now."

He replied: "Mr. H—, you have been very kind to me, and I had intended to remain with you, if you were willing. But I think I ought to go to the war. I may be back after awhile, but if I should not come back, perhaps it is as well. One ought to be willing to do a little for his country."

He was mustered into Company G, Seventh regiment. The Seventh was a good regiment, filled up with excellent men, and during the progress of the war, did some splendid fighting. There was very little opportunity for furloughs in the regiment. We heard of it through the papers occasionally. The only report that came as to Dan Wright was that he was a good soldier.

In the summer of 1862 he came home. He stopped a few days with his mother and sisters. On the 4th of July he was in Ravenna and took dinner at my house. After dinner we went out walking. I inquired of him as to his experience in the service. From him I heard that he had been in excellent health; that a soldier's life agreed with him; that he had obtained valuable experience; had had a good opportunity to study, not only the art of war and the questions connected with the controversy between the two sections, but also to study the geography of the country and the conditions of the people. He had proven to be a close observer of men and things, and he gave me a great deal of information not found in the newspapers. He had a diary in which he had jotted down the result of his observations. He had already filled two or three books, and it was a wonder to me how he found time to do so much writing. He said it was a source of pleasure, and if he lived long might be of some service.

There are a great many newspaper-made men in the country. Men whose fame depends not so much upon what they do as upon their ability to get the eye of the newspaper press and have their performances heralded to the world. This was especially so in the army. The successful general was oftentimes the one who kept on the right side of the newspaper correspondents. Some men were written up, and others of equal merit were written down, and either brave, conscientious and capable commanders were left without notice.

Our conversation was long and pleasant. He told me not only of the war, but also of his personal experiences and of acquaintances that he had formed. Among other things he exhibited to me the photograph of a beautiful girl. Her home was Winchester, Va., and she belonged to a good family. I don't know what chance had brought them together, but it was very evident from his conversation that an attachment had grown up between them. I hinted him a little on going down south to capture the rebels and then being captured himself.

The time had come for him to go back to his regiment, and the train was nearly due upon which he was to take his departure. As he turned to go he said: "Good-by, Mr. H—, I want to thank you for the kind things you have done for me. My time has come to go. I shall never see you again."

Struck by this remark, as well as his impressive manner, I replied: "Cheer up, Dan. No doubt we shall meet often again. When the war is over,

you will come back here to live, and perhaps you will bring that pretty Winchester girl with you. Good-by and good luck to you. Don't have any evil presentiments now, but go away with a light heart. Write me when you can. I shall always want to hear from you."

He gave me his hand and slowly answered: "Mr. H—, I shall never return. I think the contest now going on will result in final victory to the union cause. The government will be saved; but I shall not live to see it. I do not hesitate to go. It is in the line of duty, and a brave man ought never to fear death. I shall probably die in battle; but, whether in battle or elsewhere, my death is sure to come before the war is over. Good-by."

He went away. Feeling a deep interest in the young man, and believing he was entitled to a better position than that of a private, I interested myself with the authorities, and in a short time it was arranged that he was to be appointed a lieutenant in one of the companies of the One Hundred and Fourth regiment, then forming, with headquarters at Camp Massillon. His credentials were duly made out and forwarded to the colonel of the Seventh regiment, then in the field, with instructions to send Wright to join the new regiment in Ohio. The papers reached the regiment the day before the battle of Cedar Mountain. Wright was sent for, informed by the commanding officer that his commission had been received, and he could go immediately to Ohio.

Dan replied: "I am glad to receive this appointment, and I will try to fill the place acceptably, but I hope, sir, you will permit me to remain here a few days. We are probably on the eve of an engagement, and I shall be better satisfied to stay with the boys till the fight is over. It wouldn't be manly to go away now."

The request was granted. The next day occurred one of the bloody battles of the war. In the heat of the contest the Seventh regiment was hotly engaged and suffered from a tremendous fire of the enemy.

Dan Wright was wounded by a shot in the face. Capt. Reed said to him: "You are badly hurt; better go to the rear."

Dan answered: "It is not so bad, captain. I can still use my musket." Hardly had the words been uttered, when another ball came and buried itself in his brain. He fell dead on the field.

The battle still waged with terrible fury, and when the day was over the ground occupied by the union army in the morning, with its bloody burden of union dead, was occupied by the confederate forces. Dan Wright's life was over. His prophecy was fulfilled.

A day or two later the daily papers announced the fact that in the battle of Cedar Mountain the union loss was fifteen hundred killed, wounded and missing. A little later the list of dead was given, and in the list was the name of Dan Wright. It was only one life gone out, and to the great world at large little notice was taken of it. But up in the good old town of Freedom, where Dan's people lived, the news was received with a sad interest. Men and women talked in low and tender words about the lad who had grown up in their midst, and who now slept his last sleep on the field of battle. Of course, his body was not recovered, and they could never give it the rites of burial, and they could have no funeral in the ordinary acceptance of the term. But they determined to have funeral services, and so on the Sunday afternoon the church bell was rung, and people from far and near gathered at the church.

I was not a preacher, but they asked me to speak for them, and I consented. The gray-haired and venerable pastor was there, and made a prayer full of tenderness. I did the best I could. Dan Wright's character and life, his services as a soldier, his bloody and heroic death, and the cause of the union in and for which he died, furnished a grand theme. It was text enough for a good many sermons.

This was only one life among the many, and the blood that trickled from his dying wounds went to make up the great river whose increasing volume bore red contributions from a million homes.

Here, in the ordinary course of things, my little story should draw to a close. But while I have my pen in hand, I wish to record a further incident connected with Dan Wright. Fifteen years after the close of the war a letter was received one day by the family of Dan Wright. I don't remember to whom it was directed. It was postmarked Charleston, S. C. When opened it was found to be written by a person of whom they had never heard. It stated in substance that the writer was, in 1862, a soldier in the confederate army under Jackson; that he was at the battle of Cedar Mountain, and when the contest was over he and some of his comrades were detailed to bury the dead; that among the union soldiers who had fallen on the field was a young man of dark complexion and somewhat striking appearance, and when they came to move him they found on his person a pocket Testament, a diary and two or three letters. The soldier took these and had ever since retained possession of them, and after a perusal of the contents of the diary he had determined if possible to send them to the friends of the deceased. From the papers found he had learned that the name of the dead soldier was Wright, and that he belonged to an Ohio regiment. He had written to various points, but so far without avail. The family were satisfied from the letter that the Bible and papers belonged to Daniel, and answered the letter at once. In a few days a package came by express from Charleston. It contained the Testament, the diary and the letters. The diary was a daily memorandum or record of events, and the last lines were written on the morning of the battle. The leaves and the writing were well preserved, but the cover of the little book was stained with blood.—Alphonse Hart, in Washington Post.

**IN THE CHEROKEE STRIP.**

**The Experience of a Drummer in the Rush for Land.**

**He Found He Had Made a Great Mistake and Was Glad to Get Out of the Country—Trials of Other Would-Be Sojourners.**

No less than eight traveling men were seduced into making a run to the Cherokee strip in search of quarter sections or town lots and the number which returned disappointed and disgusted was exactly six. As I was one of the number and hence am telling a tale on myself, says a writer in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, I cannot be accused of malice, unless it be against mankind in general and the interior department in particular. I paid twenty dollars for a turn to register, and have ever since looked upon the man who made the sale as a remarkably smart individual. I obtained a certificate and at twelve o'clock commenced to ride a bright looking horse into the strip. I might have got a good claim if I could have controlled the horse. But I couldn't. The animal simply did his best to beat everything else in sight, taking the fastest horse for peacemaker and following with praiseworthy assiduity. I have been under the impression that I could ride, and if sticking on a horse's back means good riding I have nothing to be ashamed of, for I certainly did not fall off. Otherwise I was a complete failure as a rider, for the horse went at his own gait, turned when he wanted to and treated my desires with a contempt which was supreme. It was nearly three o'clock before he got so tired out that I was able to stop him, and by that time he had got me into one of the worst sections in the strip, where the ground did not begin to be worth the amount the government asked for it. Whether those who obtained the claims got in on balloons or whether they sneaked in over night I am not prepared to say, but every claim with pretense of heritage or water on it was occupied, and one man had a house half built. It did not take me long to make up my mind that the sooner I could get back into Kansas the better, but I had no idea of the enormous distance I had traveled until I had got well into the journey on an exhausted horse which needed both food and water badly. I had to camp out all night, and finally got into town on Sunday morning heartily ashamed of myself, and with enough dash on me to have started a small vegetable garden. My only consolation was that hundreds of others were equally unfortunate, and I believe there was more grumbling and cursing to the square inch all day Sunday in this town than anyone present could possibly realize. W. who travels for a St. Jo dry goods house, did not turn up till just after supper on Sunday evening. Exactly what happened to him no one will know until he regains his temper. At present he will give no information whatever, and all that is known is that he went into the strip on horseback and came back as an extra passenger in a prairie schooner or ex-boomer's wagon. A Chicago man who went in with us on horseback from here got hopelessly lost, and finally found himself at Kiowa, where he sold the quadruped and took the cars back here. Another man of the traveling fraternity, who has always boasted that he never got left, joined a town-site colony a few days before the opening and went in with them. Half a dozen sojourners were quarreling over the quarter section they had designed to make the metropolis of the Indian territory when they arrived at it, and all they could do was to drive back. Our brother in affliction gives a most humorous account of his experience. Three of the number made the run on horseback, the balance following in wagons. When they met at the coveted spot and compared notes they decided to camp out for the night and come back at their leisure, as they had enough food and drink on hand to give indigestion, if not death, to the entire party. A remarkable difficulty then beset them. Every inch of ground of the vicinity was claimed, and no one would allow them to camp, fearing lest it was a trick for the purpose of securing evidence in a projected contest. Finally their resting place was selected on the edge of one of the countless branches of the Arkansas river, and after a hearty supper and a good wash in the river an attempt was made to sleep. The darkness brought with it thousands of mosquitoes and millions of insignificant creeping things which stung worse than could be imagined, and camp was broken before nine o'clock. After that two or three more attempts were made to secure a decent resting place, and finally it was decided to keep moving as the best opportunity for comfort. Several miles were covered during the night, and in the morning the heartrending discovery was made that they were going south instead of north. They retraced their steps and finally got back into town in a very dilapidated and dirty condition and with an immense amount of conceit knocked out of them. We propose to resume our ordinary avocations soon as we are rested up.

**Found the Station.**  
Two Egyptians, dark-skinned and fox-topped, boarded a downtown train on the Sixth avenue elevated road a few days ago, says a New York paper. They took seats near the door. One of them produced a piece of paper and a pencil. On the paper were drawn straight lines an inch in height. An inch of space separated them. As the train stopped at Fifty-ninth street the Egyptian drew the pencil obliquely through the first line. The other man watched the operation intently and nodded approval. At each station a line was traced into an X until Eighth street was reached, when they were all X's but one. There the pair left the train. That was the Egyptian way of finding the right station. Some philandering couple counted the minutes between Twenty-second and Eighth streets and gave the paper and pencil.

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**Notice of Executor.**

Notice is hereby given to all whom it may concern, that by an order of the County Court for Linn County, State of Oregon, the undersigned has been duly appointed and is now the duly qualified and acting Executor of the last will and testament of Eugene H. Elm, deceased. All parties indebted to said estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned, and all parties having claims against the estate are hereby required to present the same properly verified, within six months from the 30th day of April, 1893, the first publication of this notice, to the undersigned at the office of Sam'l M. Garland, Lebanon, Ore.

E. J. ULM,  
Ex. of the last will and testament of Eugene H. Elm, deceased.  
SAM'L M. GARLAND,  
Atty. for Executor.

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