Our Friend Tells of Three Days of Active Service During the War.

Sent to Burn a Bridge to Embarrass the Enemy-Which the Enemy Had Already Sent up in Smoke.

April 5, 1862, my regiment was stationed at Crump's Landing, on the Tennessee river, six miles from Pittsburgh Landing, or more historically known as Shiloh.

On the night of April 5, my regiment and one other, making nearly 2,000 soldiers in all, were sent to Purdy, a small place twelve miles inland, to burn a bridge that we thought, or at least our commander thought, was of great value to the enemy; but when we got there we found the Johnies had burned it for us, so we had our trip for nothing.

The road was wet from previous or clay was borrible, when mixed with plenty of water and properly tempered by a couple of thousand soldiers march-

purgatory yet. We made the round trip just before sleep, up again at roll call, got breakfast, when my partner and I took our overcoats to a stream close by, to wash some of Tennessee's sacred soil off them, for the coat that was a U. S. blue the night before, was a beautiful Tennessee yellow the next morning.

In explanation of the word partner, than one. First, a double blanket will have four blankets over us instead of then we whack up.

government used to issue it to the men kindly, gave me his name, regiment sometimes, and I was quite solid with and his mother's address. I unrolled the brigade commissary. Pard and I his blanket, put some brush under his generally had a canteen of it between head for a pillow and covered him with us. | Pard says: "I'll take the bet." I his blanket, bid him good night and won and had half an hour to spare, for that was the last I ever heard of him. the orderly's call was beat in less than for I suppose the whiskey put him to half an hour and our orders were: "Two sleep. He was shot through the hips, day's grubin your haversack and sixty and the lower part of him was paralyzed. rounds cartridges, forty in your carfor Shiloh.

lect, was as follows: First Nebraska, how before morning. I handed him Sixth Missouri, Eighth Missouri, the the canteen, he gave it a shake and was buried with the rest of the dead, pride of your humble servant, | Fifty- found I was lying about giving all the fifth Illinois, and Ninth Indiana bat- whiskey to the John, and he said, "I tery. I don't remember the number of didn't think you was such a big fool." the battery; it was a full company, six It was now near morning, the thunder pieces. We marched about five miles, and lightening had ceased, and the only but we took the wrong road, and when thing that marred our peace the balwe discovered ourselves we were almost ance of the night was the gunboat firing in the rear of the enemy, and within occasionally and an orderly going along half a mile of where General Prentice hunting for the commanding officer. and his whole brigade were captured. Pard and myself took a little consolaso I afterwards learned. Just here an tion out of the regulation canteen and orderly came dashing up to the head of backed ourselves up against the tree, the column, handed the general an en- and he slept pretty well for an hour or velope, and in a few seconds the order two, but every time the boat sent shells came: "Right about, double quick, over our heads I awoke, although I was march," and we did it for about two quite ripe for sleep, only about four horde into the Tennessee river and miles, when we came to a walk and hours in two nights. took to a road leading east until we struck what was called the river road morning of the 7th, when the reveille to Shiloh, and a fine wet and spongy was blown, and everything was astir. one it was; we had to corduroy a part Pard and myself, wet and half asleep, of it to get the battery and teams over. tried to light a fire; he got a piece of It was about dark when we got in line, paper out of his knapsack, and the fire and the firing had about ceased for the was started; he prepared the coffee and day. We were on the extreme left of I took the two guns and wiped them as detail-I mean in burying the enemy the enemy's line; our right in a large dry as a could, while he was getting after a big battle. There is a gang timber, and I would say, about a the coffee boiled. The sun rose clear, quarter of a mile from the river. We and as it was in the large timber and trenches, which are dug about seven stacked arms with orders not to leave no wind, scarcely, the air was thick with feet wide and from ten to forty feet the stacks over ten feet, but that order mist or fog, we could not see much over was not very rigidly kept. Pard and I a hundred yards. When our coffee was got a slim supper, black coffee, sow about done, a six pound shot came tear more; the length of the ditch depended per over, we commenced to make our It went about fifty feet to the right and and the number we had to bury. The bed like so many hogs, by scratching about ten feet too high, and buried it hauling detail was a four-mule team some leaves and small brush together self in the ground a hundred yards in with a driver, and four men to do the

of bayonets half a mile long.

heavy rains, and that Tennessee mud I did. The trip was made when it light the killed; we were touching elbows enough to kill a man, but it seems ing through it, and the night was so the tree, he said to me: "There is a ment to look at poor Phill, when the dark that you could not see three feet dead Johny has this tree." "How do captain's shrill voice rang out, "Close ahead of you. We marched by twos and you know?" "Why I put my hand up, close up." It was well he did, for vant was unfortunate enough to be in joined hands [like the country jakes right in his face." I said, "You are it would have been certain death to the it to the finish; and of my whole three coming in town to a circus]. One of us sure he is dead?" His reply was, "His most of us to have halted there any years' service, those three days and would come up to a right shoulder face is wet and cold as a wedge." I time. After getting over the ravine shift, the other to a left, when one said: "The rain won't hurt him any; we were ordered to lie down to escape lamentable of all my life, and yet it would fall the other would pull him up; lets pull him out a little from there," the enemy's fire, and the batteries was thirty-one years last month since but even that would often fall to keep so each took a leg and moved him out, changed position. I don't suppose we it happened. So strongly was it imus out of the mud, for we would both and we had the tree to ourselves; but were lying there over five minutes, but slip and go down together. There was it was no improvement on the place we it seemed an age to me. A thousand a dead horse just in the middle of the had left, but it was the best we could things ran through my mind, but the vivid as if it occurred but yesterday. road, and I'll venture to say that out of do, for the rain found its way to our subject that was uppermost was poor And that was soldiering in every sense the 2,000, about 1,500 fell over that hides just the same. But our cup of Phill, dead or mortally wounded; and of the word. Three days and nights horse, and if a soldier's curses availeth experience was not quite full yet, for then the wounded Johny of the night of my life will never be forgotten. anything, that horse's soul must be in half an nour before we went to the tree, before came to my mind, and I wondaybreak, tired, sleepy and covered begging for a drink of water, and with whiskey in it, but there was but with mud, laid down, got a few hours though his clothes were wet as water little left. While lying there I could soldiers in the army almost invariably in it." Another clap of thunder, a seemed to leave me, and all respect I pair off, as it is essential in more ways flash of lightning, then more rain, an- ever had for the enemy seemed gone for- prices so that time and car fare are cover two, so on a cold night we could echo had scarcely died away, when our the power at that time to send the put our rubber blankets under us and wounded Johny opened up again with, whole confederacy to hell at one swoop two; another reason, if one is sick and bring me a drink?" I sgain urged my fire at will. Well I had a will at that off duty, the other will make it as pard to go. As it was his day to carry time, and it appeared to me that I fired pleasant as he can for him: again, in canteen of regulation. I told him to three shots to my neighbors two, and I foraging for things that are good to give it to me, and I started for the did not fire without taking aim either, est, two are apt to get more than one, wounded Johny with the two canteens. for I wanted to get even with the fellow I went a few yards, waited till it light. that killed my partner. We had scarcely commenced to wash ened and would go again. I got within our coats when the firing at Shiloh was seventy feet of him, I hailed him with, heard very distinctly where we were. "Are you a Johny or a Yank?" "Oh! when the Johnies massed their whole are able to secure uniformly good re-This was Sunday morning, April 6, and I am a confederate, for God's sake give force in a body of about 40,000. I was sults. This is often due to the fact that ber aright. E My pard said: "The pick- water and gave him some, and while ets are unloading their guns at Shiloh." he was drinking I asked him if he I said: "Pickets be d-d, did you ever | would like a drink of whiskey. "Great hear of six and twelve pounders unload God," he said, "have you got some ing after being on picket? I'll bet you whiskey?" He appeared to be more a canteen of regulation, pard, that we surprised than he did when the ball get marching orders in less than an struck him. He took the whiskey, and hour to help them fellows out." [Regu- would have emptied it if I had not lation in the army means whiskey; the choked him off. He thanked me very

tridge box and tweny in your blouse, did you find?" I told him a wounded at poor Phil. The fellow that shot and be ready to march at a moment's notice. The notice came about 11 him all that whiskey?" he inquired. I notice. The notice came about II him all that whiskey?" he inquired. I o'clock, and the whole command started told him yes, and he commenced to the back, taking half a hand-full of the d-m me for wasting good whiskey on blue cotton batting such as the soldiers The command, as near as I can recol- a Johny, for he said he would die any-

It was not later than 6 o'clock on the - and hard tack. Our stingy sup- ing through the trees from the enemy, generally on how thick the dead were,

use, for in the early part of the evening sounded and the long roll was heat front of the wagon and pile them up, it commenced to thunder, lighten and along the whole line, and that was the for I have seen as many as thirty in rain, and if the weather-clerk ever did last breakfast for many a poor fellow, one load. We would take the load to his duty, it was that night, for at inter- and my partrer was among that un- the nearest trench and roll them in, vals it seemed as though it came down fortunate number. As the indiana bat- sometimes two deep to save digging. in bucketfuls; it would let up for a short tery was just to the right of my regi- They were not handled as you would time, to let the lightening get its work | ment it was ordered into action in reply in, and when the lightening would to the enemy's shot, and a regular ar- anything but a pleasart job, and you Sleep was out of the question. Between dered in, and then the ball was on for the thunder and lightening and a gun- the day, not at our end alone, but the Wednesday afternoon, and the two last boat in our rear, which was throwing whole line. That one shot in our front days were quite warm. Why they were forty-two pound shells over our heads was the opening of the whole fight for not buried scener I don't know. All into the enemy's camp, two miles away, the day, and from then until about 2 the dead horses were burned on Tuesabout every three to five minutes, the o'clock in the afternoon, there was no day. It is less work to burn a horse and I took our guns, stuck the bayo- utes at a time while the artillery was of wood, and we had plenty of it. nets in the ground, threw an oil-cloth changing position, or the infantry was blanket over the butts for a roof, put making some small flank movement, we did, there would likely have been our knapsacks down and sat back to which was done several times in the an epidemic, for the smell was unbearback with our blankets around us. But afternoon. My regiment was making a able. The burying detail was furnished it did not last long, for the next big flank movement on a double quick whisky to drink, for one needed somea quart of water went down my back. got us in range, firing on us, killing eight deaden the sense of smell. By working same I says, 'let's get out and hunt a tree,' of my company outright and wounding lively I think the dead were all buried which we did. Pard got there before as many more. My pard was one of by Wednesday night. It appears bad ened, for that was the only time we when he fell. It is hard to express much worse when you have to wait until could see anything. I followed him as one's teelings just at a moment like he is decomposed, and then bury him to soon as I could, and when I was near that. I slackened my gait for a moa wounded rebel in our front, and not dered if any one would give him water over a hundred yards away, had been if he needed it, for he had the canteen could make them, he would hollo, have wept like a child if I could have "Oh, won't some one for God's sake done any good, and I don't know but bring me a drink," and after waiting a I did to some extent, for, as the old reasonable time, would raise his voice saying is, it was a time that tried men's and hollo, "Won't some cowardly Yank souls. The bugle sounded, rise up and bring me a drink?" I said to pard, double quick to another ridge, then or-"Go give the poor devil a drink." "Not dered to lie down, load and fire at will, by a d-m sight, there may be a brick and here all my sympathetic feelings other shell from the gunboat, and the ever, and I believe if I could have had saved our customers. "Ohl won't some big-hearted Yank I would have done it. The orders were,

The fighting was terrible from about eleven till half past one or two o'clock, is appreciated by everyone, but so few to a forty-eight calibre rifle, was doing duty. Just imagine 100.000 infantry Try it. and all the artillery of both sides in action at one time. It seemed a miracle how any one could escape a wound of some kind. I have seen several skirmishes and hard battles, but never heard such an artillery and musketry as on April 7, from twelve to two o'clock, When they could not break our line they gave it up, and we had the field with all their dead and wounded, and all the dead to bury, with the exception of those the rebels came in and got under a flag of truce. I went back next morning to where our dead were When I got back. Pard said, "What collected for burish to take a last look coats were lined with. I don't suppose he ever knew what ki'led him. He and their graves properly marked.

> On Wednesday afternoon, April 9, I was detailed on the burying squad to Undertaker and Embalmer bury the dead enemy. Some had laid on the ground since Sunday morning, for they did not intend to do anything towards burying until after Monday, when they expected to have a large portion of the Yankee army to burythose who were not driven into the Tennessee river; for General Bureguard made a speech to his men on Sunday night and told them that the next day-Monday-they would drive the Yankee make an end and a first-class job of it, but he counted his chickens before they were hatched, for on Pionday night the whole force under Bureguard was five miles from the river, on their way to Corinth, minus many thousands of the

comrades, who were killed or wounded. I will give you an idea of a burying goes with picks and shovels to dig the long, and about three feet deep: if it is good digging the hole may get a foot to keep our precious hides off the our rear, but it was near enough to loading, three on the ground and one 2107 Cuming St.,

"I WAS THERE MYSELF" ground; but our leaves were of little stop all coffee making. The bugle in the wagon to pull them up to the bandle eggs and crockery, for it was utes, when we, the infantry, were or- a flower garden after lying on the Shoe for ground from Sunday morning until

If we had not buried the dead when keep him from killing you in return.

So you see we had to fight the enemy twice, as it were, and your humble sernights were the saddest and most pressed on my mind that the most minute details of that occasion seem as

HARRY H. KIRBY, Formerly of Eighth Missouri Infantry

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