

# Where Iowa Troops Fought at Vicksburg

After a long period of parley and preliminary surveys the real task has now begun of restoring to the Vicksburg hills their martial adornments of batteries and breastworks, worn during the city's investment. The commissioners have signed the 194th of the 111 deeds necessary to convey the 1,231 acres intended for the great national park. Surveyors are now laying out the long semi-circular roadway marking the inner line of the confederate works, and with its completion the whole reserve will be easily accessible.

At this time many of the spots where deeds were done are fenced in and cultivated, or, on the union side, lie in isolated summits not to be reached by ordinary endeavor. The confederates, having the first choice, placed their line along a continuous range of hills surrounding Vicksburg in a half circle. For some distance of the nine miles an outer parallel range offered a crest for the federal line, an ideal position for opposing forces. For the rest, however, the union men planted their guns on such elevations as happened to occur in the south half of the formation.

It was the government's purpose to secure

pective posts and one more pretentious memorial, which the state's generosity has made possible, to signalize the achievements of all the Iowans in the action. The larger monument will either be along the line of Quincy's division of Boomers' brigade—this point is directly east of the city, where Iowa regiments were centralized—or in the position of Carr's division of Lawler's brigade.

### Spot Rich in Historic Interest.

Lawler's brigade was located in a less accessible spot, but one rich in historic interest. Over the old east and west track, up the "railroad redoubt," the union troops made the only assault of the siege which succeeded in breaking the confederate line. It is a curious coincidence that the command of Captain Rigby of the park commission was engaged in this vicinity while directly opposed to him on the confederate line was the force of Lieutenant General Stephen D. Lee of Mississippi, who is now co-operating with him on the same board in the restoration of the site.

The Massachusetts commissioners have also visited Vicksburg and have ascertained



SHIRLEY HOUSE, NEAR VICKSBURG, KNOWN TO FEDERALS AS THE "WHITE HOUSE," ON JACKSON ROAD, AT POINT OF GENERAL LOGAN'S ATTACK.

teries; Missouri, with fifteen foot, three horse regiments and seven batteries, and Wisconsin, with fifteen foot regiments, one horse regiment and three batteries. The eastern states will also make a showing, although it was the great northwest which bore the brunt before Vicksburg. Several of the states named will have representatives at the next meeting of the park commission in April. The Mississippi board will certainly be present at that time.

According to the plans of the park engineering corps, the north entrance to the park is two miles above Vicksburg, opposite the great triumphal arch of the national cemetery, probably the most striking and picturesque of national reserves. The accompanying view, showing the crests of the hills purchased, opens as one reaches the cemetery gate. The gorge is worthy of a place among the Colorado canyons.

The parallel ranges extend in an unbroken line for two and one-half miles westward, the inner belt then turning directly south. The only interruptions in all the nine miles are at Glass' and Stout's bayous, showing the ideal position for defense held by the southern forces.

### Old Shirley House.

All of the historic spots will be given due prominence, and the commissioners already have several of the more important in hand. They are now awaiting the approval of the War department before restoring to its former staunchness the old Shirley house, better known in federal official reports as "the white house," because its color made of it a shining mark. The dwelling was within the federal lines for a time and again stood directly between the contending forces, so that it was badly shattered by solid shot and is now in an advanced stage of decay. To reach other such points of interest as this numerous branches will radiate from the main avenue within the confederate works. All the roads used during the siege will be restored and the total mileage within the park limits will aggregate twenty-six and six-tenths.

As a peaceful climax to the contentious scenes about the hills one comes upon the graves of 16,736 union soldiers overlooking Lake Centennial. Most of them made their last light around Vicksburg, and the bodies of only 4,019, less than a fourth, were identified. The small white tablets stud the steep hillside to the summit. The peak is crowned by the remnant of the Grant-Pemberton monument rescued from relic hunters at the scene of the surrender and brought under the eye of the superintendent. The stone is chipped and scarred until it bears the appearance of having gone through the siege. From the monument the view extends for miles along the heavily wooded shore of the Mississippi, with Lake Centennial, a mammoth horseshoe, in the foreground. It is the finest prospect in the valley.

So precipitous is the hillside that of the sixty-five acres in the tract twenty-five have been lost in the terraces. The landscape gardening has been of the best, and the hillside bears semblance to an heroic an-

phitheater, the marble slabs acting as substitutes for living auditors.

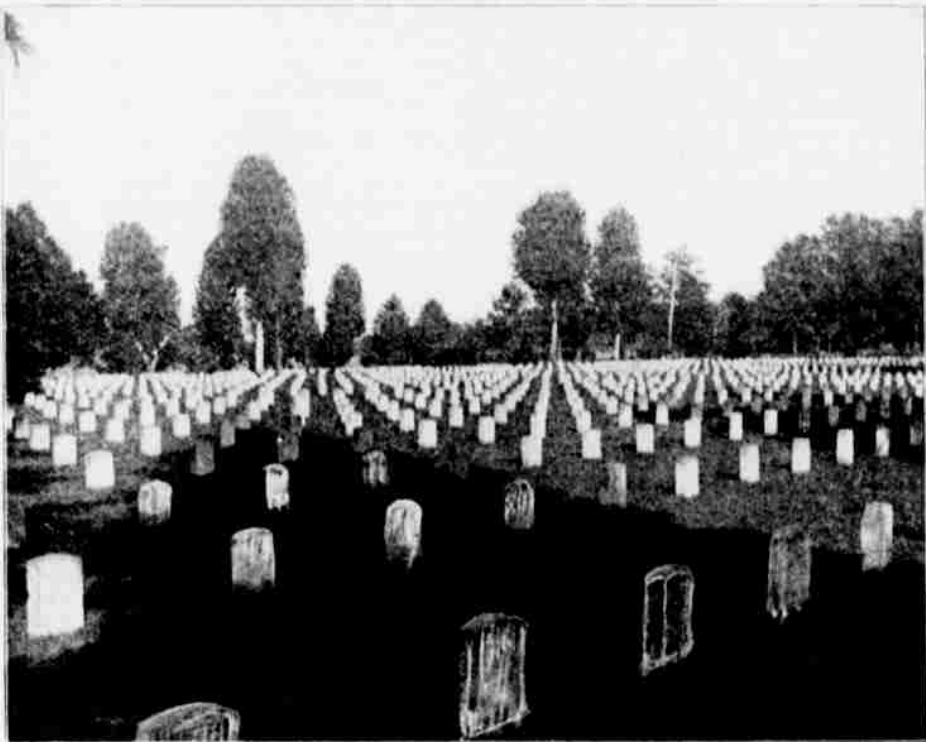
The superintendent of the cemetery has recently completed a catalogue of the known dead. Hitherto no state has known its representation, as through some error the bodies were interred as they arrived, promiscuously, with no regard for regiment. The known dead are from each state

would feel shame for the spot which holds its substance. The grounds seem in constant readiness for a day of inspection, though even unofficial guests are rare, as the reserve lies ten miles from the city. The cemetery's sole adornments are a score of captured confederate cannons, cast in iron in the old fashion.

Superintendent Mitchell is conscious that the grounds have a bare appearance in spite of their fitting location in a brake of cypress, mourning symbol of the older Romans.

"There are 1,100 men of Illinois buried here," he said, "and 1,000 from forty-seven Iowa regiments. Their bodies were gathered all along the east bank of the Mississippi from Paducah, Ky., to Helena, Ark. Then there are 500 from New York, Ohio and Missouri, with other sections representing every state in the union. Even the sparsely settled territory of Nebraska was given a plot with eight graves. In the Vicksburg reserve the 16,000 bodies were buried indiscriminately as they came, but here care was taken to give each state its own space. It would be easy, therefore, for any state to signalize the service of its sons, and, while my position prevents me from taking the initiative, I would go to any length to assist in such a movement."

Superintendent Mitchell was himself one of the sturdiest and most untiring of those who answered Lincoln's first call. From the first shot of the war Mr. Mitchell served in the First and Third New Jersey until



CEMETERY AT MEMPHIS, Tenn.

the crests of the hills and whatever locality in the great ravine between had witnessed sorties or assaults. To do this the national commission, Lieutenant General Stephen D. Lee of Mississippi, Captain William T. Rigby of Iowa and Captain James G. Everest of Illinois, were empowered to appraise and condemn property whenever ordinary negotiations failed. The commissioners are much gratified with the outcome, as no extreme measures were necessary.

### Picture of Siege Operations.

When the park is finally complete, a matter of years, depending upon the liberality of congress, it will possess a unique distinctive feature not aspired to by the other great reserves at Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Shiloh and Antietam. The park will give a picture of siege operations such as took place nowhere else during the war. Richmond was also a beleaguered city, but the investment was at no time complete, while at Vicksburg there was no chance to withdraw. Every gun or its like in make and pattern will be restored to its mooring in that bloody half-circle. Every earthwork and roadway will stand again as in May, 1863. It will be the living panorama of one of the greatest sieges of modern warfare.

Whether the large squad of men now at work clearing away brush and laying out the inner roadway will continue at their task during the winter depends upon the action of the present congress. Assistant Park Engineer G. C. Hayden has made the complete surveys necessary for the manual labor, but will be unable to keep his men at work more than a few weeks longer under the present appropriations.

The original bill carried with it \$65,000, an additional \$85,000 being set aside by the last congress. These sums were adequate only for the preliminary work. While an additional appropriation this winter is virtually assured the commissioners have some uneasiness lest the park may be passed over lightly in the hurry of a short session.

The commissioners have been greatly assisted in their work by delegations appointed by the legislatures of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Ohio, Iowa and Mississippi, with a view of locating the positions held by their state troops. These co-operative commissions have usually contained one member from each state regiment engaged who are able to put their fingers on the desired spots from a personal knowledge of the same.

The Iowa commissioners have completed their inspection of the Vicksburg surroundings within the last month. They have been able to locate the positions occupied by the Twenty-eighth Iowa infantry regiment, the two cavalry regiments and the two batteries of artillery engaged in the siege. Although the Iowa commission has not announced its plans its informal preference is for one monument for each of the thirty-two regiments engaged located at their re-

the important, but less conspicuous, position of their troops. Massachusetts had no place in the investment line, as its regiments had been assembled elsewhere by Grant to prevent any interruption from the outside. They faced away from the city, the line extending from Haynes' bluff on the north to the railroad crossing on the Big Black river on the south. This territory could not be included in the park, and after consideration the Massachusetts commissioners decided to erect a single monument in honor of their three infantry regiments in the action, the site to be at Grant's headquarters, five miles northwest of the city. They have \$15,000 at their disposal for the purpose.

In all similar cases to Massachusetts, where there were no troops actually in the investment line, the commissioners will seek to induce the states to erect their memorials at the commanding general's quarters. The other states which the commissioners rely upon most confidently for co-operative action are, first of all, Illinois, which led in point of numbers, with fifty-two foot, ten horse regiments and fifteen artillery batteries engaged; Ohio, with twenty-six foot, one horse regiment and eleven batteries; Indiana, with twenty-four foot, two horse regiments and two bat-



LOOKING NORTH AND EAST FROM OLD FORT HILL, NEAR VICKSBURG.

as follows: Illinois, 879; Ohio, 535; Indiana, 448; Iowa, 397; regular army, 291; Missouri, 252; Kentucky, 71; Michigan, 64; Mississippi Marine brigade, 65; New York, 49; Minnesota, 39; Tennessee, 40; Virginia, 22; Kansas, 16; Pennsylvania, 16; New Hampshire, 9; Massachusetts, 8; Louisiana, 5; Rhode Island, 5; New Jersey, 3; Maine, 2; Vermont, 1.

**Memphis Burial Place Overlooked.**  
The great burial place of the rank and file near Memphis, Tenn., has been rather overlooked in the revived interest taken by Grand Army posts in the national cemetery reserves. There 14,042 fighting men lie buried, scarcely a commissioned officer among them all, the name of only a major heading the list. It is, perhaps, on this account that while funds have been set aside for state monuments at Vicksburg, Chickamauga and elsewhere no more pretentious memorial than the small tablets set by the government is found at Memphis. The reserve appears exactly as it was laid out by order of congress thirty-three years ago.

But the shade of no man resting there

1866, when the need was over. He missed none of the great Shenandoah valley engagements and was wounded at Gettysburg and Williamsburg.

For a number of years Mr. Mitchell was in charge of the battleground cemetery at Washington and was transferred to Memphis four years ago. His lodge at the cemetery is set in a rich foliage of oleander, evergreens and English ivy. Hardy roses and asters are blooming in profusion about the place at Christmas time. There is a Plumbfield crew of grandchildren, even to the twins, to add human interest, but in spite of this lively presence the lodge loses none of its picturesque charm.

### Bitterness of Old Days Losing Sting.

The cemetery, while still a lonely spot, has come into more distinction with the countryside as a point of interest since a common enemy confronted the north and south. While Memphis still bears no flowers to the cemetery on Decoration day, directing its efforts rather to the erection of a monument to General Forrest, the city feels a much more kindly interest in the federal dead. One seldom hears now, in the common manner before the Spanish war, the contemptuous reference to the cemetery as "a graveyard for niggers and mules." The term was once applied because of the presence of the negro victims of the Fort Pillow massacre. The bitterness of the old days is losing its sting, and now when the lodgekeeper and his "crew" run down the colors at sunset it is to usher out an almost invariable company of guests.

Little attention has been drawn to the Memphis cemetery and it is not appreciated that only four outrank it in number of dead of all the eighty-three government reserves. There are more graves at Arlington, Fredericksburg, Vicksburg and Nashville, though the difference is not important. At Arlington, with its hundreds of famous names inscribed on splendid memorials, there are only 4,349 unknown bodies among the dead, and the headpieces over 11,911 graves bear the names of the bodies there interred. The dead at Memphis, gathered as they lay on a score of battlefields along the river, were identified but one in three. Only 5,159 tablets bear the soldiers' names above the regimental numbers, the flat cubes having reference simply to the battleground being far in the majority.

Since the cemetery's establishment in 1867 bodies of federal soldiers have been admitted and a few taken away. Removals are infrequent, however, for the families and friends concerned feel that every service and distinction will be paid their dead while the government stands, and that they may well rest where they be—in good company.

WILL B. WELSHANS.



RAILROAD REDOUBT FROM NORTH OF RAILROAD, SHOWING THE SLOPE UP WHICH THE IOWA TROOPS CHARGED MAY 22, 1863.