

The North Georgia Journal is the official publication of The Northeast Ga. Historical and Genealogical Society. It is published each February, May, August, and November at 1500 Calhoun Rd., Dahlonega, Ga.

Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs are welcome. Photographs will be copied and returned.

Subscription rates are \$15.00 per year or \$25.00 per year with a membership in the Northeast Georgia Historical and Genealogical Society. Address all Correspondence to North Georgia Journal; P.O. Box 595; Dahlonega, Ga. 30533.

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NORTH GEORGIA JOURNAL

HISTORICAL

GENEALOGICAL

VOLUME TWO, NO. 2

SUMMER 1985

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We encountered a problem with this issue. It is the kind of problem that editors like to have, but still a problem. We simply had more excellent articles than we had room to print. Articles by Ola Webb, Sybil McRay, Robert S. Davis, Norma D. Guild, Jimmy Anderson and others will be published in the Fall Issue.

COVER: This young Confederate is a member of the Dowdy family from Lumpkin County. James Richard Dowdy and William R. Dowdy were both members of the 52nd Regiment.

Printing by PAPERWORKS
Cornelia, Georgia
778-7008

A BAND OF BROTHERS THE MEN AND THE LEGEND OF The 52nd Georgia Regiment

William S. Kinsland

**"We are a Band of Brothers
and native to the soil,
Fighting for our liberty
with treasure, blood and toil."
(From "The Bonnie Blue Flag"
by Harry Macarthy)**

These rousing first lyrics of the unofficial Confederate national anthem embodied the strong patriotic sentiment which sent some 700,000 Southern men into battle from 1861 to 1865. It was in 1862 that over 1,300 men from the North Georgia mountains joined them and marched into the hell of civil war beneath the battle flag of the 52nd Regiment, Georgia Volunteer Infantry. When the regiment surrendered in 1865, less than 150 men remained to furl the flag and lay down their arms. This is the story of those men, their heroism and their humanity, their tragedies and their victories.

It was early February, 1862 when Dahlonga attorney Wier Boyd penned a letter to his son, 17-year-old Augustus who was off in the Carolinas and Virginia fighting with the Blue Ridge Rifles in Phillip's Legion. Boyd's letter reflected the disillusionment and alarm felt by many Georgians that winter. The bright prospects of easy victory faded quickly the previous summer after the costly success at Manassas. The Union Army had been dealt a severe blow. But the proverbial sleeping giant

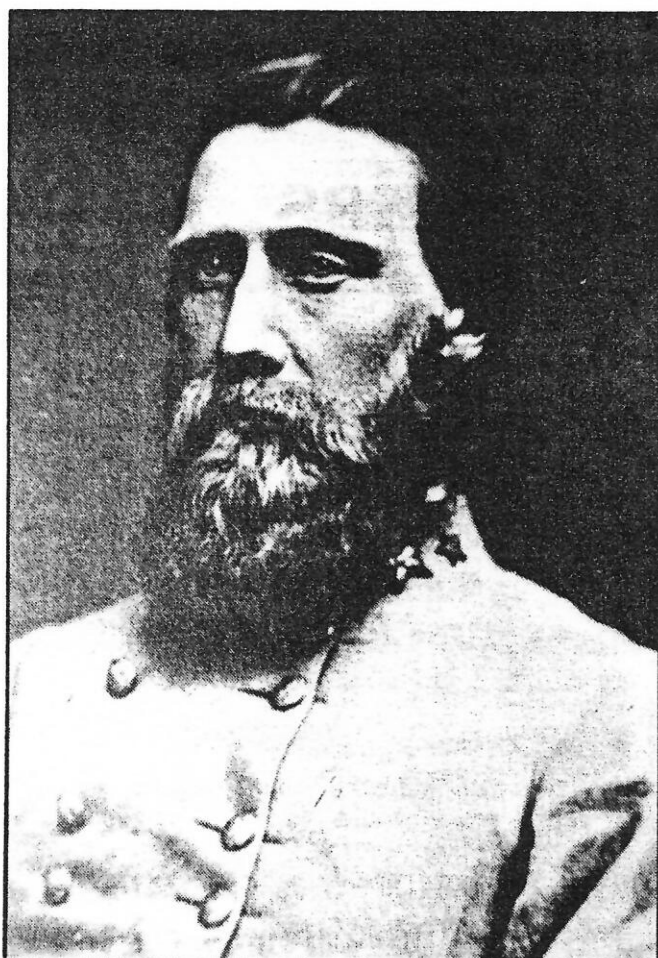
of Northern industry and wealth had been aroused and would ultimately overwhelm the agrarian South with its limited resources.

As Boyd penned his letter, he felt great concern about the naval blockade at Savannah and along the Georgia coast. Salt, coffee and cloth were already in short supply. Union forces had taken Tybee Island and were laying siege to Fort Pulaski near the mouth of the Savannah River. All of Georgia anxiously awaited news, expecting any minute to hear of a mighty Federal invasion from the sea.

Wier Boyd was not one to sit quietly in the midst of impending danger. In January, 1861 he had obtained leave from Gov. Joseph E. Brown to raise a regiment. In his letter to his son Gus, he said:

"I have become somewhat tired of doing nothing and am anxious to see this war come to a close and peace... prevail. And I have concluded the best way... is to convince the Lincoln government that we are all ready to fly to arms in defence of the country. Therefore, I have applied to Governor Brown and have obtained leave to raise a regiment in Northeastern Georgia for the war."

Traveling about from county to county, Boyd enlisted the support of hundreds of men and prominent community leaders. It appears from the correspondence between Boyd's daughter, Fannie, and his son, Gus,



General John B. Hood commanded the Corps in which the 52nd Georgia served during most of the Atlanta Campaign. On July 17, 1864, he was placed in command of the entire Confederate Army of Tennessee and ordered the many costly frontal assaults around Atlanta which spelled disaster for his command.

that Harrison Riley (see story elsewhere) also attempted to raise a regiment and probably competed with Boyd for leadership of the unit.

However, Boyd was confident in his eventual election to the office of colonel. Indeed, on March 16, 1862, the men of the newly formed regiment at Camp McDonald elected Boyd to be their first leader. On March 20th, Gov. Brown signed the commission making Boyd a full colonel and commander of the 52nd Georgia Regiment.

Although they had not yet faced hostile gunfire, the new recruits were confronted with many hazards and hardships. They came down from the isolated little communities in the hills of Habersham County, from the gold mines of Lumpkin

County, from the copper mines and mills of Fannin County, and from the cabins and farms of Dawson, White, Franklin, Towns, Union and Rabun Counties. They all came together and marched from the old rallying places of former wars like the Dahlonega Mustering Grounds and the Denton Springs Mustering Ground and elsewhere. In the early spring of 1862, these men marched down from the mountains in the midst of torrential rainstorms, crossing swollen rivers and trudging through mud by day and sleeping in rain-soaked haystacks by night.

Nor were their troubles over when they reached camp near Big Shanty (now Kennesaw) on Thursday, March 13th. In a letter written to his wife, Sarah, the following Sunday, Boyd said:

"We arrived safely at Camp McDonald on Thursday last amid great storms of rain. The authority had no tents for us and we with several other companies from our region stopped east of Camp McDonald some 2 miles."

Disease was, by far, the greatest killer in this war. The microbe theories of Pasteur and Lister were virtually unknown among American physicians. Thus, the mechanisms of infectious diseases and their propagation remained an enigma which would kill nearly two-thirds of the estimated 600,000 American troops who died from 1861 to 1865.

The 52nd Georgia experienced more than its fair share of deadly epidemics. With hundreds of young men fresh from the relative isolation of the mountains, and as yet unexposed to smallpox, measles, typhoid and malaria, most of the soldiers of the 52nd Georgia became ill in March and April, 1862. Scores of these soldiers died and lie buried in Atlanta's Oakland Cemetery.

Boyd's letters to his wife reflected the measles epidemic which was rampant in Camp McDonald at the time:

"The men in my Regiment...are all passing the ordeal of Camp sickness. Seven men have died in my Regiment here. Over a dozen have died in Col. Henderson's Regt."

Based on analysis of the incomplete data given in Lillian Henderson's Roster of the Confederate Soldiers of Georgia, Volume 5, no less than 89 men died of disease in the regiment over a three-year period. However, through various means of estimation,

RIGHT: Colonel Wier Boyd, prominent Dahlonega attorney and landowner, was the first commander of the 52nd Georgia. Disabled by typhoid fever, Boyd resigned and returned to Dahlonega to resume a successful law practice. Boyd died in Dahlonega in 1893. (Photo: Courtesy Madeline Anthony.)

it seems possible that nearly 220 men may have been killed by disease. Of this total number, more than 50 percent died in March, April and May, 1862. (See Disposition Table).

On April 11, 1862, Union General Ormsby Mitchell led his troops south from Tennessee and captured Huntsville, Alabama, and threatened the poorly armed Confederate garrison at Chattanooga under General Danville Ledbetter. Mitchell's bold move caused near-panic in North Georgia. Mitchell was counting upon a secret mission to cripple the vital Western and Atlantic Railroad connecting Chattanooga and Atlanta to prevent the movement of some 15,000 Southern troops from the Atlanta area.

On the morning of April 12, 1862, a Federal agent named James J. Andrews and some 20 disguised Union soldiers boarded a northbound passenger train at Marietta. Their mission was to steal the train and burn the bridges over the Chickamauga, Oostenaula and Etowah Rivers.

Pulled by the locomotive "General", the train rolled into Big Shanty shortly after daybreak and stopped to allow its passengers and crew time to eat breakfast at the old Lacey Hotel. Just across the tracks from the hotel, the 52nd Georgia carried on its seemingly endless routine of drilling and marching at Camp McDonald. But something happened that day which would make it a memorable one for the regiment.

Sergeant-Major Gus Boyd, learning earlier that his father had been elected colonel of the regiment, was transferred from Phillip's Legion to join his father



in the 52nd Georgia. Gus Boyd arrived at Camp McDonald that fateful day in the midst of a great deal of excitement and uproar. In a letter written the following day to his mother in Dahlonega, he described the situation:

"The train came up here yesterday and stopped for dinner. While the train hands were over at their dinner some persons (I suppose they were Yankies) loosed all the boxes but two and put on the

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steam and left.

"We soon procured an engine and Col. Phillips and several persons started after them. They overtook the train above Ringold. When the scoundrels perceived that they were pursued, they stopped the car and made their escape.

"Our men are still hunting them and I hope they may catch them. There are two here under arrest who are supposed to belong to the same crowd."

"Col. Phillips" mentioned in Boyd's letter, was the second-in-command of the regiment. Lt. Col. Charles Phillips was a resident of Marietta and a prominent Georgia attorney. Later in the year he became the commanding officer of the regiment and would suffer many hardships before the war's end.

On April 13th, it appears that the 52nd Georgia was mustered into the regular service and its men were paid their long-awaited \$50-bounty. On or about April 17th, the regiment boarded a northbound train and moved out for Dalton where they stayed only a few days. Then they moved on to Chattanooga. Because of a bitter feud between Gov. Brown and Confederate President Jefferson Davis, the soldiers of the 52nd Georgia were ordered to leave their firearms behind and were told to expect to be armed by the Confederate government when they reached their destination.

Indeed, when the troops arrived in Chattanooga, they were armed quickly with brand-new .58-caliber Enfield rifles confiscated by Confederate ordnance officers from the cargo of the raider CSS Nashville. The 12 boxes of rifles had been brought from England and were destined for delivery to Gov. Joseph E. Brown at Milledgeville! This particular incident sparked a bitter exchange of communications between Gov. Brown and Confederate War Secretary George Randolph.

By April 27th, the regiment had reached Camp Van Dorn near Knoxville. Another epidemic was taking its toll among the troops. Col. Boyd wrote to Sarah:

"About half my regiment are yet unfit for duty. None, however, that we brought here have died, and none are thought to be dangerously ill. Measles, mumps and fever are the prevailing diseases... a man of sympathy would be sick to see so much suffering as is seen here."

RIGHT: Colonel Charles Phillips, a native of Habersham County, succeeded Wier Boyd as commander of the 52nd Georgia when Boyd resigned in Nov., 1862. Phillips was in the party which pursued Andrew's Raiders in the famous Great Locomotive Chase, 1862. This photograph was taken on his wedding day, Feb. 21, 1866, to Miss Ella Mildred Combs of Augusta. (Photo: Courtesy Mary D. Phillips)

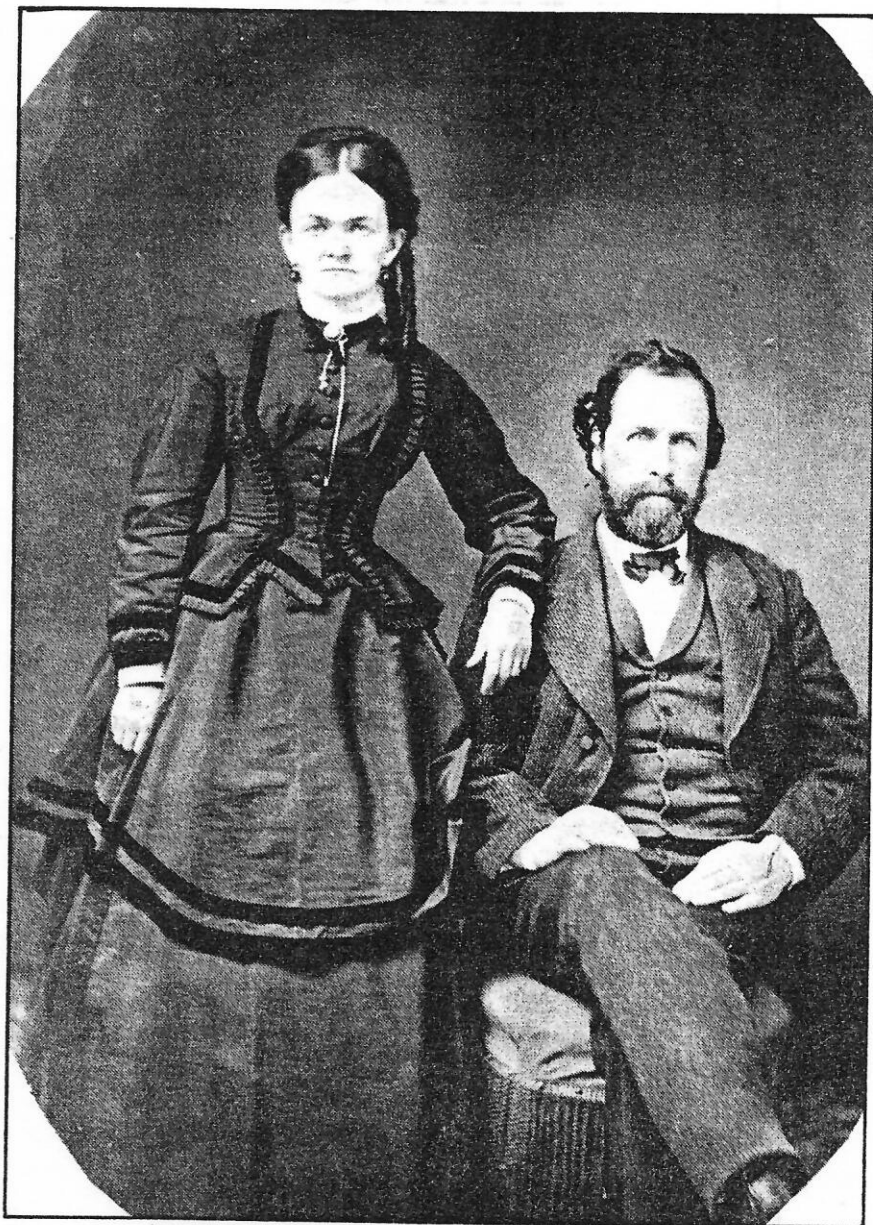
Throughout May and the first part of June, 1862, the regiment spent much time marching through the mountains near Cumberland Gap which was a strategic passage through the mountains between Tennessee and Kentucky and Virginia.

During this period, Col. Wier Boyd became ill and was forced to return home to Dahlonega. Temporarily taking command, Lt. Col. Charles Phillips was faced with the difficult task of keeping an effective fighting force on its feet in the wake of yet another epidemic which left only 300 men able for duty.

By June 18th, the Federal forces had mustered enough strength to push the Confederate forces out of Cumberland Gap. But the fighting and skirmishing continued as General E. Kirby Smith and General Braxton Bragg prepared to launch a major thrust into Kentucky.

As the summer wore on, the fighting for control of the Gap became more intense. In another letter home, Gus Boyd described an engagement with Federal forces under Brig. Gen. G.W. Morgan at Tazewell, Tenn. in early August:

"We marched in about a mile and a quarter of the enemy and halted then... it was not long before we heard the boom of the cannon and the whistle of the ball...the fight was opened...Our regiment was ordered onto the field. We marched on with a brave heart. We soon reached our position...the firing became incessant, but when we opened up in our second volley, the enemy began to break their ranks. Then we gave



a loud yell and charged down the hill and it would have done you good to have seen them run..."

Boyd also described an incident in which he and Col. Phillips had a close brush with death:

"Once me and Col. Phillips were crossing a fence. Just as we were getting over, a shell struck right under us but did not explode. If it had, it would have killed us both."

Having recovered partly from his illness, Col. Wier Boyd returned to the regiment on September 4th and wrote to his wife: "I find the regiment in better health than since we left Camp McDonald...my captains are all now at their posts."

On August 29, 1862, Gen. E. Kirby Smith launched his long-awaited invasion of Kentucky. The 52nd Georgia, as part of Barton's Brigade, Stevenson's Division, was assigned to cover Union General G.W. Morgan's movements at Cumberland Gap. Because of Kirby Smith's invasion, Morgan's force was ordered to abandon the Gap and withdraw into Kentucky on the night of September 17th. That night Captain Rufus Asbury commanding Company "C", 52nd Georgia, wrote in his diary that "tonight the Yankees evacuated Cumberland Gap. Blew up their magazine. Burnt up about 10,000 stands of arms." And on the 18th, Asbury wrote: "About 2 o'clock pm all of our Division marched up and took possession of the Gap."

Sergeant Tim Worley recalled the capture of the Gap in a letter written in 1908:

"...there was a call for volunteers to reconiter the Gap to find out its strength. Our company then commanded by Capt. J.W. Woodward, volunteered to go and as we went down the lane some Alabama soldiers fired into us; we called a halt and Col. J.L. Rider jumped upon a fence

and cursed the Alabama soldiers for all the cowards that could be mentioned. We went on and took the gap and slept in it that night."

On September 20th, Stevenson's Division took up the line of march northward into Kentucky in pursuit of Morgan's forces. Their march took them through such towns as Cumberland Ford, Goose Creek, London and Lancaster. Describing their arrival at Lancaster, Gus Boyd later wrote his sister, Fannie: "There we struck the old settlements of Kentucky and the ladies cheered us on our steady march."

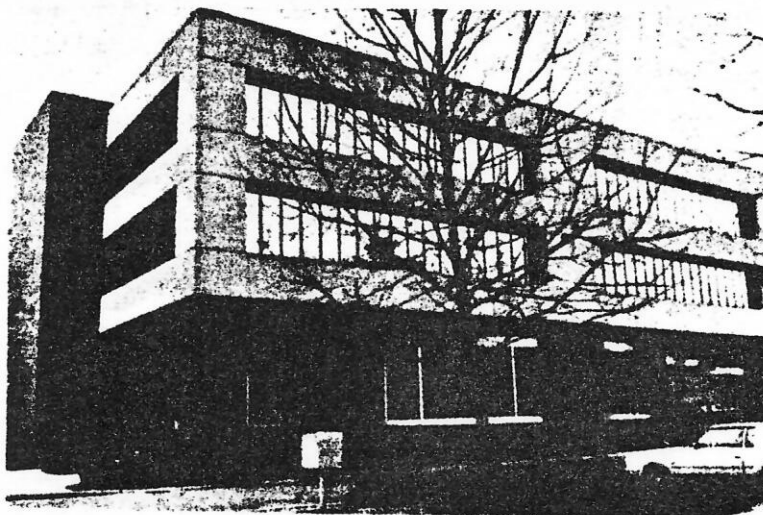
On October 4th, having joined General Braxton Bragg's column, the 52nd Georgia entered Frankfort, Kentucky, the state capitol, where they witnessed the inauguration of Richard Hawes as the Confederate governor. But they did not remain long in Frankfort. According to Captain Asbury, the Confederate troops burned wagons and a railroad bridge and on the same evening began a 16-mile night march to Versailles, Kentucky.

North central Kentucky was now in a state of confusion as both Union and Confederate forces were scattered throughout the region. Bragg's Army was spread along

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RIGHT: Major James J. Findley was a prominent attorney and former sheriff and legislator from Lumpkin County. He resigned from the 52nd in 1862 and later was colonel of the Lumpkin Co. Home Guard. He died March 1, 1888 and is buried in Alta Vista Cemetery, Gainesville, Ga. (Photo: Library of Congress)

a 30-mile line of roads from Lawrenceburg southward through Harrodsburg to Perryville, with elements of the command in Danville. On October 8th, Bragg's forward elements encountered Union General Don Carlos Buell's army at Perryville and the major battle of the campaign was joined. At that point the 52nd Georgia was still in the area of Lawrenceburg where they took several prisoners in a series of skirmishes. The following day they moved southward toward Harrodsburg where they went into battle formation in anticipation of a Federal assault coming on the heels of the Union victory at Perryville. They then fell back to Camp Dick Robinson. By October 13th, it was apparent that the Kentucky invasion had failed and that Bragg's forces were in full retreat toward Cumberland Gap.

Both Asbury and Boyd noted the scenes of devastation from battle along the route of retreat. In Boyd's words: "We left about two acres of land covered with pickled pork." Asbury wrote on October 16th; "I never saw such devastation. Where everything seemed prosperous a few days ago, all is blighted now."

By October 26th, the 52nd Georgia had crossed the Gap and was now camped in 4 inches of snow near Rutledge, Tennessee. At that point, General Seth Barton advised the brigade that they must prepare for a winter campaign. In a letter home, Gus Boyd wrote:

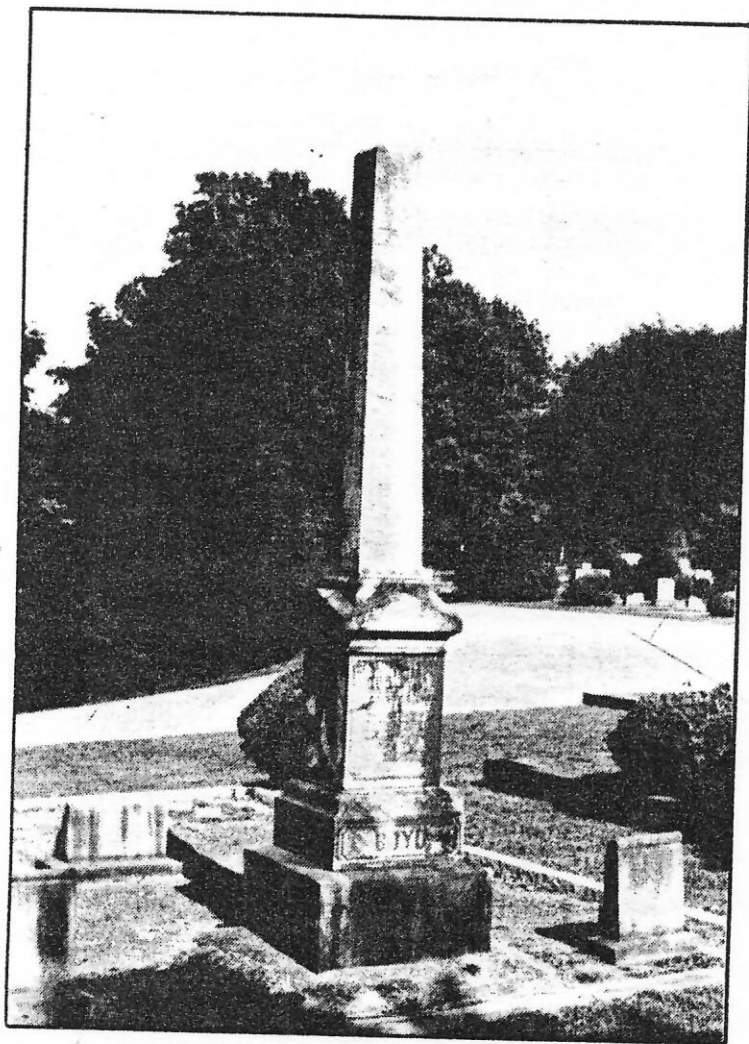
"We are going to send one man home from each company to procure clothing for the men. You can send me a pair



of pants and a coat. Tell mother to make me a short coat."

This passage reflects an interesting reality of the Confederate uniform, namely that it was often supplemented with civilian clothing to provide adequate protection against the elements.

The balance of that cold autumn saw the 52nd Georgia marching from one campground to another in central Tennessee, from Cumberland Gap to Chattanooga and back to Cumberland Gap, all with virtually no fighting. It was during this snowy autumn that many changes of command took place. Col. Wier Boyd, now gravely ill in a hospital at Macon,



LEFT: The final resting place of Col. Wier Boyd in Mt. Hope Cemetery, Dahlonega, Ga. Boyd was born Sept. 14, 1820 and died Nov. 8, 1893.

got its marching orders. Fortunately, for their blistered feet, most of the travel would be by railroad. On December 19th they marched to Murfreesboro, Tennessee where they camped for the night. The next morning they boarded a southbound train and traveled to Chattanooga. There they changed trains and went on to Atlanta. Changing again in Atlanta, they rolled on to West Point, Georgia where they boarded another train for Montgomery, then on to Jackson and finally Vicksburg. By December 28th they were disembarking from the train in the midst of heavy cannon fire.

On December 27th, Wier Boyd and his family back in Dahlonega had learned of Gus's promotion. Col. Boyd wrote a letter of congratulation and admonition to his son:

"I desire you to be courteous in your new position. Be firm in your discipline but kind to your officers and men. Act always with an eye to the dignity of your position but never be proud and haughty...study your Bible and military discipline very closely; avoid bad habits...and you will have nothing to fear."

At daylight on December 29th, the Federal army under Maj. Gen. W.T. Sherman near Vicksburg commenced shelling and followed with a furious infantry assault on the Chichasaw Bluff breastworks. The 52nd Georgia, still in Barton's Brigade, was in the center of the fighting. Holding a position on an Indian mound which overlooked a crossing point on the Bayou, the 52nd and other regiments in Barton's Brigade fought off five determined assaults that day.

Captain Asbury wrote the following report on the battle in his muster roll for January and February, 1863:

"This company was engaged at Vicksburg in the fight on the 29th and 30th December, 1862. The enemy kept up a continuous firing both days. This regiment was engaged in the thickest of the fight. We were attacked by a whole brigade. They attempted to charge over our breastworks four

Georgia, was examined by surgeons and found to be unfit for duty due to "disease of the kidneys and liver". Boyd submitted his resignation on November 1st. Shortly thereafter, Charles Phillips was commissioned a full colonel and took command of the unit. Sergeant Robert Quillian was promoted to adjutant. Gus Boyd was elected by the men of Company "B" to serve as their captain, replacing John J. Moore who was promoted to major.

Major James J. Findley served briefly as the temporary commander of the regiment during this period. Shortly before November 20th, he resigned his commission and returned to Lumpkin County. The reason for his resignation is not known. Findley later became a colonel in the Georgia militia and in 1864 assumed command of the 11th Regiment, Georgia State Troops. His command was marked by much controversy and was criticized publicly for his "military despotism". After the war, Findley became a deputy U.S. marshal and prosperous gold miner.

On December 18th, the regiment



Dahlonge Mustering Grounds

During the Civil War nine companies were organized on this site including Co. C and Co. D of the 52nd Georgia. The old mustering grounds were the rallying point for troops in other periods of national and state crises. Lumpkin County men met here to join Texans fighting for independence in 1836, to aid U.S. troops in removing the Cherokees in 1838, and to wage war against Mexico in 1846-48. The house across the street was built by Col. Wier Boyd for one of his daughters. His own home, which was located several yards to the right rear, is no longer standing.

different times and was signally defeated. Our soldiers showed undaunted courage, the enemy attempting to undermine our works."

The fighting at this point was furious, and the marksmanship of the mountaineers was deadly. In his report of January 5th, 1863, Brig. Gen. Seth Barton wrote:

"...nine large grave-trenches, of capacity of 75 men each, were left filled...the ground for 150 yards in front of the breastworks gave frightful evidence of the great slaughter committed here."

A cease-fire was called when Union Col. Slaughter of the 8th Missouri Regiment sent in a flag of truce and asked for permission to bury the dead and remove the wounded from the field. General Sherman reported that he lost 208 killed, 1005 wounded and

563 missing. Confederate losses were only 63 killed, 134 wounded and 10 missing. The 52nd Georgia reported only 1 man killed and 3 wounded.

The carnage at Chickasaw left a deep impression on Gus Boyd who wrote to his family:

"It made me feel sorry for the poor fellows to see them lying there cold and dead in the mud and water. They fought bravely and charged up to our breastworks three or four times so close that we could see the fire flash out of the muzzles of their guns."

As the winter wore on, the men of the 52nd Georgia settled down to the tedium of camp life once again, although with no tents to protect them from the elements. Rain and snow prevailed around Vicksburg throughout much of January. Laying in

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rifle pits and trenches, the men of the 52nd endured the bitter weather, often sleeping in water and mud between watches. Behind the breastworks along the river, the soldiers watched and counted the numbers of Federal gunboats cruising down the river as they engaged Confederate shore batteries in fierce duels.

Sergt. Tim Worley later wrote:

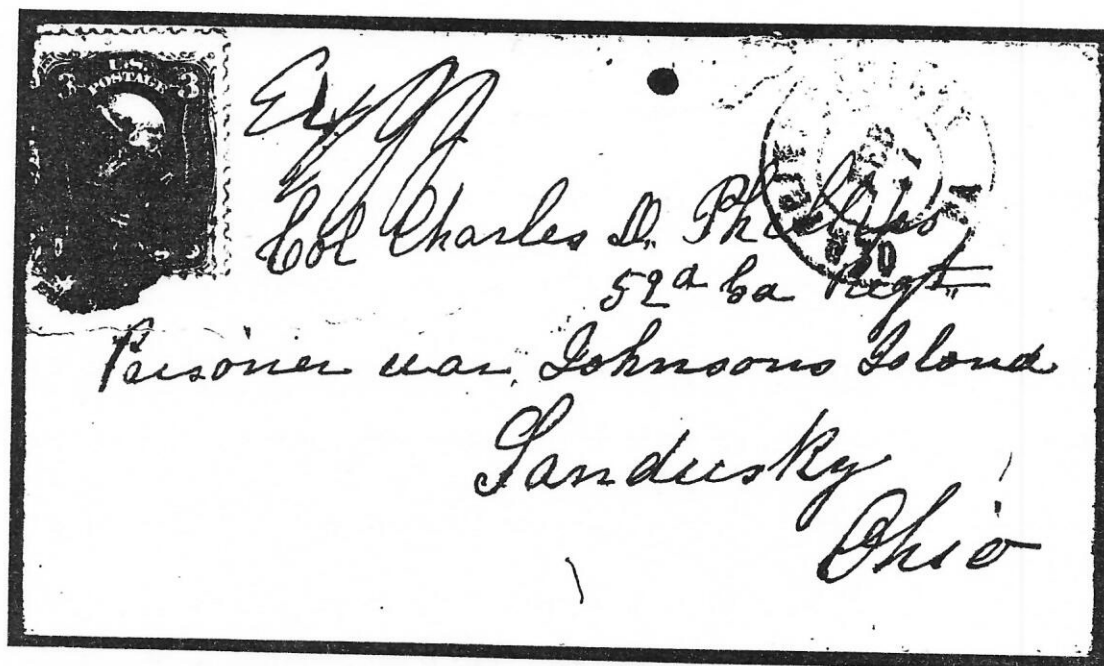
"Federals had a large fleet just above Vicksburg and very near every morning before day, they would try to pass down the river and the long role would be beaten. We would be ordered into line and double quicked down to the wharf about half asleep the most of the time on a false alarm. A few of their boats ventured down and our cannons generally sank them."

Conditions improved slightly for the regiment when their tents and other gear finally caught up with them on January 22nd. Some 50 tents belonging to the regiment had been inexplicably lost in Atlanta during their transit from Tennessee. Quartermaster John Logan brought the equipment from Atlanta by railroad.

On January 25th, Captain Gus Boyd was detailed to return to North Georgia to collect deserters from the unit and to recruit new troops. This would be Boyd's final trip home and the last time he would see his family. He was accompanied by Captain John Gailey and Lieutenant Lewis Gilreath. Two other men identified only as "Lt. Hodge" and "Lt. Weaver" accompanied them. It is believed that this was the point at which Boyd had the only known photograph of himself made. That photograph is shown on page 8.

As the winter wore on and spring came, the 52nd Georgia was still operating around the Vicksburg area but engaged in little significant fighting. In the meantime, Sherman gave up his effort to break the Confederate defenses around Vicksburg temporarily and commenced operations along the Arkansas River. As Gus Boyd's 14-year-old sister Fannie wrote, Vicksburg had become the "Gibraltar of the West".

On April 29th and 30th, 1863, Sherman's Corps conducted a diversionary assault against Confederate General Pemberton's forces at Haynes' and Drumgould's Bluffs near Snyder's Mill to cover the crossing of the Mississippi by Grant's forces south of Vicksburg over a relatively dry land route. The stage was set for the final drama



ABOVE: A letter received by Col. Charles D. Phillips while a prisoner of war at Johnson's Island. (Courtesy Mary D. Phillips)

of the Vicksburg Campaign.

First, Port Gibson fell. Then Grand Gulf was rapidly abandoned to Union forces. Sherman's Corps now rejoined Grant's column which moved to isolate Vicksburg by cutting off all communication to Jackson, the state capitol. On May 14th, Jackson, Mississippi fell to the Federals. On May 16th, General Pemberton ordered his troops to march eastward to link with General Joseph Johnston's 12,000-man force which had evacuated Jackson. As Pemberton's troops marched, they ran head-on into Grant's army at Baker's Creek (Champion's Hill). The battle was joined.

Barton's Brigade, of which the 52nd Georgia was a part, was one of the first to send troops into the fray. The 42nd Georgia under Col. R.J. Henderson and a section of the First Mississippi Artillery were sent to hold the bridge over Baker's Creek. At about noon that day, Federal General McClerndan's Corps launched an assault on Confederate lines. The remainder of Barton's Brigade was ordered to the left flank to support General Stephen D. Lee's Corps. The troops were marched at the double quick. Barton's Brigade formed a line of battle with its left wing on the bridge road and the right wing adjoining Lee's left. Barton's troops moved through dense thicket. Suddenly, the 40th, 41st and 43rd Georgia encountered the Union troops which had driven Lee's left

flank back, and pushed the Federals back some 300 yards into the timber. The Union line was then reinforced and Barton's advance was checked.

Meanwhile, the 52nd Georgia had been held in reserve to cover Barton's left flank. Barton ordered Col. Phillips to move his regiment forward. As Barton later reported: "I had reserved the Fifty-Second Georgia on the left to protect that flank; it was not moved up rapidly and in handsome style engaged a brigade that was turning the left."

Undaunted courage was not enough to stop the Union tidal wave. As Barton later wrote: "...my right flank was soon overwhelmed...the left was in like manner enveloped and a heavy fire was poured in from the rear." Barton's Brigade was virtually surrounded.

The Union assault turned into a slaughter. Men in gray fell where they stood. Others were so quickly overtaken that they had no choice but to surrender. A Federal bullet struck Captain Gus Boyd in the forehead above the left eye. At age 18, he fell dead, his young life snuffed out. Private Jephtha Ledford, surrounded and overwhelmed, was taken captive. Col. Charles Phillips, the brave commander of the regiment, fell wounded in the head and hands. Unable to resist, he was taken captive by the Union troops. Private John McKinney took a minie ball in the left leg and it was later amputated. Privates James Rogers, W.A. Carroll, N.M.

Freeman, H.C. Burns and several other brave mountaineers of the 52nd Georgia lay dead. Baker's Creek would ever after be remembered as the bloodiest and most costly battle ever fought by the regiment, rivaled only by the slaughter on the fields before Atlanta the following year.

Following his capture at Baker's Creek, Col. Phillips was taken to a Federal field hospital where his wounds were attended. He was then sent on to the prison camp at Johnson's Island, Ohio and in 1865 he was forwarded to City Point, Virginia. Following his release in late March or early April, 1865, he was ordered to join General W.T. Wofford's command in North Georgia but saw no further action as hostilities ceased shortly thereafter. Phillips returned to his practice of law and became a director of the Confederate Soldiers' Home in Atlanta.

In his report on the battle at Baker's Creek, Gen. Barton wrote:

"I take pleasure in naming the following officers for marked and distinguished service and gallantry: ...Colonel C.D. Phillips, Fifty-Second (missing)... the heavy loss of the brigade (over 42 percent)

is the best evidence I can give of the good behavior of the men."

Barton's Brigade fell back across the creek along the road and bridge which they had barely managed to keep open as their only route of retreat. Major John J. Moore now commanded the regiment following the loss of Col. Phillips. The line of march took the regiment to the Big Black River where they were involved in an engagement with advance elements of Grant's army near Hayne's Bluff.

By May 19th, Grant had driven Pemberton's army back into Vicksburg and the siege began in earnest. Grant invested the city with a virtual 'wall of blue' and all communication with the outside world was cut off. Shot and shell, disease and starvation took a merciless toll on the Confederate defenders.

Sgt. Tim Worley later wrote about the siege:

"Then came the seige of Vicksburg which lasted about 48 days. There we were in a pen completely shut in. Cannons and small arms playing on us from every side. Half starved, yet we fought like heroes..."

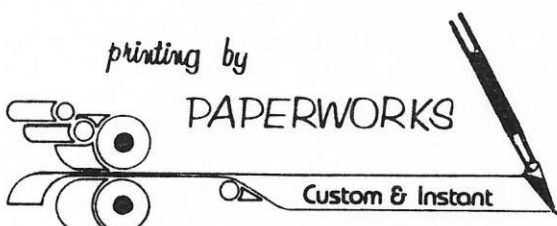
Worley then described the final days of the siege when starvation was taking its worst toll:

"4th of July we were surrendered by Gen. Pemberton without rations. I had had nothing to eat for four days and the first I got was mule meat without bread."

On July 4th, under an armistice agreement between Generals Grant and Pemberton, Vicksburg was surrendered and the 29,000-man Confederate army laid down its arms. The Southerners marched out of the city to various parole camps where they signed pledges not to take up arms again "until properly exchanged".

Although no records indicate exactly what happened at this point, it appears that the soldiers of the 52nd Georgia simply returned home for a much needed rest following the disastrous siege, awaiting further orders. There is some indication, however, that a few of the soldiers may have ignored the terms of their surrender and proceeded directly to Northwest Georgia and joined other Confederate regiments near Chickamauga.

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RIGHT: Captain Rufus Asbury of White County had been a successful gold miner before the war and had gone to California during the 1850's. Following the resignation of Major John Moore in December, 1863, Asbury became the commander of the regiment and remained in command for the duration of the war. He was wounded at the Battle of New Hope Church.

On September 12, 1863 at Richmond, Confederate Exchange Agent, Robert Ould, declared the men and officers of the 52nd Georgia officially exchanged. Again, records are scarce and it is difficult to determine exactly where and when the regiment was re-armed and mustered. However, on November 12, 1863, General Braxton Bragg, commanding the Army of Tennessee, issued Special Order Nr. 294 which transferred Gardner's Georgia Brigade from Stevenson's Division to Stewart's Division and named Brig. Gen. Marcellus A. Stovall to command it. The 52nd Georgia along with the 40th, 41st, 42nd and 43rd Georgia regiments were subsequently assigned to the Brigade.

Bragg's Army of Tennessee had turned the tables and now had a Union Army surrounded and besieged in Chattanooga. Following the disastrous Federal defeat at Chickamauga in September, General William S. Rosecrans led his wounded army back to Chattanooga and his men now faced starvation. Shortly thereafter, Rosecrans was replaced by Gen. George Thomas and soon General U.S. Grant himself arrived to direct the lifting of the siege. On November 24th, General Joseph Hooker's Federal Corps assaulted Lookout Mountain and after the famous "Battle Above the Clouds", the Union Army held the heights, driving the Southern back to Missionary Ridge. Here the battle-hardened, gray veterans dug in.

It appeared that the Federal assault would come to a halt at this point. On the afternoon of November 25th, four Federal divisions under Thomas were ordered to take the rifle pits at the base of the ridge. Due to a combination of miscommunication among the leaders and frustration among the line troops, the Union forces not only took the rifle pits, but continued to sweep up the ridge and threw the troops in Stewart's Division into a state of confusion. The Confederate line broke and the



Confederates were forced off the ridge in a bloody defeat. Sgt. Tim Worley wrote:

"We were in the Battle of Missionary Ridge when an Alabama Brigade gave way on our left and we had to retreat."

The battlefield often brings out the most noble or the most cowardly attributes of men. Missionary Ridge provided examples of both among the men of the 52nd Georgia. As the Union Army swept the retreating Confederates before them and overwhelmed the fortifications, Private Thomas J. Hester of Company "D" turned to his comrades and told them that he thought he could go back and still bring out two or three more wagons. Hester embarked on his mission and died in battle, a hero.

On the other hand, James Jackson of Company "B" didn't bother to join his comrades at the winter camp in Dalton. Instead, he fled into the wilderness of North Georgia and joined an infamous band of bushwhackers known as the Moorland Gang and murdered Jesse Turner of White County on July 4, 1864. In 1867, he was tried for his crime and spent the rest of his life in prison.

Reeling from the blows of Missionary Ridge, the Army of Tennessee fell back to Dalton, Georgia where they went into winter camp. The balance of the winter and early spring, 1864 saw the 52nd Georgia encamped near Buzzard Roost Station with Stovall's Brigade. The only significant action was repelling a demonstration maneuver by the Federal Army near Dalton. Here the 52nd apparently was not involved in actual fighting but may have provided a support for the 42nd Georgia which formed a skirmish line at Rocky Face Ridge.

From scant records, it appears that there was another change of command in the regiment in December, 1863. Major John J. Moore resigned and Captain Rufus Asbury assumed command. The duties of command apparently were shared between Asbury and Captain John R. Russell as his name also appears from time to time on the brigade's regimental roster.

With the coming of spring, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman quietly organized a grand army at Chattanooga. His force was comprised of the Army of the Cumberland under General George Thomas, the Army of the Tennessee under General James B. McPherson and the Army of the Ohio

under General John M. Schofield, more than 100,000 troops in the aggregate.

Following the debacle at Missionary Ridge, General Braxton Bragg had been relieved of command at his own request. He was replaced by the popular General Joseph E. Johnston, or "old Joe" as his subordinates called him. Johnston set about revitalizing his new command by furloughing his entire army in rotations. Drill and marksmanship became the order of the day. Resupply of depleted stores of food, forage and ammunition were also effected.

On May 4th, Sherman's grand army set out on its long-awaited campaign of "marching through Georgia". Opposing Sherman's force of nearly 100,000 men was Johnston's army with an official aggregate strength of 42,856 men.

The fighting began in earnest at the Battle of Rocky Face Ridge as Sherman's troops approached Dalton. After a 3-day battle from May 9th to May 12th, Johnston still held Dalton in spite of Sherman's maneuvers. The 52nd Georgia saw action in this battle, but the extent of its involvement is not known.

As Sherman's forces moved around Dalton threatening the Confederate supply line from the south, Johnston withdrew his troops down the Western and Atlantic Railroad to a new position at Resaca. On May 15th, there was some skirmishing in the area but on May 16th, the battle was joined in earnest. The 52nd and Stovall's Brigade, as part of the impetuous John B. Hood's Corps assaulted the Federal line taking many casualties. Sgt. Tim Worley wrote:

"We charged and got up within 15 steps of their breastwork. They had sharp stakes driven down in the ground in front of them and we could go no further, and there we were being shot down. Lewis Brady and myself had got behind a little tree sidewise. We were firing away as fast as we could until Lewis looked behind and said 'Seg't, they have all gone.' I looked and so they had. We two were fighting Joe Hooker's army. So we took to our heels."

During the night, Johnston's army fell back from Resaca and burned the bridge over the Oostenaula River. They passed through Calhoun, then stopped briefly at Adairsville, then on to Cassville and Kingston. At that point, Sherman decided to strike out away from the railroad to the southwest



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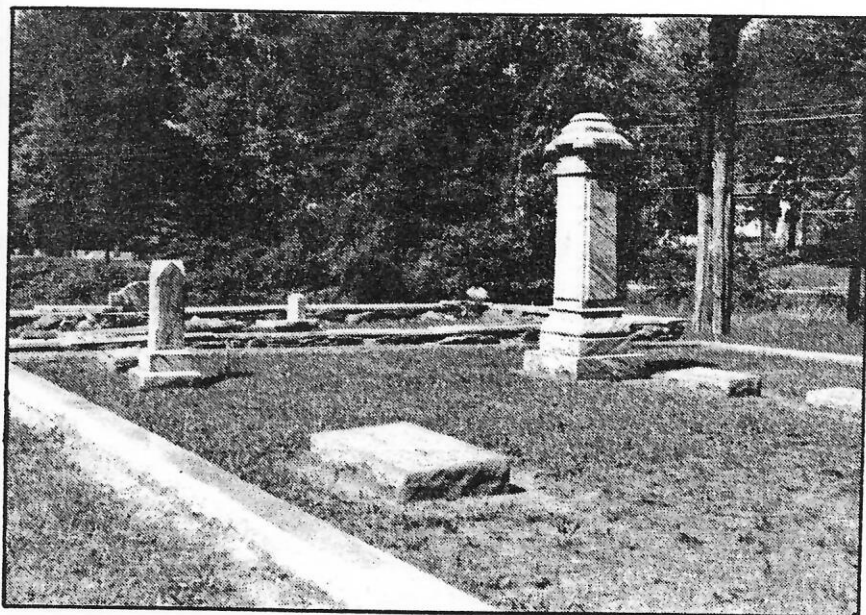
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LEFT: Captain Rufus R. Asbury (Jan. 29, 1829 - Dec. 8, 1904) is buried at Clarkesville, Georgia.

BELOW: Col. Charles D. Phillips (1829-1912) is buried in the Marietta Citizens' Cemetery.



toward the Dallas-New Hope Church area, bypassing Johnston's left flank. On May 25th, the Federal juggernaut was dealt a severe blow at New Hope Church. Elements of Hooker's XX Corps encountered Confederate General Alexander P. Stewart's division deployed in front of New Hope Church. Stovall's Brigade held the left flank and stood on the open ground, unprotected by the log barricades which shielded the rest of the division.

After severe skirmishing, Geary's Federal division commenced a furious assault at 4 p.m. just as a driving thunderstorm broke over the battlefield. The blast and fire of Hood's 16 cannons and the withering hail of bullets from Confederate rifles were indistinguishable from the thunder and lightening that broke over the field. The Southern lightening bolt killed or wounded over 800 Federals in a matter of minutes. The rainwater ran thick on the ground with Union blood that day. When the sun set that evening, the Union army broke off its attack and fell back to build log breastworks of its own.

Although the Federal troops sustained far more casualties, the Confederate victory had its price. Among the dead were three men of the 52nd Georgia: Privates David Roper, Benjamin Blalock and John H. Carroll. Seventeen men were wounded, including Captain Rufus Asbury and Captain

Joseph Woodward. In a report written later, Captain Asbury said:

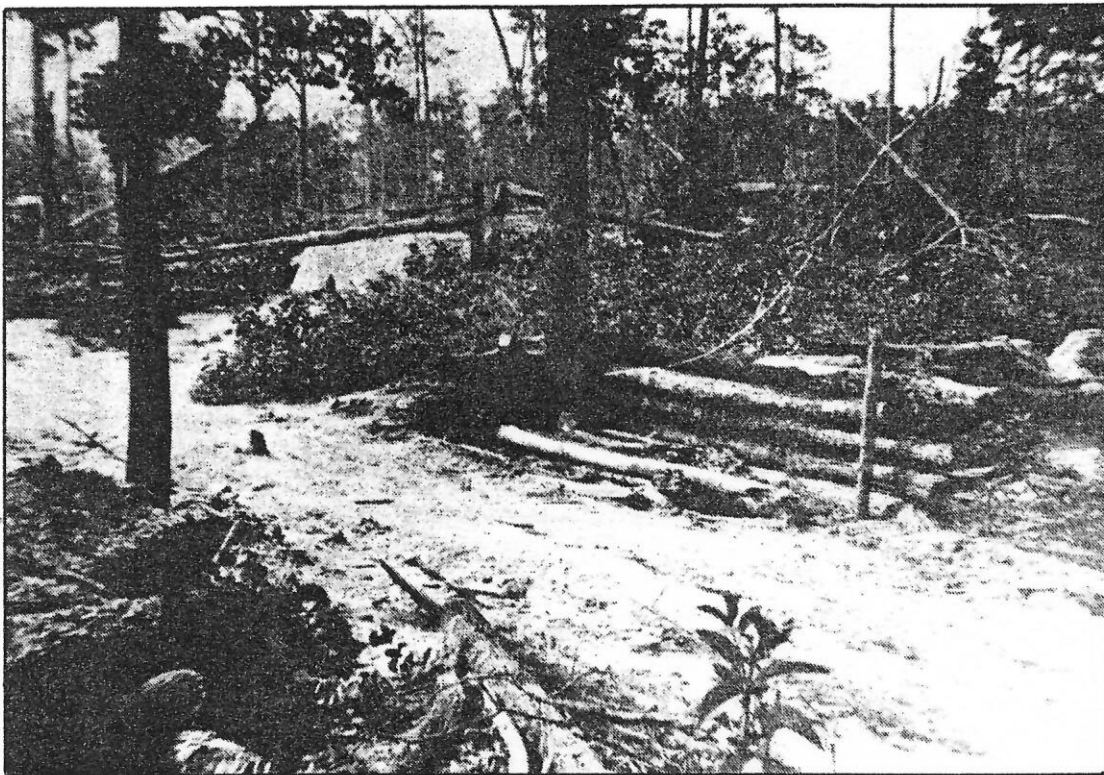
"...we were actively engaged with the enemy for about two hours, fighting upon the open ground, holding our position during the day, repulsing every assault upon them. All, both officers and men, never performed their duty better. They exhibited their coolness and bravery..."

It is interesting to note that New Hope Church would ever after be remembered by the Union troops as "the Hell-Hole".

Following a stunning defeat at nearby Pickett's Mill on May 27th, Sherman abandoned his westward flanking movement and began to move back to the railroad. The 52nd Georgia was involved in the action at Allatoona Hills and then in the retrenchment that took place along the Pine Mountain and Lost Mountain lines in June. By June 18th, the 52nd was entrenched along with the rest of the Army of Tennessee along the famous Kennesaw Mountain line. The regiment was part of Hood's Corps which held the left flank near the Powder Springs Road.

On June 22nd, Captain J.H. Barclay, commanding Company "G", 52nd Georgia, addressed a letter to Col. Wier Boyd in Dahlonega. Describing the conditions at Kennesaw, he wrote:

"It is the first day for a long time that



At the Battle of New Hope Church, May 25, 1864, this log barricade in a post-war photo by George Barnardin, protected some of the Confederate soldiers. The men of the 52nd Georgia, however, were caught in the open. In this battle, later referred to by the Union soldiers as "The Hell-Hole", 3 members of the 52nd were killed, Privates: David Roper, Benjamin Blalock and John H. Carroll. Among the 17 wounded were Capts. Rufus R. Asbury and Joseph W. Woodward.

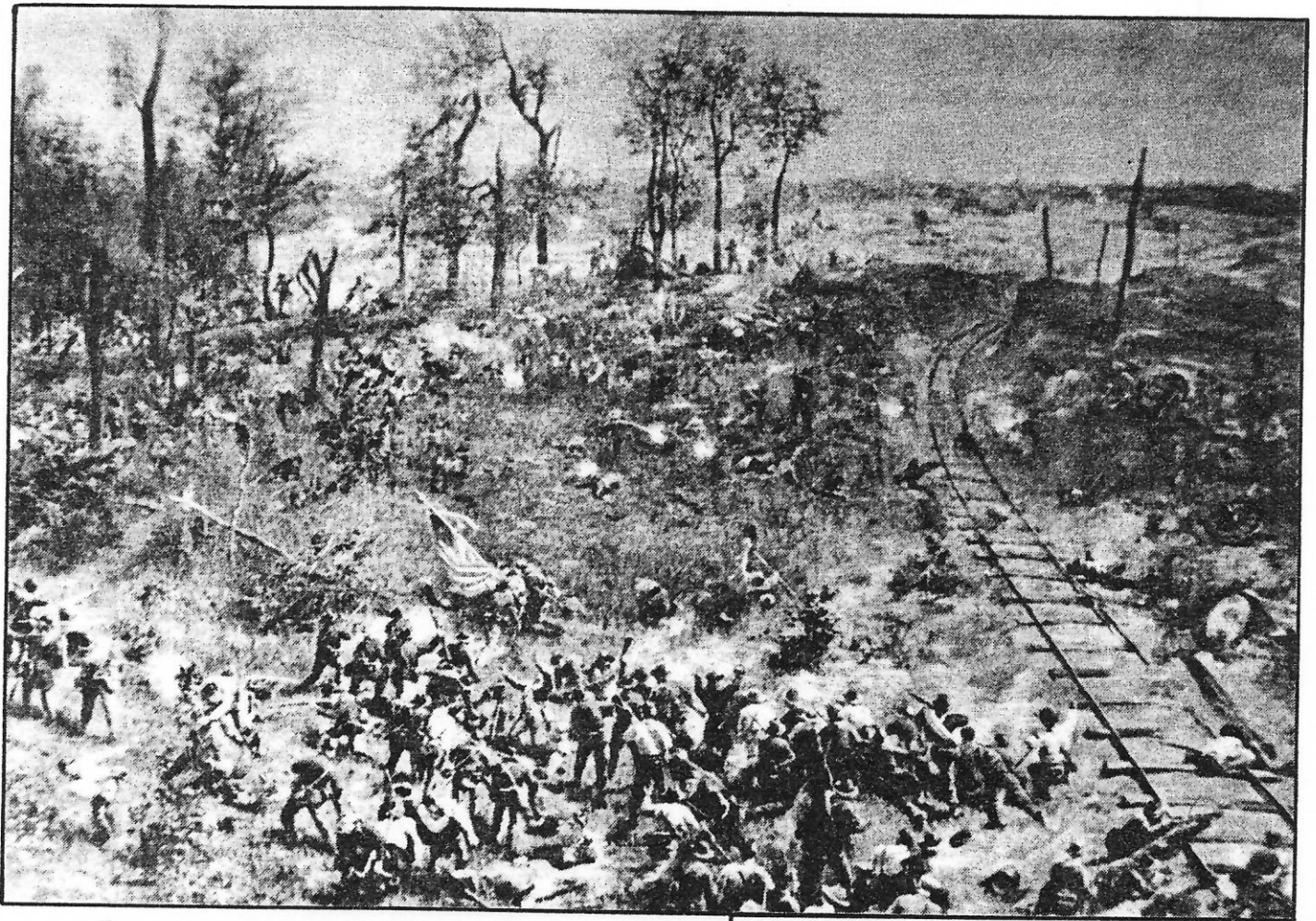
our ears have not heard the... whir of the shell...and can enjoy the small ration of real genuine coffee. The boys are all drying their blankets that have not been free from moisture for several days...the roads are in terrible condition and it is almost impossible to supply the army with subsistence..."

As Captain Barclay wrote these lines, plans were already being made by John B. Hood to launch a major assault against Hooker's and Schofield's troops to his front at Kolb's Farm. At 5 p.m. that day, Stevenson's division sallied forth in a determined assault on the Federal line. The assault was futile and Federal artillery raked the division with a merciless, enfilading fire. In spite of the hellish barrage, several of Stevenson's men actually made it over the Union breastworks and were killed by infantry gunfire and bayonets. As the division fell back, the retreat was covered by Alexander P. Stewart's division of which the 52nd Georgia was

a part. Apparently, the 52nd Georgia sustained no serious casualties in this action.

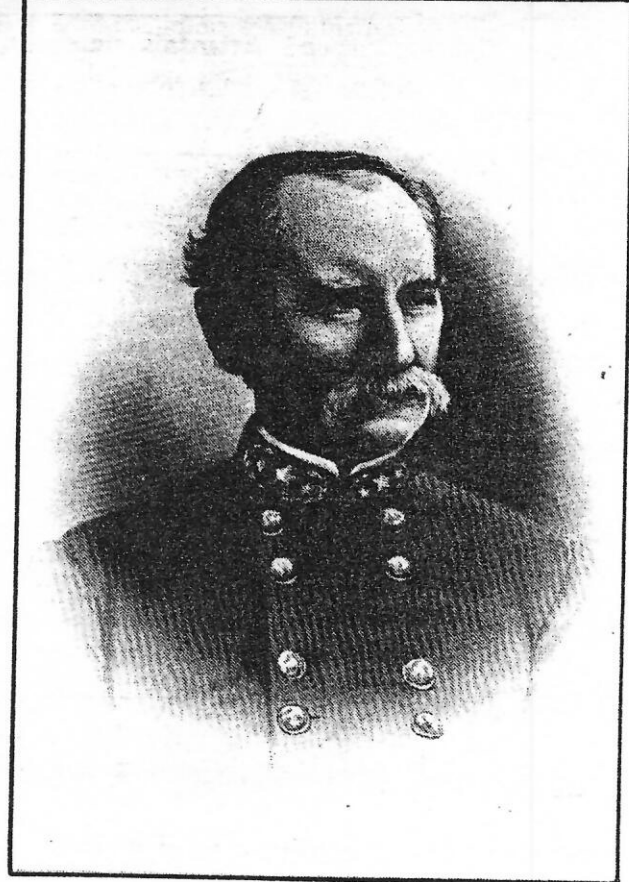
Frustrated by the determined resistance of Johnston's army, General Sherman ordered an all-out assault on the entire Confederate line on June 27th. The 52nd Georgia sustained some six casualties. Wounded were Privates Benjamin Van Dyke and Perry Grogan. Captured were Privates: John Langston, William Shelton and Jesse Wooten. Private Willis Grice was captured and later died in prison from smallpox at Camp Douglas, Illinois.

Sherman's massive frontal assault on the impregnable Kennesaw fortifications was a massive failure, leaving some 3,000 Union troops dead, wounded or missing. Once again, he began his usual flanking tactics. Before much longer, he had swept out Confederate resistance at Smyrna and Marietta and crossed the Chattahoochee. By the middle of July, his columns were marching down the middle of present-day Peachtree Road in the Brookhaven area and along Northside Drive toward Peachtree Creek. McPherson's army moved east toward Decatur.



ABOVE: In this famous scene at the Cyclorama in Atlanta, Stovall's Brigade (of which the 52nd Georgia was a part) charges down the slope driving the Federal troops of Martin's Brigade before them at about 4:30 on the afternoon, July 22, 1864 in the Battle of Atlanta.

RIGHT: Brigadier General Marcellus A. Stovall was born in Sparta, Ga. in 1818. During the Atlanta Campaign, he commanded the brigade of which the 52nd Georgia was a part. After the war he founded the "Georgia Chemical Works" at Augusta where he died in 1894.



On July 17th, the pressure of politics moved Confederate President Jefferson Davis to replace General Johnston with General John B. Hood as commander of the Army of Tennessee. The choice may have been politically expedient. However, it seems to be the consensus of many historians that the move was a military disaster. Davis needed a resounding victory to keep his troublesome and often obtuse Congress in tow. The colorless 'though



In the fighting around Atlanta's defenses, many Confederate soldiers were captured and sent to Camp Douglas, near Chicago, Ill. Several men of the 52nd Georgia spent the rest of the war here.

wise defensive tactics of Johnston did not enchant Davis nor impress Congress. Thus, Davis decided to install Hood as commander, a man who had a record of numerous spectacular (and disastrous) frontal assaults. Sgt. Tim Worley, recalling the incident in later years, wrote:

"There we were under Gen. Hood who believed in charging and lost more men around Atlanta than Gen. Joe Johnston did in all his retreat."

Hood did not enjoy the confidence of his troops.

Although no official record was found to indicate that the 52nd was at the Battle of Peachtree Creek, Henderson's Roster of Confederate Soldiers of Georgia shows at least 10 soldiers of the 52nd who were killed or wounded there, including Captain J.H. Barclay of Company "G". It is possible that the regiment was tempo-

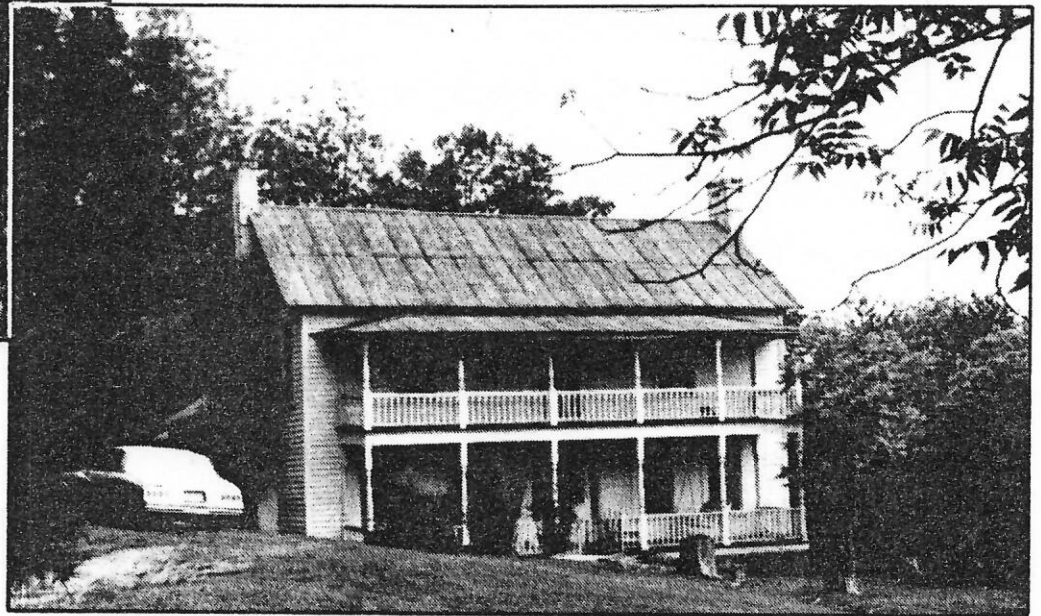
rarily attached to another brigade or division at that point, and on July 20th, they probably were involved in resisting the Federal crossing near the present day bridge along Peachtree Street below Buckhead.

On the night of July 21, 1864, Hood ordered Gen. William Hardee to march his Corps some 15 miles southward from Little Five Points and then to the northeast with the intent of enveloping McPherson's army which occupied a line roughly along present-day Moreland Avenue between Glenwood Avenue and the Georgia Railroad. Unknown to Hood, McPherson was busy moving his troops about the terrain of East Atlanta. On the morning of July 22, Hardee attacked. However, his assault fell upon the Union left flank instead of its rear. Late in the afternoon, Hood realized what had happened and ordered Gen. Benjamin F. Cheatham to move his Corps out of the trenches in East Atlanta and charge Logan's XV Federal Corps. The 52nd Georgia of Stovall's Brigade



LEFT: Dr. Nicholas F. Howard (Nov. 24, 1821 - June 23, 1909), Surgeon of the 52nd Regiment, is buried in Mt. Hope Cemetery, Dahlonega, Ga. He was a prominent physician in the area for several years.

BELOW: The post-war home of Maj. James J. Findley as it appears today. It is located on East Maple St. in Dahlonega.



was in the vanguard of that deadly assault, immortalized for future generations upon the canvas of the world-famous Cyclorama at Grant Park in Atlanta. Cheatham's attack started about 4 p.m. Stovall's Brigade marched across the field on the left of General Arthur Manigault's South Carolina Brigade. On they marched, through groves of broken pine trees, seemingly oblivious to the furious blast of canister fired from the six-gun battery of the First Illinois Artillery to their front. Stopping momentarily at the widow Pope residence to realign, riflemen of the 10th and 19th South Carolina scrambled to the second floor of the house to deliver "a galling fire" into the battery. Pressing on, the brigades of Brown's and Clayton's Divisions (of which Stovall's Brigade and the 52nd Georgia were a part) reached the Federal line at the Troup Hurt House. The 42nd Georgia, together with Manigault's Brigade, overran the 4-gun battery just north of the house.

The 52nd Georgia and the balance of Stovall's Brigade continued to battle the Federals to the north of the battery. According to a study done by William R. Scaife, author of The Campaign For Atlanta, Clayton's Division was then shifted to Manigault's right flank to close the gap between Manigault's and Sharp's Brigades. Stovall advanced by the right oblique

with the 43rd Georgia as skirmishers and crossed the Georgia railroad to the south and drove Martin's Federal Brigade before them. This particular scene is depicted prominently in the Cyclorama painting.

Writing of his experience at the Battle of Atlanta, Sgt. Tim Worley said:

"...while on the third line of the enemies breastworks, I was severely wounded with a minnie ball. My brother Lt. (Columbus W.) Worley had three ribs broken with piece of shell. Our color bearer, William Murray, was killed and many others."

Indeed, by the end of the day after Cheatham's Corps had been withdrawn back toward the Atlanta defenses, the 52nd Georgia left several of its brave dead soldiers who fell near the present-day intersection of Moreland Avenue and the Georgia Railroad. Among them were Privates: Cicero Chambers, J.W. Chambers, Jacob Eller, James West, William A. Bagwell and Oliver Cheek. Private Mackey W. Crisson took a piece of shrapnel in his left shoulder. William Harper was shot in the left shoulder. A.W. Sparks was missing. William Smith was captured and spent the duration of the war at Camp Douglas near Chicago. Many others were killed or wounded. In all, the 52nd Georgia sustained some 34 casualties on July 22, 1864 in the



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Most of the photographs and illustrations for Part I concerned the officers of the 52nd Regiment. Part II will concentrate more on the enlisted man.

If you have any photographs or documents about an ancestor that served in the 52nd, please call us and make that ancestor a permanent part of the history of the 52nd. Call either Bill Kinsland at 864-7225 and 864-6317 or Jimmy Anderson at 864-7040.

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