

About three o'clock in the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> of April I happened to be lying awake in my tent. Away in the distance towards town I heard the faint ~~fast~~ beats of a horse on the hard macadamized road. They gradually sounded louder and louder. I was impressed with the thought that the rider on that horse was bearing important news or orders to our camp. Nearer and nearer came the rider and the hoof beats suddenly sounded louder as the horse <sup>rounded</sup> turned the corner from the main street and turned toward our camp.

Clatter, clatter they went till they stopped at the door of Col. Peales shanty. Then silence a few seconds, followed by a sharp rap, rap, <sup>and</sup> the rider of that horse struck with some hard substance on the door. I soon heard the door open, and a voice spoke in a low quick tone. This was followed by an answer in a louder tone. Then silence, as probably our commander was reading the message brought him. Then there was a loud, emphatic, ~~rap~~ surprised tone, followed by quick footsteps and knockings on other doors as the other field officers were aroused. Then there were loud, excited, anxious tones, all speaking together. This was kept up some minutes when they all retired to their tents and silence again fell over the camp.

Then Geo. Heath, "my pard", who had heard the voices, spoke up.

"Whats that, corporal?"

"Something's up," I answered. "Well hear something surprising in the morning. Marching orders for home, I guess."

Little did we think what we would hear in the morning.

When the companies assembled at the morning roll-call the news that was brought by the orderly was read to them. They were appalled by the announcement, and home, which had seemed so near, appeared to fade away at the war seemed not yet to be ended.

Feelings of revenge and sadness took possession of our minds. The men dispersed to their tents talking in low tones, and the the camp was very silent and funeral like all that day.

The astounding news that was read to us was that President Lincoln, Gen. Grant, Secretary Seward and other members of the Cabinet had been murdered the night before. The real news were exaggerated in that Gen. Grant - Sec Seward and other members of the Cabinet had been killed; it was sad enough when we knew the real facts that our beloved President was dead - so foully murdered by the assassin J. Wilkes Booth.

It was days before the men regained their usual cheerfulness and saw that these things were not going to retard the progress of the closing up of the affairs of the Great Rebellion.

Our duties now were somewhat relaxed. Picket duty was kept up but there was nothing to look out for. A week or so after the surrender I was on picket at the old brick house on the Winchester road. All day long the paroled rebel soldiers of Lee's army kept coming along on their way to their homes in this part of the country. They came in pairs, squads of half a dozen or so, and one squad of about 20 came along in the afternoon. They would stop and chat with us and pass more or less chaff. They all invariably said that they were glad the war was ended.

Drilling was suspended but we had to appear at dress parade. This became to be the event of the day, and visitors from the town came every evening to witness the parade. We had become so that we could execute this maneuver in great style and to see the regiment go through the movements of this parade like clockwork, was really quite a sight.