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ONE BOY'S HELENA IN THE NINETIES

by

Albert A. Hornor, M. D.

Part Two of Two Parts

I LEARNED TO MILK A COW

Shortly after my fifth birthday I learned to milk a cow. This happened for two reasons; first of all, John Patterson, the colored man who, along with many chores, milked our cows, was a great teacher and very good to all of us; second, my father could not milk, that was a woman's job when he was little, so he was anxious for me to learn how and when he saw that I could milk efficiently he gave John Patterson five silver dollars. This was the first time I ever saw anyone paid as much as five dollars for anything. After a while I began to milk one of our cows every morning before breakfast and again before supper. Each cow was expected to produce three gallons of milk a day. All over that was mine and sold to my mother for forty cents a gallon. I became rich (?). With intermissions of varying lengths I continued to milk regularly till the age of fourteen and the time of my father's death (Sidney Henry Hornor).

John Patterson also taught me how to four-square plait. This was the best type of plait for four to six inches of a riding whip. The folded ends of the two strips of leather could be used to slip over one's hand that held the four-plait. Below the four-plait one could have three strips of leather to strike one's horse. The real fancy riding whips would have six inches of round plait between the square plait and the lash.

Much to my delight when I wanted to learn to

round-plait, I found that my father was a real expert at plaiting. He taught me the under two and over one routine so that I became skilled at making round-plaited whips. The leather we used was called lace leather, because that was the kind used to lace together two belts, at sawmills for example. The round-plait was used to make all types of long whips, some of eight or more strips and some long enough for the driver of an ox team to hit the oxen in the lead yoke perhaps twenty feet away. To use one of these long whips required a great skill that I never acquired, though I used to love to see one used.

Anyone who has ridden or driven horses or mules knows that bridles, saddles and harness often need repairs. A few of these repairs can be done at home but many require the help of a skilled saddle and harness maker. For Helena, Arkansas, in the 1890s this was Mr. Opp. His shop was up a narrow flight of stairs in a building at the northwest corner of Walnut and Rightor Streets. To go to Mr. Opp's shop was a great treat. He was always busy but would let you sit and watch him sew patches on to saddles or mend harness or bridles. He sat on a "horse" with big wooden clamps in front of him, in which the article being repaired was held by foot pressure on a pedal. This apparatus was fascinating. Sometimes he would let you sit on a new saddle he was making, but the greatest thrill was when he would let you stitch with a narrow piece of leather.

It was in Mr. Opp's garden at the southeast corner of Porter and Columbia Streets that twenty or thirty dogs were kept a day or two by the Kentucky bear hunters who came every Spring to hunt bear in the bottoms thirty or more miles south of Helena. Over on Rightor Street back of Mr. Opp's home were his beehives where wonderful honey was produced for sale as well as for use. I visited the hives but kept my distance. I was, and still

am, afraid of bees.

Prior to Papa's death in 1900, he and Uncle Re had maintained on The Orchard Place one mile north of Helena on the Big Spring Road, a herd of milk cows with a registered pureblood Jersey bull. They had started with about six pureblood Guernsey cows and crossbred these with a pureblood Jersey bull. Why they thought they would get better milk cows this way, I have no idea.

The farm had a superintendent and several "hands" to milk and do chores. There were peacocks, turkeys, guineas, and chickens which belonged to the superintendent and his wife who lived in a lovely cottage surrounded by beautiful gardens, flowers and vegetables. They were among the first to produce roasterens (green corn) in June.

When I was small we kept only two milk cows and their calves at our Porter Street home. Later we kept three cows. After about six or possibly eight months of milking a cow produced less milk and much less cream, then she and her calf would be returned to The Orchard Place and a fresh cow with a two or three week old calf would be brought from The Orchard to Porter Street. Conducting the cow and calf was usually done by two people on horseback. Sometimes the mother cow would be led and it might take an hour because she was heavy with milk and anxious about her calf that rarely left her for more than thirty feet.

Once the new cow was in the barn at Porter Street her calf was kept separate except for a half hour after milking, when the calf nursed until he had gotten all the milk from her bag that a milker could not get.

The cows were milked twice a day, before our breakfast and before our supper. They spent their nights in the stable lot, but each morning they were driven slowly by someone on horseback on

Columbia Street to Perry Street, then west to "The Pasture," about a hundred acres with a flowing stream of water located about three blocks west of College Street. Usually this chore as well as that of bringing them home in the afternoon was done by "the hired man." If I had to do it, I had to get through breakfast early and hurry home from The Pasture, unsaddle my horse and then go to school.

SCHOOL DAYS

The earlier one got to school the better because playing before school was lots of fun. What the games were at kindergarten I have forgotten, but I recall well some of the boys and girls with whom I played.

The most fun for little boys at the Hillside School, located where now is the southwest corner of Walker and Columbia Streets, was digging caves into the clay-like soil. Once a group of little boys dug a cave, a yard long and half a yard broad and the same depth, with play shovels or some other small tool. The ground under the schoolhouse, in places twelve feet below the floor of the school, was also almost clay and made wonderful places to play marbles. There was a vacant level space at least 50 by 100 yards southwest of the school where games could be played or horses ridden. A few of the boys rode their horses from the country to school, - tied them except at recess when they were watered or perhaps fed. Both tennis and baseball were played but neither with any enthusiasm. Many of the school children went home for lunch. Boys and girls did not play together at school and little boys rarely played with any of the big boys. School days were always fun, and we were all glad when vacations ended.

STREETCARS

One line of a popular ragtime song of the 90s

was "A Streetcar Ran Right by Her Door," and one did run by our home until 1898, and so streetcars were familiar from my earliest memory. A mule pulled each car on tracks (standard gauge). The route was from the southern town limit north on Biscoe, then east on Arkansas to the levee, then north one block and west half a block to the south end of Cherry Street, then north in front of most of Helena's stores to Porter Street. There it turned west to Columbia and then north to McDonough, then west to Poplar and again north to Walker Street Extension-town limits. On rainy days there were more passengers, but I doubt if the cars were ever full.

If the cars had any schedule I never learned it, though I could usually ride from Porter and Columbia to the Hillside School and frequently had time enough to ride to the end of the line at Walker and Poplar Streets, then back to school. The cars stopped wherever a passenger wanted to get on or off, and the driver was careful not to stop at a mud hole or else the passengers would get their feet wet. If a train or a steamboat was due, the streetcar would wait.

Streetcars passing right by our front door delighted me as a little boy, and I loved to get on by the right rear door and walk through the car and put my nickel into the box, which was on the "platform" near the stool where the driver sat. Some of those aboard paid their fare with tickets, probably 25 for a dollar. Ladies and children felt safe on the cars. The drivers were all courteous. As a very little boy I was allowed by the driver (also conductor) to put on the brake, and occasionally to drive the mule.

When the streetcar reached either end of the line the driver put on the brake then got off the car, unhitched the mule and walked him to the other end of the car, then hitched on the mule, let off the brakes and the return trip began.

There were five turntables, one at Biscoe and Arkansas, one at Cherry and Porter, another at Porter and Columbia, another at Columbia and McDonough. The fifth was on Cherry Street midway between Elm and Phillips and led to the car barn where both mules and cars spent the nights.

If one looks carefully on Page 4 of Volume 3 "Pictorial History," compliments of First Federal Savins and Loan Association, Helena, one can see a streetcar turning from Cherry to Porter Street. In 1898 when the Helena Street Railway ceased its business, the mules were sold and the streetcars were given away to become playhouses for children.

One of the mules, named Pat, went to the Beaver Bayou Plantation, operated by my Uncle Joe Mosby and became my favorite animal.

THE ARKANSAS MIDLAND RAILWAY

The Arkansas Midland Railway was important to my childhood. As previously mentioned, visits to the Roundhouse were interesting. As a small boy I was taken by my father, who was Treasurer of the Arkansas Midland, to Brinkley and back. We went on the main line to Pine City and changed cars to the narrow gauge branch to Brinkley and back. The engine on the narrow gauge burned wood and Papa took me into the cab of the locomotive, where the engineer let me sit with him and blow the whistle. Either before or after this I rode in the engine on the main line, rang the fireman's bell and shovelled in one or two shovels full of coal.

For about three years I rode the Arkansas Midland train to and from Poplar Grove two or more times a month. There I was met by my Uncle Joe Mosby or one of his hands and we rode to Trenton. After a stop of varying length there we went another three miles to the Beaver Bayou Plantation, owned by my father and Uncle Hammy, a gift to them by their

father because the Civil War prevented him from sending either of them to college.

Beaver Bayou Plantation was reached by a good road south from Trenton, passing by a bridge over Big Creek. We left the good road, crossed the bridge and went about a mile through tree covered bottom land across one or two small bridges over Beaver Bayou. Some parts of this road were corduroy. During one visit to the Beaver Bayou place, the hands and Uncle Joe were busy repairing the road. In these days every able-bodied man was required to work for Phillips County three days a year or else hire a substitute. Everyone who worked on Beaver Bayou place lived there in log cabins, except Uncle Joe Mosby, who had a weather-boarded three room house with chimney, fireplace, kitchen and front porch.

On the cultivated land, 400+ acres, corn and sorghum were the principal crops. Only a few acres of cotton were planted. It sold for only 7 or 8 cents a pound in those days. Some of the "hands" were single and some married; one of these was a sharecropper.

The farm was surrounded by wooded land and the nearest neighbor a mile or more distant. Canebrakes were common. There were many rabbits and squirrels that lived on hickory nuts, pecans, berries and the like. One late afternoon Uncle Joe was riding through the woods and found a 15 year old negro boy, Little Jake, all alone and obviously unhappy. Uncle Joe asked why he was there. The answer, "Pap told me to get out of his house and stay out." "Pap" was Big Jake and the only sharecropper on the place. Uncle Joe said, "Come on to my house. You can sleep on the floor in my room." That he did and slept on the floor for several years.

Little Jake became my guardian and companion. I talked about him so much at home that my two

younger brothers (Sidney and Louis) used to accuse me of having slept with Little Jake. "Otherwise my hair would not have been curly," as it was. Actually there was no room for me on the floor because Little Jake usually shared the floor with one or two dogs. Little Jake taught me many things. Most important was how to go into the mule lot and get my mule Pat from a group of six or more mules. Pat had been one of the mules that pulled a Helena streetcar and I had first met her there.

Actually I never learned that a mule would kick until I visited a mule lot on another plantation. I was early taught that a mule always swam with its back out of the water so if an overflow came, I would be safe if I got aboard Pat. The Beaver Bayou place was frequently flooded though I was never to see one there. In the flood of 1897 the water was so high that wild game as well as cattle, mules and horses came out of the bottoms and then to Trenton which escaped flooding.

Fresh-killed squirrels were often cooked and served for supper or breakfast. Once I went with a group of men into the deep bottoms looking for deer or bear in the thick canebrake. The only thing shot was a big rattlesnake. These deep bottoms were used every winter by farmers who drove yearling mules and horses down there so they could get wild food all winter. Every farmer sent a "Bell Mare" down there which mothered the yearling horses and mule colts. The owners could recognize the bell on their own bell mare when they were brought out of the bottoms before overflows. How many square miles there were in this area of "wild bear" country I do not know.

Returning to Beaver Bayou and Little Jake, he once was given the biggest watermelon ever grown on the place to take to Trenton to be weighed; this he did, - 50 lbs. was the reported weight and it was returned to Little Jake aboard his mule. The mule

moved suddenly and the watermelon fell to the ground. All the bystanders enjoyed eating that melon.

Trenton was really an important town to me. There were three stores, a big mule lot, a cotton gin, a school, a church and a doctor (J. M. Bean, M. D.).

The road from Poplar Grove to Trenton continued South to Big Creek, then along that creek towards Turner, Arkansas. The east-west road came from Barton and went on to Marvell after the crossroads at Trenton. The Goldsmith Store was at the southwest corner. The Krow property occupied an acre more or less on the northwest corner with the Krow Store, containing the Post Office, 50 to 100 yards west of the crossroads. There were also a cotton gin and warehouse on the Krow property.

Mr. Krow and Mr. Goldsmith were brothers-in-law and each had several delightful children. Abe Goldsmith was a year younger than I and he became an intimate friend. I occasionally spent the night at his house where I first slept in a feather bed. He often went to Beaver Bayou with me and also visited our home in Helena.

Farmers for miles around came to Trenton to buy provisions, sell products, get the mail and discuss farm problems as well as those of the whole county. I remember well being on the porch steps of the Krow Store and learning on July 4, 1898 that the Spanish-American War had been won and ended with U. S. A. the victors. How word of the surrender came I do not know. The nearest telegraph was in Poplar Grove and the nearest telephone in Helena. Most of the men took only a weekly newspaper.

There were a few hitching posts for horses or mules near the stores but there were "no hitching" signs with \$1.00 fine. Once I hitched my mule at one of these at the Goldsmith Store, confident that Mr. Goldsmith knew me and would forgive. Uncle Joe

saw the error and with the help of one or two others frightened me into thinking that my own "Western Saddle" might be taken as a penalty. I moved the mule for that saddle was the last real Santa Claus present I received.

My trips on the Arkansas Midland had been on passenger train to Poplar Grove on Friday afternoon and back Monday morning, though occasionally the trip back was in the caboose of the freight train which came from Clarendon in the afternoon. This was interesting because I was allowed to sit in the conductor's lookout at the top of the caboose.

Uncle Joe Mosby was married in 1899 to Mary Rice of Bourbon County, Kentucky, at the end of her second year of teaching school in Trenton, and moved from Beaver Bayou to Trenton. My father died in 1900 and in 1901, Uncle Joe moved to Helena and I made no more visits to Beaver Bayou or Trenton.

TRIP TO NEW YORK CITY

Whenever my father went away from Helena, he took one or more of his children with him. Once he took my brother Mosby to New Orleans, and while there they went to the U. S. Mint where Brother stood on 10,000 gold dollars, and held a 10,000 dollar note in his hand. All my life I have regretted that I never had such a chance to see and hold so much money. Trips to St. Louis or Memphis were greatly enjoyed by whoever went with Papa, and their memory still lingers on.

Once a year Papa went to New York City. My time to go with him was in the late winter of 1896.

We took the Iron Mountain train from Helena to Wynne, Arkansas, where we had supper at a local hotel and then got aboard the train from Memphis to St. Louis and slept in a Pullman berth. After arriving at the Union Depot into which all trains backed, we had breakfast there and then Papa

visited several of his business friends, all of whom were kind to me. The next evening we boarded a Wagner sleeping car and travelled overnight to Elyria, Ohio. There we were met by Colonel Albert Johnson who had lived in Helena and was a business associate of the Hornor family. Colonel Johnson was going on to New York City with us. While he and Papa were transacting business in Elyria, one of his young relatives showed me the town, covered with snow, and many maple trees with little buckets hanging on to tubes through which sap was dropping. He showed me how to drink a little sap from several buckets. That evening we boarded a train for New York City, and had supper aboard and breakfast the next morning. As the train approached New York City, I was amazed to see all the ground and many houses covered with snow, while the Hudson River was frozen over.

After leaving the train at Grand Central Station, we walked a couple of blocks to the Murray Hill Hotel where we spent our nights. After breakfast each morning we walked to the Elevated Station, near Grand Central, climbed up a long flight of stairs to board a train pulled by a steam locomotive, and with one change of trains, went down to William Street (near Wall Street) where Papa and Colonel Johnson did most of their business, and I could be turned over to some clerk for entertainment. I surprised everyone by learning the names of all the stops made by our elevated trains. We visited the Battery and many other sights, but not Coney Island, - too cold. One noon while in New York, several business associates put on a beautiful lunch for Papa and Colonel Johnson. It probably included oysters and lobster, but the only food I recognized was celery, bread and butter. These I consumed throughout the party. As we were leaving the restaurant, I asked Papa when we were going to have dinner.

There was a restaurant near William Street where one served oneself to whatever he wished, then on his way out he told a cashier what he had eaten

and then was told what he owed. No New Yorker I have met since 1907 ever heard of such a restaurant. The Flat Iron Building was the highest building we saw and never expected to see a higher one. We were greatly impressed by the boats, the Battery and Brooklyn Bridge. Manhattan's water reservoir at 42nd Street was interesting.

When we left New York City, we separated from Colonel Johnson because Papa was going to take me to Niagara Falls. We changed trains at Buffalo for Niagara, New York. There we got aboard a two-horse sleigh and were driven to the bridge and all around the American Falls. It was very cold with ice and snow everywhere. In the afternoon we went back to Buffalo and got on a train for Oberlin, Ohio, where we were to visit Colonel and Mrs. Johnson for a couple of days. Their house had burglar alarms on doors and windows. I was impressed and startled. The Johnsons had a big place with stable, barn and carriage house. Their son Albert, Jr., was a senior at Cornell, and I was given the privilege of taking his 22-gauge rifle and cartridges out back of the stable and firing at a target. While there I put the end of the gun's barrel on the tip of my shoe, and forgetting that the gun was loaded, I pulled the trigger. The bullet went into my shoe but missed my toes, - thanks to my mother's rule of buying shoes for us children one size larger than seemed right in the shoe store. I then used up the rest of my cartridges and reported to Papa and the Johnsons. We left the next evening, and when we got to St. Louis, Papa bought me a new pair of shoes. He also bought the first Kodak our family ever had.

HOME-KEEPING

Mama, only sophisticates spelled it Mamma, ran the home place very efficiently. There were usually three servants, - a cook (Steady and her followers) a nurse who really was a maid most of

the time. The younger children were cared for by the older children and a house girl. The third servant, the yard man, took care of the stable, the stable yard, carriage and buggy, the horses and cows. These servants were supposed to arrive at 6:00 a. m. and were usually on hand before 7:00 a. m.

After I learned to milk a cow I went to the stable as soon as I was dressed and helped with the milking.

Even on Mondays breakfast was never a lean meal, for then we often had waffles with hash made from Sunday's dinner leftover meat. The waffles were good even with sugar house molasses or rarely with maple syrup. The children during the winter months always began their breakfast with oatmeal with sugar and cream.

After breakfast we children hurried to school. We liked to get there early and play before school opened at 9:00 a. m.

The daily breakfast, except Monday, included raised rolls. The dough for rolls and for loaves of "light bread" was mixed and put into an earthenware jar in the kitchen and brought up before supper to Mama's bedroom where it was put on the fireplace hearth to rise overnight, then taken down into the kitchen as soon as the cook arrived in the morning.

The magazine LIFE sometime in the 1890s published a cartoon about a burglar threatening a man- "Money or your life," and being answered, "Take both but don't wake the baby." Papa changed this to "Take both but don't touch the bread dough."

Breakfast was an important meal and every child had to have clean hands and face before he or she was served. Any attempt to escape this routine failed, though sometimes a child would be permitted to wash his face and hands on the back porch rather than go back upstairs where he should have done this

chore earlier.

Mama, because of her deafness, sat at the head of the table with Papa at her left. Often she asked the blessing before Papa arrived at the table. Except in hot weather or on Mondays we had hot risen rolls. We didn't have risen rolls on Monday because the cook always had Sunday afternoon off and so could not set the dough to rise for Monday's breakfast. As I mentioned before, the dough was taken every night, except on Sunday, upstairs to Mama's room and put on the hearth to rise during the night. Of course, the fire died down and usually went out during the night, and I, or later Sidney or Louis, would have to get up and build a fire about 6:00 a. m., then get back into bed while the room got warm. All of our breakfasts were fun, and even on Mondays the meal might be a treat, especially if we had waffles with turkey hash.

Guests from out of town, visiting friends or relatives in Helena, were likely to be entertained at our house by one of Mama's famous breakfasts. This was when she most enjoyed company.

Breakfast always began with freshly cooked oatmeal, grapenuts, - our first prepared cereal had not been introduced when I was a little boy. After cereal we had biscuits or rolls with meat of some sort and with molasses. I was bribed ten cents a week by Aunt Molly, Mama's sister, to drink a glass of milk with my breakfast. The meat was often delicious hash, made from the meat left over from dinner the day before. Turkey hash was our favorite. Even lamb hash was good. Often one of us would have to go before breakfast to the butcher shop two blocks away (at the southeast corner of Perry and Beech) to buy steak in the winter, - pork steak ten cents a pound, and at other seasons beef steak, two pounds for a quarter.

Delicious homemade pork sausage was plentiful during the winter. Several times each fall we might

have quail for breakfast presented by some friendly hunter. Another great treat was smothered chicken. Every spring Mama bought repeatedly a dozen or more "smother-size" chickens from some farmer who stopped at the back gate with chickens for sale. These chickens were fed table scraps and corn for a couple of weeks before being killed. They were killed by having their necks wrung. Every good cook knew how to wring a chicken's neck (I never learned). The freshly killed chickens were dressed and cooked within a couple of hours. (This was true also for turkeys killed by cutting their heads off with an ax.)

Shortly after breakfast Mama and Papa went upstairs to their bedroom, read a chapter from the Bible and prayed together. Children were welcome and occasionally attended though they usually hurried off to school. When this prayer was over, Papa set off on his four block walk to the Bank of Helena. Usually he met one or more of his business friends and contemporaries for a pleasant conversation on their way to work. This walk Papa took six days a week and he often walked home, though Mama loved to take some of us in the carriage to the Bank to get Papa.

Our noon meal was only lunch until I was about ten years old by which time Papa's health had failed enough so that he wanted only a light supper for his evening meal.

Mama was truly a country girl, and except for a few trips to Memphis during the last year before her father died, had not traveled. She loved to tell of imaginary trips she and her father took by railroad and steamboat. Mama's father died in 1879 during the most severe yellow fever epidemic Tennessee ever had. My memory is that Grampa Mosby did not die of yellow fever.

Mama and Papa were not interested in "Society," they were too busy enjoying each other and raising a family, ultimately four sons and three daughters.

Many friends and relatives of Mama and Papa

visited our home for various periods of time. The visitor who thrilled me most as a little boy was Cousin Sue Dunnington, a first cousin of my mother on the maternal side. Cousin Sue came by rail from Columbia, Tennessee, and spent two weeks with us before taking a steamboat to New Orleans. Once I was so anxious to accompany her that I was told that I could go in her trunk. Everything was taken out of the bottom of the trunk and I, at the age of three, got in, but when they started to put the top down I decided that I did not want to go that year.

Uncles, aunts and other relatives as well as friends came frequently for two nights and the intervening day or longer. One set was invited for several Christmas Weeks and then one year Mama decided to invite another set of cousins for Christmas and did not invite the usual guests. Their mother brought them anyway, so we had a very full house and lots of fun.

Christmas Week began December 24 and ended New Years Day. That was the fireworks season and we had a lot more skyrockets and roman candles than firecrackers. Mama because of her deafness could not hear the firecrackers but loved the colored sparks from roman candles and skyrockets.

After I reached the age of ten I was permitted to fire blank shells out an upstairs window from a 12-gauge shotgun, but not before 6:00 a. m. and only a few times on Christmas Day. I hardly believed it when Uncle Oscar Thweatt (Papa's brother-in-law) told us that fireworks in the United States were limited to Fourth of July except down South.

My mother loved to go to the circus and always took all her children, plus friends and cousins. Some circus came to Helena every autumn and camped above the Walker Levee near the Old Fairgrounds. There would be a big tent with one or two rings where actors and clowns performed on beautifully trained horses. They also performed with dogs and monkeys.

Many of the trick riders were quite skillful. So too were the clowns. We loved to see the riders jump through hoops back on to their horses. Usually there was a horse or mule that no one could ride, but after several volunteers from the audience failed, someone would succeed without much effort. Of course there were seats at various prices, but the ones nearest the rings were choice.

The elephants always paraded ahead of the cages of lions, tigers, monkeys and rare birds, - the acrobats, sleight of hand artists and occasionally an hypnotist. The trained dogs always attracted great interest. Of course the bands were wonderful, loud if not really musical, - all were musical to me. Our mother enjoyed the bands because despite her deafness she could hear the drums, trumpets, horns, calliopes, etc. In addition to a circus we had Dog and Pony Shows. The best of these was Gentry Brothers. The skill which dogs, ponies and their trainer showed is still remembered.

Every autumn Mama would buy or be given a few turkeys. She always preferred gobblers, though she bought both hens and gobblers. The turkeys, with their wings clipped to prevent their flying away, were fattened while running loose in our backyard and stable lot. Thanksgiving, though a holiday, was not a special feast day.

Eggs were usually bought from some small farmer living two to four miles west of Helena at whose home we would stop when out in the carriage. Occasionally someone would come in our side gate and up to the north door of the back porch and offer fresh eggs for sale at twenty cents a dozen. Later, about 1900, the price rose to twenty-five cents, much to Mama's dismay.

Later, with help, I had built a pigeon house and cage up over an arbor in the backyard. Soon I tired of pigeons, and thanks to the influence of that wonderful craftsman and plumber, Mr. Elsesser,

I went into the business of raising purebred, rose-combed white Wyandottes, and selling their offspring as fine brown egg producing stock. A few of the eggs were sold to Mama, but most were used for hatching brood stock which I sold for as much as five dollars a trio - one cock and two pullets. They were beautiful birds and my total profit over several years was fifty dollars. About once a year we would get from one of the Hornor farms freshly killed guineas. These were delicious when broiled. Occasionally a turkey hen would in the spring build a nest and lay eggs. Once when my brothers Sidney and Louis had the measles, they were given soft-boiled turkey eggs as a treat. Ever since then I have wanted in vain to taste a soft-boiled turkey egg.

Every few months Mama would buy a loaf of baker's bread which was enjoyed because it tasted different from our homemade bread.

Underneath the north window of the kitchen was the box for stovewood. This had to be kept full for "Steady" and her successors. The stovewood was dry cut and split to fit in the grate of the stove. All our food cooking was done in or on the woodburning stove. It was much better than when cooked on or in the gas stove which was reserved for hot weather.

The stovewood box was the regular sleeping place for our "successive" cats, and there the kittens were born.

The north door of the back porch led to the coal house side gate and the cisterns, to a path to the wood house and the stable lot gate. The slope between the cisterns and the back porch was steep, and if there was any snow for coasting, it would be there and if we had no sled Papa knew how to make sleds out of barrel staves, and most every winter we had two or three days of snow, - one winter two weeks of coasting down the cistern wall for five to fifteen feet.

The cistern near the porch was unused, because

when Papa had the stable built he had zinc gutters built around its roof to collect rainwater and drain it through an iron pipe to flow into a barrel filled with rocks and charcoal to be filtered into a new cistern. This, until Helena acquired a public water supply in 1894, was our total supplier of water for the house, yard, garden and stable lot. All water from the cistern was pumped by hand into a bucket or into a short trough that led to the watering trough for our stock in the stable lot.

Even after we had city water with a hydrant that led to the watering trough for horses and cows, the carriage and buggy had to be washed with sponges and dried with a chamois skin. This was hard work and "the man" often persuaded me and some of my brothers to help. Occasionally we washed a horse with the hose but most cleaning of horses was done with a curry comb and a brush. There were always the two carriage horses, and after "Daisy" was bought as a saddle horse for Sister (Elisabeth) there were three and often a fourth horse. Usually the fourth horse was a loan from Uncle Re's stock raised and kept at Stamp Creek.

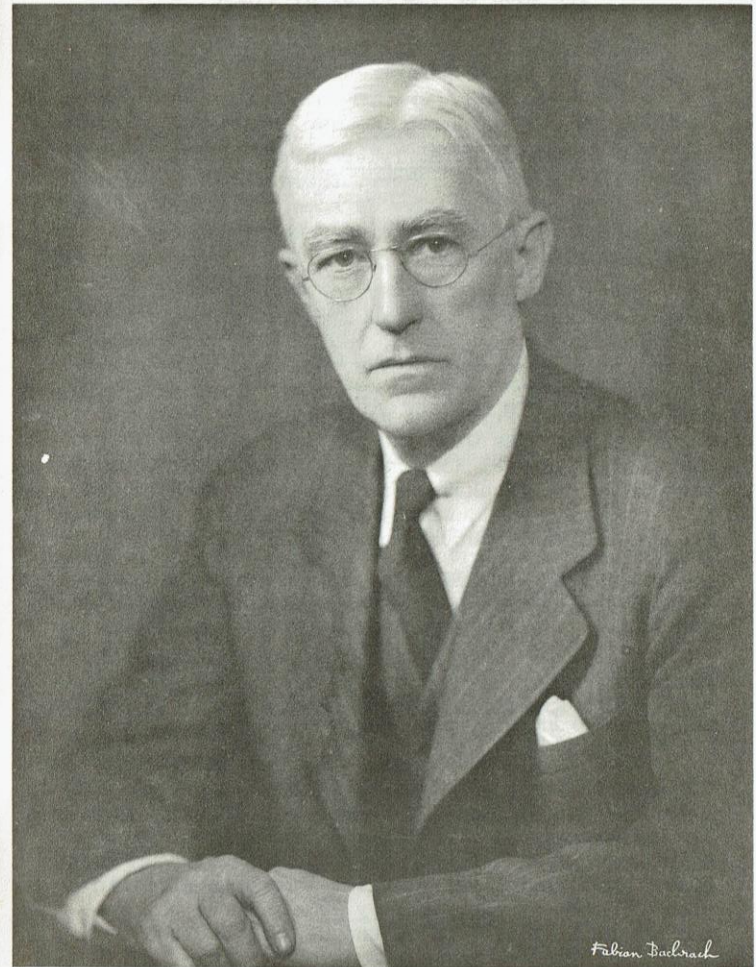
The stable had a "carriage house" separating the horse stalls from the cow stalls. The carriage house accommodated, in addition to the two-horse carriage, a one-horse buggy. If we had a cow that was about to calf she was given space in the carriage house. Otherwise, the two or three cows were in the stable only for feeding and milking twice a day. During the day they were in a pasture off Perry Street. They spent their nights outdoors in the stable lot. Papa thought them very good "watch dogs," - why I have forgotten.

Whenever I think about the carriage, I remember that once when I was about ten years old my mother wanted to pay a call out on Perry Street, and asked me to drive her there. I did but after Mama got out of the carriage and had gone into the

friend's house to make the call, I hitched one of the horses to a hitching post and went off to join a group I knew were playing baseball about four blocks away. When Mama came to the carriage and found me missing, she drove herself home (she was a beautiful rider and driver of horses). When I got home Papa was there and told me that because I had left my job I was to drive my mother wherever she wanted to go every day after school for a year. My baseball career was ended. The result of daily driving was that I became an excellent driver of a two-horse team. One summer I read Scott's Waverly Novels while waiting for Mama at the dressmakers and other places.

After I went away to school, September 1902, my brother Louis took over the responsibilities that I had had and managed very skillfully. About that time a man who came to work for Mama was a negro named "Davis" but called Shakespeare because he could quote many lengthy passages from Shakespeare's plays. Davis soon began to worship Louis and stayed with the family for several years after they moved to San Antonio, Texas, where after many more years, he died.

The picture on the following page shows Dr. Hornor at 24 years (An Arkansas Product). The second picture is of Dr. Hornor when he was Vice President of the Massachusetts Medical Society (What New England Did To A Helena Boy).



THE LOGS OF THE U. S. S. TYLER

by

Steven W. Jones

The following letters and log entries clarify the role of the U. S. S. Tyler in the Battle of Helena, July 4, 1863. Moreover, these selected entries from the Tyler's logs give us some indication of the lifestyle and duties of the crew members aboard a Civil War river gunboat.

The U. S. S. Tyler was converted from a freight-passenger steamer to a military vessel in Cairo, Illinois, in August, 1861. With the change in duty came a change in name. In peacetime, she was named the A. O. Tyler. However, to avoid confusion with former President John Tyler, a Virginian whose sympathy was with the Southern cause, the Tyler's owner, Samuel Rodgers, petitioned the Secretary of War for a change of name: "The name of the A. O. Tyler, I will, with your permission, change to Taylor, a name of better augury than Tyler."

The Secretary agreed to the change. However, the original name was frequently used throughout the war to identify the vessel. The existence of both names (Tyler and Taylor) in the Official Records of the Navy has created considerable confusion for researchers. U. S. S. Tyler has survived as the vessel's most generally recognized name.

The Tyler was 180 feet long, 42 feet wide, and displaced roughly 535 tons. The only area below the main deck was the hull of the boat. She was a paddle wheeler with a wheel at each side, each wheel driven by a single cylinder, low-pressure steam engine. Each engine was about 21 inches in diameter with a 7 foot stroke. The Tyler had three boilers and was capable of 7 to 10 knots. She had two

sister ships, the Conestoga and the Lexington. All three vessels were approximately the same size and capable of similar performance.

The Tyler's defensive strength lay in its 5 inch thick oak bulwarks, which encased the upper deck and pilot areas. This provided adequate protection from musket and minie balls, but if anything heavier came along, the crew members had to take their chances. Barges were often tied alongside the vessel to protect its hull.

The Tyler was armed with one 32-pounder (Parrott) and six 8 inch smooth-bore Dahlgrens. Prior to her service at Helena, the U. S. S. Tyler had spoiled the Confederate Army's success at Shiloh and duelled head-to-head with the C. S. S. Arkansas at the mouth of the Yazoo. The Tyler cruised the Mississippi, White, Yazoo, and Arkansas Rivers from 1862 through the end of the war. For her contribution at Helena, we turn to the following logs and official Army and Navy correspondence.

*

May 17, 1863--Mouth of the White River: At 2:00 a. m., Abraham Boller "contraband" came on board. Light-draft gunboat Prairie Light came down at 3:15 p. m. and landed above us. Average amount of steam 80 lbs. - George L. Smith

May 20, 1863--Mouth of the White River: At 11:30 a. m. U. S. Hospital boat City of Memphis came down and made fast astern to coal barges, and wait a convoy. Crew engaged coaling ship. Amount on board 2224 bushels. At 2:00 p. m. a deserter from the Rebel army "Joseph L. Dillard" came aboard ship. Crew still engaged coaling ship. At 4:00 p. m. U. S. gunboat General Bragg got under weigh and stood down river. At 4:15 p. m. ceased coaling - Ira Athearn

May 24, 1863--Mouth of the White River: At 4:10 a. m. U. S. gunboat Cincinnati got under weigh

and stood down river. Received two refugees, Thomas Fletcher and Joseph Costern. Avg. Amt. steam 90 lbs. - James Byrne

June 1, 1863--Mouth of the White River: At 8:45 a. m. Mr. Athearn suspended from duty by Captain Prichett for gross neglect of duty - Marine Young was released from confinement by order of commanding officer. At 9:30 a. m. went to quarters and had general inspection exercises. At 12 midnight steamer Sultana passed up from below with gunboat General Bragg - Thomas McElroy

June 5, 1863--Mouth of the White River: At 8:50 a. m. Light-draft gunboat Cricket came up from below. L. D. G. B. Juliet came up from below. At 9:30 a. m. inspected crew at quarters (awarded) Sanitary Boat Champions and got under weigh at 9:50 a. m. George Oliver and John Cain "seawren" were confined in double irons for leaving the ship and being without permission by order of Capt. Prichett-Charles Ackley

June 7, 1863--Mouth of the White River: At 8:45 a. m. made signal "2139" to U. S. Gunboat Crockett. Mr. Athearn was released by order of Capt. Prichett. At 11:50 a. m. U. S. Gunboat General Bragg came up river, crew engaged coaling ship. Amt. of coal consumed in last 24 hours 70 bushels. Amt. on board 2230 bushels. Avg. Amt. of steam 80 lbs. - George L. Smith

June 12, 1863--Mouth of White River: At 2:11 steamer Sultana and Ohio Belle passed down. William Wicker discharged and left the ship - Chas. Ackley

June 14, 1863--Mississippi River: Mr. Byron released from suspension, returned to duty by order of Captain Prichett. At 5:30 p. m. passed U. S. Gunboat Curlew laying at anchor at the foot of Island 68. At 6:00 mustered crew at quarters. Average amount of steam 120 lbs. - Chas. Ackley

June 15, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 5:35

a. m. came to anchor off Helena "Ark" in 3 fathoms of water. At 7:40 a. m. transports Diamond and Dacatuh with troops passed down - Chas. Ackley

June 16, 1863--Mississippi River: At 6:00 a. m. steamer Luminary arrived from above. At 7:45 made the following signals to U. S. Gunboat General Bragg "8815-8866-441-2016" General Bragg answered with "6259" - Ira Athearn

June 25, 1863--Mississippi River: Winds S. E. (5) Heavy squalls of rain accompanied by thunder and lightning. At 3:30 called all hands up anchor. At 8:00 p. m. passed U. S. Gunboat General Bragg and came to anchor off Helena, "Ark" in a fathoms of water. Made signal "54," Crew engaged washing decks. Avg. Amt. of steam 110 lbs. - Released C. B. "Moon" Thomas Oden out of irons by order of commanding officer - Ira Athearn

June 28, 1863--Off Island 40: Heavy rain squalls at 10:00 U. S. Gunboat Hastings came alongside and took aboard C. Burkhart, Patrick Brady, J. D. Osborn, Henry Gilbert to go to the hospital at Memphis - Charles Thatcher

June 30, 1863--U. S. Navy Yard, Memphis: Fine weather, steamers Ruth Courier and Rose Hamilton passed down. At 7:00 a. m. Hastings came up and anchored. Robert Connor "Quarter Gunner" delivered himself up, was disrated and confined in double irons - At 7:30 let fires go out and cooling boilers preparatory to repairing boilers - Charles Thatcher

(Report of Lt. Commander Pattison, U. S. Navy, regarding repairs to the General Bragg and U. S. S. Tyler)

U. S. NAVAL STATION
Memphis, Tenn., July 1, 1863

Sir: Enclosed you will find the report of Mr. Apperly, chief engineer of the workshops, referring to

the work done and the number of men employed in the navy yard since my last report; also a list of contrabands employed....The Tyler has arrived at the yard with her boiler in a dangerous condition. I have placed a gang of men on board of her to temporarily repair her, and hope to dispatch her tomorrow morning to Island 40 in accordance with your orders.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,
T. Pattison

To Acting Rear-Admiral David D. Porter
Commanding Mississippi Squadron

July 1, 1863--U. S. N. Yard, Memphis, Tenn:
At 7:30 boiler makers commenced repairing boilers. Crew engaged coaling ship. At midnight boilers finished - Charles Thatcher

July 2, 1863--Off Helena, "Ark": At 9:00 a. m. got under weigh and stood down river. At 9:30 inspected crew at quarters and drilled 2nd division at broadside guns. John O'Brien released from confinement by order of commanding officer. Amount of coal consumed in last 24 hours 175 bushels - Thomas McElroy

July 3, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 6:00 a. m. called all hands to breakfast. At 7:00 a. m. turned all hands to various ship duties in preparation for expected action - At 9:30 a. m. went to general quarters, exercised crew at broadside guns and Marines at small arms - Chas. Ackley

July 4, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": Calm, clear, warm, At 5:00 a. m. received information that the enemy was coming on the Little Rock road. Got under weigh and dropped down the river about a mile and opened fire on the enemy. At 7:30 a. m. steamed up river abreast mid-town and continued firing. 10:30 and still firing. At 12:30 ceased firing having expended 264 rounds of 8 inch shells and 169

rounds of Parrott. Received a quantity of ammunition "shell" at 3:30 from steamer Silver Moon coming up and made fast ahead of us.

(Reports of Major-General Prentiss, U. S. Army, requesting reinforcements, commending the work of the U. S. S. Tyler, and readiness for renewal of attack)

Headquarters District of Eastern Ark.
Helena, July 4, 1863

General: We have repulsed the enemy at every point, and our soldiers are now collecting their wounded. We have taken in all 1,200 prisoners, and their loss in killed and wounded will reach 500 or 600. But, although the rebels are badly whipped, there is no doubt that they are now massing their troops for a renewal at an early moment. My force is inferior to the rebels...I trust that reinforcements may be promptly forwarded. With the aid I expect from you and the gunboats, the rebel army may be severely beaten. The Tyler has been today a valuable auxiliary, and I depend much on the assistance of another gunboat...(later that day)...The enemy have not yet renewed the attack of this morning. The gunboat Covington is here. With a few more troops we can hold the place against any force they may bring.

I Am, general, very truly, yours
B. M. Prentiss
Major-General

Major-General Stephen A. Hurlbut
Commanding Sixteenth Army Corps.

July 5, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": Crew engaged washing decks. At 9:00 a. m. steamer Niagara passed up. At 10:00 a. m. inspected crew at quarters. At 1:00 p. m. U. S. Hospital boat R. C. Woods arrived from below to board severely wounded (and prisoners)- At 4:20 p. m. a signal gun was fired from the fort.

Went to quarters, got under weigh and dropped down the river about half a mile (expecting action). At 6:00 p. m. steamed up river and came alongside the wharf boat. Avg. Amt. of steam 120 lbs. - Charles Ackley

(Report of Ensign Smith, U. S. Navy, acting executive officer of the U. S. S. Tyler)

U. S. S. Tyler
Off Helena, Ark., July 5, 1863

Sir: I respectfully beg leave to submit to you the following report of our engagement on the morning of the 4th of July, at Helena, Ark:

We weighed anchor at ten minutes of 6 o'clock and proceeded down river about three-quarters of a mile below the town, where we opened our port battery. The enemy replied with two small rifled fieldpieces supposed to be 12-pounders, two shots of which struck within 50 yards of our stern. They were soon silenced by bringing our stern gun, a 32 pounder Parrott, to bear on them. We then proceeded one half-mile further up river, where the enemy endeavored to break through in force into our lines through a ravine about 200 feet deep. Here we sent our shells to a very destructive effect among the enemy. The killed and wounded by our shells on this place were about 600. I visited the ground here this morning and found about that number still on the ground.

We fired 433 rounds, most of which were 8 inch 15-second and 10-second shells. At 12:30 p. m. the enemy left the field, after leaving the greatest portion of their killed and wounded on the ground. They were commanded by General Holmes and Price, and supposed to be 15,000 strong. It was a most decisive victory on our side, and officers and crew are very anxious for once more to open our guns on these marauding invaders.

This vessel came out of action uninjured, and

no loss of men.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

Geo. L. Smith
Acting executive Officer

Lieutenant-Commander J. M. Prichett
Commanding U. S. S. Tyler

July 6, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": cloudy, At 5:30 steamer Courier went up river. At 6:00 a. m. U. S. Hospital boat R. C. Woods got under weigh and stood up river with heavy convoy of the Hastings and 3 unknown - Chas. Thatcher

July 7, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 5:20 steamer Kennet passed down. Crew washing clothes on main deck. - Chas. Ackley

July 8, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 4:30 a. m. a victory salute was delivered from the fort. At 6:30 steamer Empress and gunboat Covington got under weigh and stood down river. Crew engaged in washing decks - At 8:15 a. m. U. S. Gunboat Eastport arrived from above. At 12:00 we fired a salute of 21 guns in honor of the fall of Vicksburg - Chas. Thatcher

(Report of Acting Rear-Admiral David D. Porter, U. S. Navy)

U. S. Mississippi Squadron, Flagship Black Hawk
Off Vicksburg, July 9, 1863

Sir: On the 21st of June, I received intimation from various sources, spies, deserters, etc., that the rebel General Price was moving from Arkansas toward the Mississippi River with a large force in three columns and a quantity of heavy artillery, for the purpose of seizing on some point on the river, cut off our transports, and relieve Vicksburg.

I immediately made the proper dispositions to meet the rebels at such points as I knew to be

available. And Helena being a desirable point for the rebels to get possession of, I sent what I considered a sufficient force to that vicinity.

The Bragg, Tyler, and Hastings were the vessels detailed. General Prentiss has, however, no apprehension of an attack.

The Bragg remained there while the other two cruised in the vicinity. On the 1st or 2nd of July Lieutenant-Commander Phelps, whom I had put in charge of the upper river, sent the Tyler back to Helena (from the U. S. Navy Yard in Memphis) anticipating an attack there. When Lt.-Commander Prichett arrived, General Prentiss had received notice of the advance of General Price on Helena with 15,000 men. Having only 3,500 men, he made the best disposition for attack that he could make under the circumstances.

The rebels attacked the outworks of our troops on July 4 with their whole force, and, as the works were slight, succeeded in driving in the small force opposed to them, getting possession of a small fort and four light guns. Proceeding on, and overpowering our weak outposts, the rebels succeeded in reaching the crest of the hill which commanded the town of Helena, and would likely have obtained possession of it, but the gunboat Tyler opened on them with her battery of shell guns at easy range and cut them up very badly...The troops under General Prentiss behaved bravely and fought most gallantly. They charged the discomfited mass of the rebels with the bayonet while the Tyler was mowing down the retreating mob with shrapnel and shell, and the victory was ours.

This has been one of the most signal defeats the enemy have met with for some time. Lieutenant-Commander Prichett receives great credit for the share he took in the fight, the effective manner in which he delivered his fire, and the position he took, enabling him to check the enemy when they were very certain in their own mind of getting possession of Helena.

I have the honor to remain, very respectfully,

your obedient servant,

David D. Porter

Acting Rear-Admiral, Commanding Mississippi Squadron

Hon. Gideon Welles

Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

*

Headquarters District Eastern Arkansas
Helena, Ark., July 9, 1863

Admiral: I take pleasure in transmitting to you my testimony concerning the valuable assistance rendered me during the battle at this place on the 4th instant by Lieutenant-Commander James M. Prichett, of the gunboat Tyler. I assure you, sir, that he not only acquitted himself with honor and distinction during the engagement proper, but with a zeal and patience as rare as they are commendable, when informed of an attack on this place lost no time and spared no labor to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the topography of the surrounding country. And I attribute not a little of our success in the late battle to his full knowledge of the situation and his skill in adapting the means within his command to the end to be obtained.

Nor can I refrain from mentioning that after the engagement, and while we were expecting a renewal of the attack, Commander Prichett, as commanding a division of your fleet, was unusually efficient in procuring timely reinforcements.

Permit me to add, sir, that I can conceive of no case wherein promotion would be more worthily bestowed than in the case of Commander Prichett, and it would afford me much pleasure to learn that his services have received a proper reward.

I write this communication, sir, quite unsolicited and without the knowledge of Commander Prichett.

I have the honor to be, sir, with much respect,
your obedient servant,

B. M. Prentiss
Major-General

Rear-Admiral David D. Porter
Commanding Mississippi Squadron

July 10, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 12:45 p. m. U. S. Gunboat Hastings got under weigh and steamed up the river. Steamers Sultana and Crescent City passed up. At 4:00 p. m. Steamer Courier with General Prentiss onboard got under weigh and steamed up river. All hands called to deck and gave three cheers as he passed. - Charles Ackley

July 16, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 4:30 a. m. received onboard 132, 8 inch cartridges and 150 Parrott cartridges. At 5:00 a. m. U. S. Gunboat Covington, Steamer Polar Star and Wilson got under weigh and steamed down river. At 7:00 a. m. Steamer Metropolitan got under weigh and steamed up river - Thomas McElroy

U. S. Mississippi Squadron, Flagship Black Hawk
Off Vicksburg, July 18, 1863

General: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, giving an account of an attack of the rebels on you at Helena, and congratulate you on the success you obtained with so small a force over such vastly superior numbers. I am happy that the Tyler rendered such good service. Had my orders been carried out, you would have had a good force of gunboats at Helena, as I felt sure, from what I heard, that Price was moving in that direction. I do not think you will be troubled with him again shortly. I sent a force to the head of Tensas River, cut off four of his transports, and captured a good deal of his ammunition and supplies. He will be afraid of being cut off altogether and begin to move toward Shreveport. Still, I think it prudent

to keep the gunboats at Helena for awhile, and I have in charge an officer (Captain Phelps) who will always be on hand.

Hoping that Army and Navy may always cooperate together so successfully, I remain,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

David D. Porter

Acting Rear-Admiral, Commanding Miss. Squadron

Major-General B. M. Prentiss,
United States Forces

July 19, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 9:30 a. m. inspected crew at quarters. At 10:00 a. m. general inspection and Divine Service. At 10:45 a. m. U. S. Steamer General Lyons arrived from below - Charles Thatcher

July 26, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": John Cain and William Creedon confined in double irons by order of Captain Prichett - Charles Thatcher

(Letter of commendation from the Secretary of the Navy to Lieutenant-Commander Prichett, U. S. Navy)

Navy Department, July 27, 1863

Sir: I have received from Rear-Admiral Porter the reports of your successful cooperation with the Army in repelling an attack of a much superior rebel force upon the troops of General Prentiss at Helena, Arkansas, on the 4th instant.

Your prompt action on the occasion deserves and receives the unqualified approbation of the Department. Rear-Admiral Porter and General Prentiss compliment you in terms of great praise for your skill and the effective management of the guns of the Tyler which were served with such disastrous and signal effect upon the ranks of the enemy.

It is no reflection upon the troops under General Prentiss, who are represented to have fought

with determined gallantry and bravery against overwhelming numbers, to say that they were saved, in all probability, from serious disaster by the valuable assistance rendered by the Tyler under your command.

Accept the Department's congratulations for yourself and the officers and men under your command for your glorious achievement, which adds another to the list of brilliant successes of our Navy and Army on the anniversary of our nation's independence.

Very respectfully, etc.,

Gideon Welles
Secretary of the Navy

Lieutenant-Commander James M. Pritchett, U. S. Navy
Commanding U. S. Gunboat Tyler, Mississippi Squadron

July 28, 1863--Off Helena "Ark": At 10:00 a. m. Steamer V. F. Wilson came alongside with an ice barge and left us 1500 pounds of ice. U. S. Hospital boat R. C. Woods arrived from above. Amount of coal on board 1170. Average amount of steam 70 pounds - Charles Ackley

CONCLUSION:

These naval records reveal many significant facts for researchers of the War in the West, particularly concerning the Battle of Helena.

1) First; the logs of the Tyler indicate the extremely heavy traffic of U. S. vessels in the Helena area (between Memphis and Vicksburg) between the Spring of 1863 and the end of the war.

2) Second; logs and official correspondence indicate that the "surprise attack" planned by the Confederate officers was actually no surprise at all. Advance preparations for the July 4 charge had begun as early as ten days prior to the attack.

3) Third; the flooding of the rivers and creeks in eastern Arkansas did not occur until June

25-28, a full week before the attack. Had troop movements been completed prior to that time, the chances of a Southern victory would have been greatly enhanced. The Confederate troops would not have been physically exhausted and could have camped several miles from Helena to recover their strength before the battle. This would have more readily facilitated a simultaneous plan of attack, giving pickets time to screen the area for road blocks, obstructions, and abatis.

4) Finally; although tradition holds that the Tyler "laid down a physically devastating line of fire" upon the advancing rebel forces, these records and similar research on naval guns leads this writer to question the validity of such statements. (Ed. note: see Captain Redington's comment on this subject in the QUARTERLY of March, 1976, page 39.)

The various branches of the military have always encouraged coordination of efforts in order to achieve a set objective. However, it is only natural for each branch to have a biased opinion of its contributions to the achievement of that goal. Such is the case with the Tyler at Helena. All Naval correspondence attaches significant importance to the role of the Tyler, even to the point of declaring that the Tyler "saved the day" for the Union forces.

Army correspondence did little more than praise the Tyler and her commanding officer for a job well done; and recognized the ship as a valuable support unit.

With contrasting reports such as these, it becomes necessary to carefully study the logs and Official Records in order to ascertain the Tyler's impact at the Battle of Helena.

The Tyler's gunners had two key targets on July 4, 1863. These were: (1) the Confederate field pieces located on the Old Little Rock Road and (2) the area now bounded by Columbia, Arkansas, Don/

College, and Rightor Streets in Helena.

She fired on the Rebel battery south of town from roughly 6:50 a. m. until 7:30 a. m., forcing the pieces to retire from the field. From approximately 8:00 a. m. until 12:30 p. m., the Tyler fired on the second position mentioned above. During this time she expended roughly 420 shells. Gun elevations were set at five degrees and the range was between 1600 and 2350 yards. Because of the roll of the firing vessel in the water, at least 40% of those rounds carried over or fell short of the attacking forces. (See illustration.) In effect, the gunboat only fired about a shell a minute into the Confederate charge down the slopes of Graveyard (Reservoir) Hill. With such a short distance between this point and Fort Curtis, a shell a minute could not possibly "physically devastate" the men in the attacking columns. The fort could have been easily carried under this fire.

However, between the Confederate troops and Fort Curtis, the Union troops had reformed and soon began to spray the field with musket fire. The artillery of Battery D (Hindman Hill) opened up against the attacking lines, firing on the rebels from behind. At this point, the very guns of Fort Curtis were turned and fired into the faces of the rebels. Add to that the tremendously loud fire of the Tyler (shell weight up to 52 lbs.) and it is easy to see why many of those attacking troops felt surrounded, and became confused. Those who were killed or wounded did not nearly equal the number of those who were forced to throw down their arms and surrender.

The Tyler's "deadly fire" is not doubted. Surely many men fell under her fire. Her presence definitely influenced the results of the battle. But, she probably dealt a greater psychological blow to the Confederate troops at Helena than she did a physical one.

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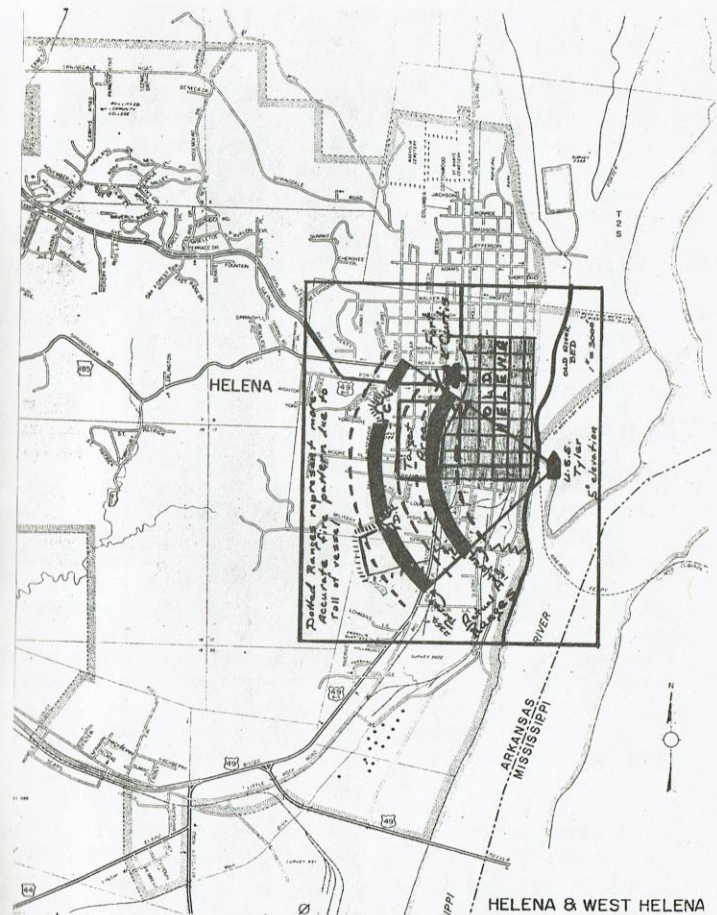
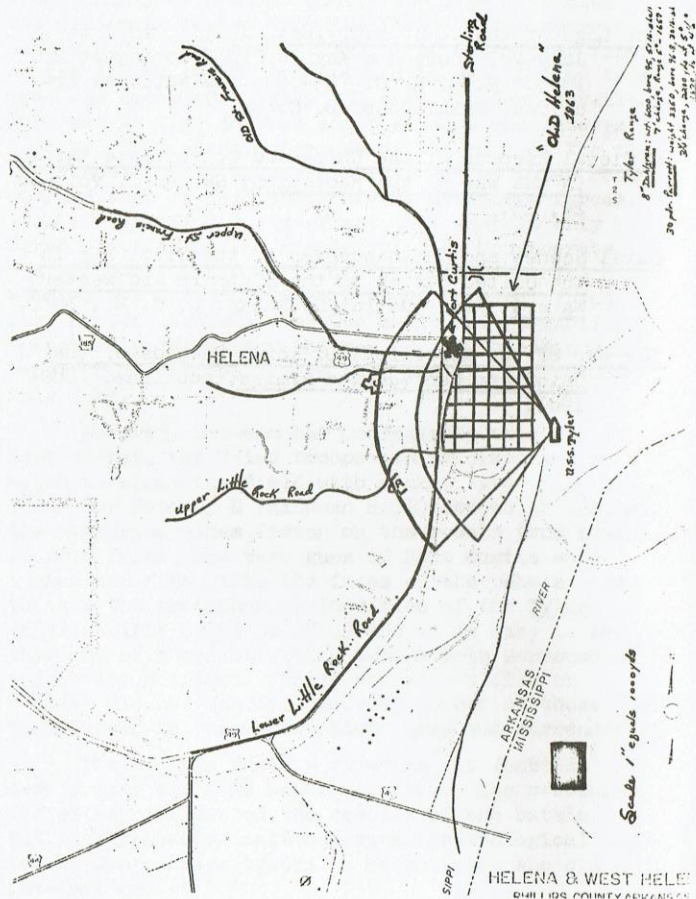
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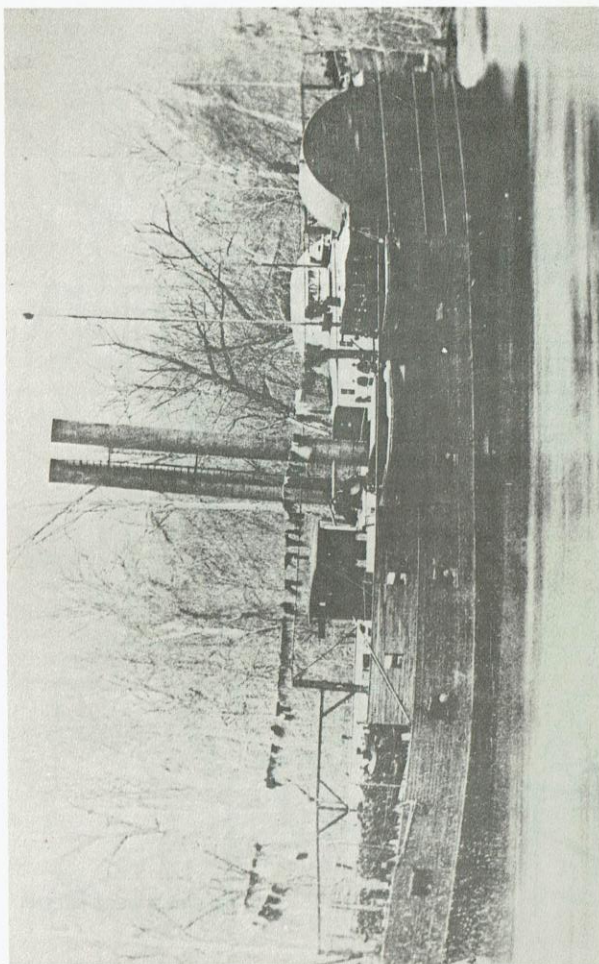
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U. S. S. TYLER. From photo collection of T. E. Tappan.

NOTES

Dues for the membership year, 1977-1978, are payable as of May 1st to the Treasurer. They are \$5.00 for a regular membership and \$10.00 for a sustaining membership.

Boyd Wade of Memphis came to Helena in early February, when he very generously gave two handsome portraits of his great grandfather, General Gideon J. Pillow, to the Historical Society. In one portrait General Pillow is dressed in his Confederate uniform, and in the other he is dressed in the uniform of the United States Army, as an officer serving in the Mexican War. Mr. Wade will be our guest speaker at the May meeting, subject--General Pillow. At that time he will formally present the portraits. They will hang in the Museum.

Mrs. Dorothy Crisp has written a very interesting and informative book, NEIGHBORS OF CRISP'S CROSSING, CREIGH AND CONNELL'S POINT, ARKANSAS. For several years Mrs. Crisp had gathered bits and pieces, hoping to share them with someone who would write a book on the community. No one did, so last year she decided to do it as a personal Bicentennial project. It is a soft back book of 99 pages, 40 pages of which are pictures. The general public has been very receptive to the book which is filled with family data on all families which lived in the area. Books may be purchased for \$5.00 from the author, Rt. 2, Box 102, Marvell, Arkansas 72366, or from the West Helena Library.

The La Salle Expedition II arrived here on schedule at noon, Saturday, March 5th. Twenty-three voyageurs in six Algonquin-type handcrafted canoes left Montreal last August 9th, re-enacting the journey of La Salle and De Tonty down the Mississippi in 1682. They braved severe weather during much of the

winter, but slept in their tents every night. They walked on ice over 500 miles. New Orleans was the final destination of the Expedition, and it reached there on April 9th.

Reid Lewis, 35 year old high school French teacher from Elgin, Illinois, played the role of La Salle. He will be remembered as the young man who played the role of Joliet in the Marquette-Joliet re-enactment in July, 1973.

The voyageurs left here Tuesday morning, March 8th. They gave a formal presentation on Saturday night at the Lily Peter Auditorium. The entire three days were packed with activities arranged by Mrs. Dick Cunningham and Harry Webb, Jr., co-chairmen of the event. They participated in many events while here, including trips to schools, churches, Heritage Home, the River Academy, tree plantings, and a rocket launch in their honor.

Many of the young men said, if at the end of the trip they had their choice of returning to a community, they would come back here because of the wonderful hospitality shown them.

The Phillips County Bicentennial Committee recently purchased and presented to the citizens of Phillips County a beautiful American flag on a stand. It will be housed in the West Helena Library, and will be available for loan.
