REMINISCENCES OF LIFE AT WEST POINT, BANGOR & IN THE ARMY

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My life came to be exceedingly pleasant at West Point after I became intimate with John Weir. We & I communed together on Art & Literature — understood & sympathized with one another. He helped me to observe the beauties & sublimities of nature — the mountains, the river, the clouds & infinite variety of sky, the trees, the immense variety of colors in wood, rocks, shrubs & all growing things — not the least the flowers.

For his sake (as well as for that of my other West Point friends) I became more appreciative of Episcopalian forms, modes of thought & feeling. Spent much time in his & his father's studio & learned to study with something like a true artist's taste & criticism the fine models, to be seen there & so gained a taste & knowledge which enabled me to appreciate the ~~extracts~~ pictures I saw afterwards, that year, in New York & Philadelphia. It was a great privilege to visit New York as my stay at West Point enabled me to do — a great city I had not been accustomed to — to hear the preachers, to observe

the architecture & to learn from everything I saw on the streets, on the boats &c. I also made a visit to Philadelphia during the year. Of course I learned much of Army life — society, drift of thought & conversation. The distinction of rank, the pride of position & the disposition to despise certain classes of people, in short, a sort of Caste that prevailed was always very distasteful to me — at first exceedingly disagreeable.

The religious work in which you were engaged & in which I became more or less associated with you, was a source of satisfaction to me, I liked your efforts to carry the gospel to the soldiers' families & to the poor at Buttermilk Falls. I preached there a few times both for the Methodist & for the Presbyterian minister Mr. Gray. I liked the quaint pastor at the Church of the Holy Innocents Mr. Wells & used to go to lunch with him with John. I liked Mr. French, Chaplain, & felt that he was just as good a pastor & faithful gospel preacher as if he had been a Methodist or Congregationalist. — John & I used to enjoy calling at the Gray's where we got a view of the trials of a country parson's life. Jeanie Gray, too, opened up a new view of human nature & we used to find

a good deal of romance in our various walks & talks with & about her & what was suggested thereby. From the letters you will see mention of some of our (yours & my) trips up the mountains. We went sometimes to Cold Spring also, & I had pleasant visits to Newburgh & Pokeepsie.— I have often thought what a remarkable providence it was which gave me so much familiarity with army matters — Artillery, Infantry, Cavalry, Engineering, the Quartermasters & Commissary departments &c.; a military Post — drilling of soldiers, company & battalion &c &c — all this & a pleasant acquaintance with many officers just before the war which fitted me for the duties of a staff officer & thus to be more useful from the start than I otherwise could have been.

The Library was a place of much interest to me. You will remember that we studied there somewhat, Greek &c. & I was constantly reading good instructive books.

The historic monuments about the point & the part taken by West Point & that region in the Revolutionary War, waken'd my patriotism.

I met there southern people & so got impressions of southern society at first hands—

of the intensity & bitterness of their hatred of abolitionists & their willingness to sacrifice the Union, rather than have the policy of the Government dictated by them. Your own frank & outspoken character & your simple religious faith & your Christian zeal & consistency all had great influence upon me at this time.

I enjoyed my home with sister Lizzie & the children & so did not get homesick. My natural love of domesticity was not quite as well & fully as it had ever been. You all made me "at home."

My friendship with John F. Tice has always been kept up. I afterwards visited him in New York City, while he was at the Tenth St. Studio, a good many times — & since at New Haven. I enjoyed letters from him while he was in the 7th N. Y. Regt. at Washington, the early spring of 1861.

I went to West Point in the Fall — I thought think it was November, 1859 & remained until after the June examinations.

About the first of September I took a High School at Holden, Me. (out east of Bangor about ten miles) entered the Seminary before, I believe, but stayed out until my school of three months was completed. Had many

interesting scholars & a marked religious awakening connected with my school. Many conversions - meetings in my school house in which I took a very active part. Two missionary families in that place, having sons & daughters in foreign fields.

When I returned to Bangor Seminary Dr. Samuel Harris asked me to take a certain class of young ladies in the Sabbath School of the Central Church where he & Dr. Shepard were the joint pastors. The class asked for me. I had seen Miss Kitty Foster before, when visiting my brother Rowland while he was in the Seminary & he had told me that she was a girl of fine Christian character. She united with the Church when she was twelve years of age as he informed me, & she never could remember a time when she did not love her Saviour. She was especially remarkable for a sensitive conscience. Once Dr. Harris had to explain to her mother, that in certain preaching, he had in mind persons of an entirely different character, so troubled was Kitty in the application of the sermons to herself.

I felt my unfitness for so advanced a class, but decided finally to take it, & there first became acquainted with Miss

Hosten in the class of six or more young ladies. She was then (Dec. 1860) not quite sixteen years of age. Was, from the first, to me the most interesting scholar in the class, both as to looks & mind — though there were one or two others with whom I was more intimately acquainted — having met them out of the class. I soon became acquainted with her parents & sister & remember that her presence at a certain reading club added much to the interest to me. She accepted my escort to one of the public society meetings at the Seminary & for a few moments called at my room, where was my room-mate, Rev. ~~A. Cox~~ Americus Fuller — now missionary in Turkey.

About the first of May 1861 I was summoned to Augusta to meet you who had come there to take the Colonelcy of the 3rd Maine Regt. — I had seen one regiment (two years enlist~~ed~~ment) leave Bangor. Its City was more patriotic. In answer to my class-mates who echoed Seward's 90 days prediction, I had said publicly that, if the South was to be conquered by force of arms, it might take ten years but I had no doubt that that would be the final issue. I found at Augusta that I could be useful to you, at least so you thought, in organizing the

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