

ARTICLE. (unpublished).

No. 41 Volume 9.

Subjects:

Some noted public men I have known in the sixties, and Generals.  
James G. Blaine, Gen. Jameson, A. Lincoln, Gen. McDowell, Gen. McClellan  
Gen. Milroy, Gen. Hooker, Burnside and Grant.

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ARTICLE (continued)

No. 41 Volume 2

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James G. Blaine, Gen. J. J. Johnston, A. J. F. Johnston, Gen. Joseph  
Gen. Milroy, Gen. Hooker, Burnside and Grant.

SOME NOTED PUBLIC MEN AND GENERALS THAT I KNEW  
IN THE SIXTIES.

The first man of note that comes into my mind in view of my subject is James G. Blaine. My first distinctive recollection of Blaine was when I was stationed at Kennebec Arsenal. Blaine was then living at Augusta, and the editor of the "Kennebec Journal". Having friends in the regular Army Mr. Blaine soon made himself known to me after I took command of the Arsenal. One day I came over from the east side of the river to the business part of Augusta. The office of the two opposing papers, namely the Journal and the "Argus" was side by side, and each had a balcony just above the basements. The editor of the "Argus" spoke to Blaine from his balcony just as Blaine reached his from the stairway. He called Blaine to an account in unmeasured terms for something published in the Journal. Blaine answered in his sharpest style and belabored the Democratic editor till he was glad to flee for shelter. I was standing on the opposite side of the street and heard the sharp controversy. This controversy I recalled with great distinctness when the Hon. Roscoe Conklin received his terrific castigation on the floor of <sup>THE</sup> House at a later day. When aroused no man could easily meet Blaine in debate and never could any one bring him to terms by abuse. Blaine did me many a good service while stationed at the Arsenal. As speaker of the Maine House he aided me to get a bill passed by the legislature which gave to the children within the grounds of the United States Arsenal a right to attend the schools of the city; a right before that time denied them except by the payment of tuition. It was natural being of about the same age that our families should become acquainted the one with the other, at this early period of 1854 and 1855.

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Six years later I was just completing my four year's detail as an instructor of the Military Academy in May, 1861. Civil War, as it is now called, was already upon us and the officers of the Army were separating and taking sides for and against the United States. Gen. Warren, who had been an Assistant Professor with me, had become the Lieutenant Colonel of the Duryea Zouaves, and Alexander McDowell McCook, a co-instructor, had rushed off to Ohio and taken the Colonelcy of the 1st Ohio. Many other officers had resigned from the Army or obtained leaves of absence, some to go South and some to abide by the flag. Day by day we were watching Gen. Benjamin Butler's operations in Maryland, and the excitement at West Point ran high. I had written the Governor of Maine, Israel Washburn, begging for a chance among the Volunteers. He had replied to me that there was no opening for me as all the officers were elective.

Near the last of May I received a telegram from Blaine the purport of which was "Will you, if elected accept the Colonelcy of the 3rd Maine?". Before answering this Mrs. Howard and I had had a serious talk. We agreed that I might fill the position of a Major, or as Warren did of a Lieut. Colonelcy, but that the position of a Colonel was a little too high a step to be taken at once. I went immediately to consult with the Commandant of cadets, John F. Reynolds, at that <sup>time</sup> having the local rank of Lieut. Colonel. Reynolds was a man of great seriousness, always very genteel in his dress and appearance and very polite to his fellow officers, always kind and cordial in commanding the cadets. I sat down with him, as I recall it, on the small porch of his quarters. I asked him what he thought should be my answer to that dispatch of Blaine's. He replied, "Accept of course". I showed him that I had never commanded more than a Company. He replied, "What of that. Don't you think you could do as well as a doc-

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tor or lawyer who has had no experience in military affairs?" He then sent for the Army <sup>Drill</sup> Regulations; a book that I had had no occasion to study very much prior to this time. He called my attention to the paragraph which showed how to organize a regiment, marked passages and turned down the leaves. After I left Reynolds I mustered up enough courage to reply to Blaine, "Yes, if elected I will take the Colonelcy."

It was not many days before I had met my fate. I had parted with my family, resigned my Army Commission and organized the first three year's regiment from my native state. How well I remember being introduced to the Governor by Mr. Blaine. Gov. Washburn was a shortish man, quick in motion and rapid in speech. He appeared to me to enjoy the prominence and the power which the great conflict already on had brought him. He was a thoroughly patriotic soul, and prepared to give all the strength he had to sustain Mr. Lincoln and keep the Flag flying.

As difficulties increased Blaine was cooler and more thoughtful. Perhaps a couple of days after my arrival I was walking with him at evening along the main street. After a period of silence between us thinking of the existing state of affairs, Blaine suddenly remarked, "Howard, you will be the first general officer from this State." Of course, I did not think so for I was just then tugging away as hard as I could at the duties of a Colonel and not very solicitous for any promotion. Blaine seemed to be ever watching over my ~~interest~~ interest. He congratulated me when promoted; he wrote a sympathetic letter to my step-father when I was wounded; he congratulated me upon the vote of thanks of Congress after Gettysburg; and with his superior talent he defended me when attacked in the newspapers on account of our defeat at Chancellorsville. Of course I watched Blaine's career with ever increasing interest, sympathizing

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with him, and wanting to see him President of the United States. He has become so well known to his countrymen in his superb statesmanship and in his able writings, and magnificent work in Congress, that it would be like carrying coals to New Castle to tell you of these things. But from my personal intercourse I had some knowledge of the kindnesses of his heart and the warmth of his affection, to which I love to testify.

At one time I came in close relationship with Gen. Jameson. It was when he was Colonel of the 2nd Maine. Jameson's military career was a brief one, but it was brilliant though so short. Early in June the 3rd Maine with its Colonels put in an appearance on Meridian Hill <sup>Washington</sup> near the Columbian College. It was during a terrific rain storm when we arrived. Col. Jameson's regiment, already established near the College, had ample camping ground with tents well pitched for the officers and men. Though the lightning flashed and the thunder roared and the rain poured down in torrents, still Col. Jameson with a few of his officers came out to meet us. He distributed ~~###~~ our officers among his officers and our men among his men, so that in a short time the majority of them had some shelter. His regiment gave us coffee for refreshment and treated my homesick soldiers so well that they had the necessary courage to put <sup>up</sup> their own tents as soon as the storm subsided.

Again and again I met Jameson who ever had what I called a "parallel" command of about equal strength to mine. He had a fine handsome figure, and was noted for the courtesy of his deportment. It was sad news to me when the fever caught him after Fair Oaks and carried him off. It was at that encampment on Meridian Hill, while we were drilling from morning until night, that I first became acquainted with Abraham Lincoln. He was sitting in a two horse carriage

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when, after one of my evening parades, I was taken by some friend to meet him. He spoke to me very pleasantly and he took my hand. I remember that I was disappointed that he did not appear taller when sitting in his carriage. I have always wondered what he did with his legs on that occasion.

Only a few days ago I came across Capt. Savage, who was a non-commissioned officer in my regiment at the time of Mr. Lincoln's visit. From over-work or improper food, I became suddenly prostrated by a bilious attack. It seemed very much like a regular attack of cholera and my surgeon, Dr. Gideon S. Palmer, was much alarmed at my condition as I grew rapidly weaker and at times delirious. Capt. Savage says that Mr. Lincoln came out to see me at one time with Miss Charlotte Cushman, and the second time with his little boy, "Tad". Savage says he had been placed on duty near my tent with instructions to keep everything quiet. After visiting the tent Mr. Lincoln went somewhere to inquire of the surgeon about me, while little "Tad" remained behind. Mr. Lincoln had enjoined upon him to be very quiet. Savage says "Tad" asked him after this fashion, "Is the Colonel sick? Is he awful sick? Father is afraid he won't live." I did recuperate as rapidly as I went down, quickly responding to the medicine and care which I had had. The wife of one of the Captains, Mrs. S.S. Sampson, who saved more soldier's lives than any other person whom I know, had me furnished with those delicacies which means so much to a man taken with sickness in camp, and Mrs. Carroll, the mother of Gen. Samuel Sprigg Carroll, had me brought to her home for a couple of days, so that I was on my feet again with my new strength before ten days had elapsed from the beginning of the assault. I had several opportunities of seeing Mr. Lincoln before crossing the Potomac. What impressed me most in him was the fact that he had to bring men together,

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Lately I have come to the conclusion that in matters which belong to Generals to study upon and decide that Abraham Lincoln outstepped them all in the clearness of his vision and in the judgment which he declared. It gives me great satisfaction to have known him and to have known him so well.

Before the formation of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Irvin McDowell had, on our side, the command of the Provisional Army. Pitted against him on the other side of the Potomac near Manassas Junction was Gen. P.T. Beauregard. I had known McDowell at a distance before the War. He was a large man, always in excellent health and capable of enduring great fatigue. He had been a great student of Military History and was a favorite aide or Adjutant to Gen. Winfield Scott. He had all the formal dignity, and that was excessive like that of his General, of being able to keep officers and men at arms length, and never had (except in the rich hospitality of his own home) any approach to what we call the "Suaviter in Modo." McDowell, notwithstanding the severity of his discipline, possessed many good qualities. Always temperate; always patriotic and personally brave. Beauregard, however, did not excel McDowell and few gave him proper credit for what he did.

While on Meridian Hill I received a note from McDowell asking me to select three regiments besides my own to form a brigade. This I did so that my brigade consisted of the 3rd, 4th, 5th<sup>Maine</sup> and 2nd Vermont Regiments. This Brigade I took into the first battle of

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Bull Run the 21st of July, 1861. It may be of interest to note here how my division was formed. Col. Franklin commanded our first Brigade; Col. O.B. Wilcox our second, and Col. Oliver O. Howard our third, and these three brigades formed Gen. Heintzelman's division. Franklin was a little phlegmatic, but he had a large brain and was a noble commander. His officers and men trusted him. Wilcox, I had known formerly in Florida. He was diligent in mastering the duties of his profession, rising steadily through the service to the command of a corps. Franklin was one of the first Corps commanders selected under McClellan. Heintzelman was already advanced in years, tho not so old as Gen. Scott. He was of an irrasible disposition, easily offended and very exacting. He always paid extreme attention to lit- tle things, yet you never encountered a braver man or a truer patriot.

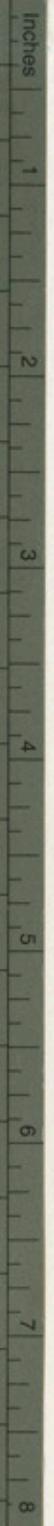
You have had all the detail of Bull Run and I need not repeat it. McDowell's plans were laid before his officers the night before the battle and they were good,- excellent if he and his army had been able to execute them. Beauregard on the other side of Bull Run, being a capital engineer, had made very complete arrangements for a defensive battle, but he hardly would have succeeded in that first struggle if it had not been for the fact that Gen. Jos. E. Johnston had <sup>not</sup> put in an early appearance upon the field. Johnston's advise and the reinforcements that he brought from the Valley of Virginia were the direct causes of McDowell's defeat. I do not think that Gen. Beauregard should ever have undertaken large commands. Engineering was his fort and that he understood. But Jos. E. Johnston was a man of the largest ability, quick to plan and able to execute.

Sherman was the only General that we had on our side who could match him in strategy. He showed his strategic ability at Gnterville, Va., at Fair Oaks and also in the West during the Atlanta and Carolina campaigns.

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After McDowell's defeat, Geo. B. McClellan came in command of our forces and held his own fairly well against Gen. Johnston up to and including the battle of Fair Oaks, Virginia. After that McClellan had against him Gen. Robt. E. Lee. I knew both of these men personally and was much with them. I really saw more of Lee in his home life than I did of McClellan. I became quite intimate at one time with Gen. Marcy when he was Capt. Marcy and in command of a company of the 5th Inf. Marcy was McClellan's father-in-law and for a long time his Chief of staff. In many instances Lee and McClellan were alike. They were scholarly men. They were thoroughly conversant with everything pertaining to that profession, that of the military and civil engineer. They were Christian men, kind and courteous to all with whom they came in contact. Gen. Lee at best was as thoroughly devoted to the Union as McClellan and nothing but the feeling that he would be obliged to fight against his State and his numerous relatives caused him to decline promotion and then to resign from the Army. He has been much blamed by Patriots and Statesmen, but I think if we should put ourselves in his place we would see the difficulties of the situation. The differences between him and McClellan were rather in degree than in kind. McClellan found it difficult to trust Volunteers and he so far estimated, probably through false information, the numbers of his opponents that the effect produced in him was always the same, namely, cautiousness. This enabled Joe Johnston to outgeneral him in the beginning of the Peninsular Campaign, and Gen. Lee to overcome him by prompter action. Lee outgeneralled not only McClellan but Pope, Burnside and Hooker. The Army of the Potomac did put up a very fair campaign against Lee, but Lee's retreat, recuperation and opposition to Grant; and opposition long kept up with inferior numbers against our greatest General, who had ample resources and plenty of men, and left a record of Generalship for War students

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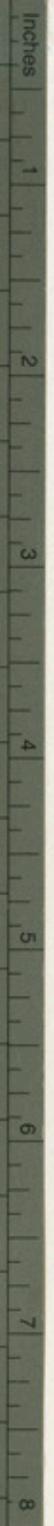


to study and imitate.

The first time I saw Gen. Grant I was impressed with the tremendous strength and character of the man. He planned instinctively and executed his plans personally without a shadow of wavering. He differed from all others in his belief as firm as the hills, that he was carrying out the will of Divine Providence in putting down the rebellion against the American Union. He was quite gentle in deportment, self-sacrificing, & self-reliant. His enemy, and not some town or city, was always his objective point. We had no other General who had this fixedness of purpose. ~~#####~~ Grant was not always silent, but at times very talkative, when there was no newspaper man present. But he did not talk about the things which it was wise to keep to himself.

My subject is too large a one to push as I had intended. I would like to speak of Edwin M. Stanton, the strongest cabinet officer under Lincoln; of Salmon P. Chase, the brave and ambitious Secretary who organized our finance during the War; of Geo. H. Thomas, the noblest Virginian who fought for the Union without let or hindrance; of the superb W. T. Sherman, who fought so many battles and handled the land and the sea as if they were his servants; I would like to speak of your own Terry and Hawley, who was not only a clear headed soldier, but a leading statesman during the times when such incorruptable statesmen were needed. All the young men remember the glorious deeds of the generation which is now almost a closed book and from it gather new inspiration for genuine loyalty to the flag and to the country.

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