

The namesake
a true story

(Original manuscript.)

No 27.

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The name-sake. - A true story.

Harry Howard is very fond of war-stories. One evening he said, "Papa, why don't you tell us more about the war?

You were in it all went
You!"

Little boys and sometimes big ones ask questions faster than they can be answered. On this particular occasion it was after dinner, and the family, including his mother and younger sister, had assembled around the table-desk in the library. The well shaded lamp cast a soft light upon the cheerful group.

"Well, Harry," says his father as he drops his newspaper and removes his glasses, "What shall the story be?"

"Oh, about some soldier-boy - some young man that you knew."

All right my son. But perhaps I had better answer your questions first. The reason I do not tell more war-stories is because I have a feeling that what I know Mama knows and

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The children know. Why, having I written and talked about the war of rebellion these many years?

To answer the other question, I do not suppose that I was in a tenth part of our great war. There were several armies in the field at the same time, and hundreds of battles were fought ~~that~~ I was not in or near.

* Harry, for whom were you named? *

"I was named for Colonel Stinson whose picture hangs in the middle room."

Yes, his name was Henry M. Stinson but he was always called Harry.

He was a Lieutenant when he came to me from his regiment. Soon after he received what in the army is called a staff appointment of Captain and aide de camp. But he finally obtained for gallant & meritorious conduct on the field of battle two brevets one as Major and the other as Lieutenant Colonel.

* What do a Major and a Lieutenant colonel have to do? *

Oh, the duties for each are much the same.

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When he is with his regiment and on duty with the soldiers the Major is a field officer. Sometimes he takes two or three companies and goes with them to seize a bridge, take a battery of big guns from the enemy or hold a fort or some other important place. In short he, as well as the Lieutenant-colonel, helps the Colonel of the regiment.

But Harry Stinson being an aide assisted me in writing letters and orders, in carrying messages night and day and in thousands of ways as you would have done had you been with me in the war.

"But," says Sister Bessie, "I don't know what you mean by two brevets?"

"She don't know much does she, papa? You see Bessie, the president gives to Harry a piece of parchment rolled up like that in papa's long tin box. On it he writes that Captain Stinson is now a Major, because he has fought in a big battle. That is his brevet, is'nt it papa?"

Yes. What is it; it is one brevet commission; but now no pay is added for the brevet. It is only to honor him with a new title.

I fear we shall never get to the story if children ask so many questions.

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"Now Papa! The story is Harry Stinson and how we've been hearing all about him?"

Yes, Harry, but I think a story should have a proper beginning.

When Harry Stinson was a little boy, I knew his father. He was a merchant and lived in Hallowell and afterward in Auburn, Maine. Like his son Harry, he attracted you by his pleasant manners. He spoke quickly and had a brisk walk like a man of business. Soon after the war broke out he and two of his sons, Alonzo and Harry, enlisted in the army. [Lieutenant and Quartermaster of the 13th Maine Regiment] The father died in the service. Then his wife with the smaller children moved to Augusta. Your mamma knew her there. In fact living on the same street the two anxious women used to meet almost daily and compare notes. When a letter came to one the other got the news. When after a battle or dangerous march a telegram saying "all is safe" or "all are well" appeared both had comfort from it.

Harry and his brother had enlisted in the 5th Maine regiment.

"Papa, how many men were there in the 5th regiment?"

There were one thousand officers and men

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in it when it left the state of Maine. This was early in June 1861. What an excitement there was then. When my regiment left Augusta on the cars, the streets were filled with people. They were in the windows waving flags and handkerchiefs, and all along the high ground which borders the railway. Some were cheering, but a great many women and children were weeping. So it must have been when, two or three weeks later, the fifth pulled out of the same depot. Poor Mrs Stinson, without doubt, her heart throbbing and her eyes bathed in tears, stood where she could get a last glimpse of Alonzo and Harry, as the two brothers from the crowded cars with so many others waved back their final ~~adieu~~ farewell.

"Did you have Harry Stinson's regiment with you?"

Yes. Colonel Dunell was its immediate commander. After a few days of drills and parades just to the north of Washington, the Colonel reported to me and I put his regiment into my first brigade. Then, General Irvin McDowell, who commanded all the soldiers that men in and near the District of Columbia, sent me with my brigade

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across the Potomac river. We marched through Alexandria and then out a few miles into the country and went into camp to the left of the Fairfax turnpike.

"Where were the rebels, Papa, then?"

They were supposed to be near Centerville or a little farther away near Manassas junction.

General P. J. Beauregard who was once superintendent of the Military Academy was then in command of them. Their horsemen used to come on scouting expeditions to within a few miles of us; and their spies both men and women often penetrated our lines. One night where some men of Harry's regiment under the command of a captain were guarding a crossroad which was a considerable distance in front of the main troops and somewhat obscured from view by an abundance of trees and under brush, the sounds of horses feet were heard. In the stillness they could be discerned at a distance. They seemed to come nearer and nearer. The captain got his men ready to fire. Soon three horsemen appeared and rode up boldly, the tallest in advance.

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He was promptly challenged by the sentinel,
"Who comes there?"

"Federal officer and two men," was the
quick and confident reply.

They were in our uniform and gave
such good account of themselves that
the captain was almost ready to let them
pass; but he thought he would be very
careful as stories of spies coming and
going between the enemies and Alexandria were
then current; so he said, "You may be
all right but I must take you to the
officer of my guard. Please give me
your gun." The stranger leader did
not anticipate that, so he cried out, "my
gun!" and using a fierce exclamation
as quick as a flash he turned his horse
and gave him both spurs. He had
hardly started when the captain cried
"fire!" The poor man was instantly shot
and fell to the ground. His companions
who had kept a little space back
pushed into the thicket and escaped.
The leader proved to be a young man from
Mississippi. He had frequently passed our
lines before. On his person was found a
very touching letter from his young wife.
In it she declared that his business was too

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dangerous, and for her sake and for
the sake of his little child, she begged him
to be careful and not expose himself so
much. It was sad news that the men who
had escaped must have sent her. Her own,
her beloved had fallen. He became
a victim to his love of daring and venture
which induced him as a Scout to
attempt to pass our lines. He tried the
experiment once too often!

Near the middle of July and soon after the
above event, General McDowell's army began
an advance toward the enemy, then reported
to be in force near Manassas.

Our brigade was in the division of the brave
General Heintzelman. This officer was rather an
odd man who was famous for his frank and
hasty speeches. He had served with great credit in
the Mexican war and was now just the resolute
commander that new troops needed. In Alexandria
as our brigade passed him without fixed
bayonets, he said curtly, "Colonel you are
not well drilled!" "No, excuse sir, - poor
officers! good looking men!" Be sure,
Harry, no such mistake occurred again while
we were in his division.

The evening of the 20th of July, the eve of the
battle, our brigade was drawn up in four lines,

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when, after parade, one of the chaplains made a prayer. Your father, Harry, who had never yet been in battle, felt that evening like speaking to the men. It was intended to cheer them and encourage them to put their trust in the God of battles.

That night a little later General McDowell invited the Division and Brigade commanders to meet at his tent. He explained to them his plans for moving forward & for the anticipated battle. One column under General Tyler was, to move straight toward the enemy, taking the most direct roads from Centerville toward Manassas.

Another column under General Hunter, our division forming part of this force, was to make a march six or seven miles to the right and try to come upon the enemy from that direction. The ~~rest~~ ^{remaining} of the army under General Miles was to be kept at Centerville as a reserve.

The stream of water, running through the woods and thickets, which separated the two armies was called "Bull Run".

"Oh, papa", says Bessie, "so it was the "Battle of Bull Run!"

Yes. The first one. Many people have a wrong idea of a field of battle. They do not imagine it large enough and they do not conceive enough objects

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upon it. This battle field had hills, valleys, woods, open farms, barns, houses, creeks and plenty of paths and roads, all within the limits of the battle field.

The confederates sent out ^{to meet our forces} cavalry, artillery and infantry to the crossings of the Bull Run ~~to meet our forces~~; and they kept back more still on the higher ground beyond.

At 2 o'clock in the morning of July 21, before it was dawn we all began to move. When the sun was up it became very hot indeed. After moving perhaps a mile we were obliged to wait three hours or more for General Tylers men to get past our road. My men wore rather thick clothing and besides this their equipments with their food & cartridges made them a heavy load. Many had not taken enough sleep. The idea of a first battle excited them. Many became faint and sick when we took up the march, and fell out by the way.

At last our brigade including Harry's regiment was making good progress along a road nearly parallel with the Bull Run. Now we began to hear the booming of big guns. It was indeed "the cannons opening roar!"

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Suddenly we caught sight of some
musclemen who, emerging from a
grove, began crossing a cleared field
to the left of our road. It proved to
be General McDowell with his staff &
escort. We were then near an old black-
smith's shop. The General, fearing that
his reserve under General Miles was not
large enough for his purposes, caused our
brigade to halt and wait at this point.
Here we remained till afternoon. The
men had plenty of time to rest but we
must be always ready to start and
we could hear not only the thunder
of the cannon beyond the woods to
our front, to our left, and far off to
our right; but, the confused irregular
rattle of musketry came to the ears
of our waiting men. General McDowell
and his escort had soon left us, and
moved forward Sudley Springs, ^{which were} now the
right of our line, near which the heaviest
firing appeared. Men often rouse themselves
and go into battle with great show of
courage but the same men lose
heart by standing and waiting too
long within the sound of the guns.
At last messengers began to come

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from the bloody field. The Lieutenant colonel of the Third Maine who had been at the front came riding back at full speed without his hat & with a handkerchief bound about his head. "We are driving them, we are beating them!" Excitement and cheers at this report made everybody for a time forget his weariness and fear.

Soon a staff-officer, Captain Whipple of the Engineers, coming from General McDowell, galloped up to me and said: "You are wanted, move your brigade to the right at a double quick!" Of course we tried, but the searching sun, the heavy burdens to be carried and the great excitement proved too much for the men, so that many dropped down and were left on the road. Captain Whipple himself not knowing the country well led us by the long route of seven miles. To add to the terror of the occasion we began to meet the ambulances bearing the wounded. Many of the poor fellows within were groaning and moaning with pain. Worse they told us was General Hunter, the commander of our column. When we were well over the Bull Run, we came out into the open spaces; there we caught the sight of our

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first battlefield. The spaces then seemed large, ~~and~~ the men but few; - still there was enough ~~to~~ see to make a splendid picture. The uniforms were of various colours, many very bright and showy from scarlet to gray. The thousands of bayonets gleamed in the sunlight and the bright barreled cannon shone in the distance.

Ambulances and ammunition wagons were hurrying to & fro. The air was full of noise, roar, rattle, screaming & whistling of missiles and fragments of shells. It appeared heated like an ~~immense~~ furnace and oppressed you to breath it.

By another officer guiding us we hurried over the open fields taking a direction perpendicular to Bull Run. This officer, afterward the distinguished Provost-Marshal General, F. D. Fry, was so pleasant in his bearing, so calm and self-possessed that he inspired courage. ~~and~~ We gladly followed his lead ~~away~~ off to a small hill where Kirby's battery had been firing. There was a shallow ravine behind this hill through which ran a small creek. Fry, taking us hither, pointed to the hill and then returned to his general. We were now close to the enemy, yet we were sheltered from his bullets.

"Pappa, was Harry stison there?"

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Yes indeed, he and his brother managed to endure all the fatigue and to keep up with their regiment. As I desired to give special encouragement to the men I had them march past me. ~~leaving~~ ^{then} the first two regiments ~~were~~
~~came~~ into one line and the others ~~were~~ a second parallel with the first.

Slowly the soldiers filed by. The most were pale notwithstanding the great heat, but many looked up into my face and smiled. I could see that very many were almost too tired to stand on their feet. So, I rested them for a few minutes in the sheltered ravine.

"Do you think, papa, that Harry was afraid?"

I think every body must have some fear, but Harry and his brother were very plucky. They did not belong to the first line, which I soon moved forward up the slope to support the battery.

"What do you mean by support a battery?"

Why suppose you have six cannon placed in a line and your battery-men are working away firing them as fast as possible, and suppose the enemy gets several hundred footmen ready behind a hill or grove, and then suddenly makes them charge

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with all speed upon the guns pushing to take them. What would you do?

"Why, papa, I would fire fast and drive them back!"

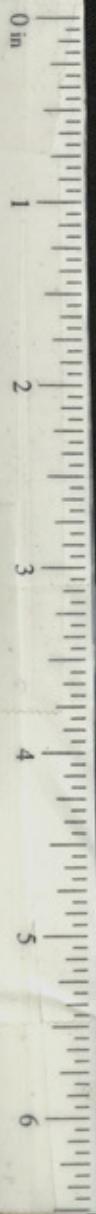
True, you might, but in nine times out of ten the enemies, whom you did not wound or kill, would keep coming on. They would use their rifles as they approached and kill the horses and the battery men. That is just what had been already done to Lieutenant Kirby's battery.

Now my brigade had come to help the battery in driving back these enemies. It was to be put where it could so help. That is what we mean by "supporting a battery".

"Did you drive back the enemies?"

No. It was too late; they had already made their charge and the battery men and horses were, many of them, already dead or disabled and the guns taken and carried off. Lieut. Kirby had saved but a small part of his battery. The horse that he was riding was badly wounded in the head by a grape shot, and he was trying to save an ammunition wagon by having it rolled back toward the ravine.

"Oh, Colonel" he cried out as I appeared, "I had



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no support and I've lost all but
this," pointing to the remnant.

Where is the enemy, Kirby?

"In that clump of trees beyond the
hollow." They might have been three
hundred paces away. My line was just
coming to the crest of our hill. The
bullets were whistling in a lively way and
shells were bursting over our heads.

My men immediately began firing into
the edges of the wood where they could
occasionally see the gleam of a rifle and
into places whence came the peculiar
ringing sound of an opposing gun. Soon
we were joined by the other line. Harry
and his brother had now their chance to
fire. Already many of the first line were
wounded & some killed. I saw that these
men, unaccustomed to battle, were fast losing
all order, and, the worst thing they could
do, were gathering into groups, thus
affording special marks for the enemy's
guns. So I ordered the entire brigade to
retire behind the crest of the hill
and reform. Harry's brother had been
badly wounded, so that Harry obtained
permission from his captain to stay and
take care of him. On going back the

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Regiments got more and more broken. One brave officer of the 3^d Maine was so much affected to see the men scatter and obey no commands but continue pushing to the rear. While walking beside my horse, he shed tears and "brokenly", what can we do to stop them!"

Mongo Stinson bled so freely that his brother could not remove him from the field. Harry did what he could to staunch the wound and keep up courage and strength. Very soon, however, the hill being clear of our men the confederates ventured out from their cover and swept over the ground where our killed and wounded lay.

Poor Mongo died but Harry was taken prisoner.

"I've seen pictures of Libby Prison - did they take Harry to that prison?"

Perhaps not, but he was imprisoned at first in Richmond then in Salisbury and afterward in New Orleans.

When in prison he suffered greatly from the confinement, poor clothing & poorer food. He said little but he turned to his mother's early teaching and, like Paul in prison at Phillipi, looked up to God for his

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help and comfort. He said that here in the midst of privation and untold hardship he learned for the first time to put his whole trust in his Heavenly Father.

"How long was poor Harry kept in the prison?"

About one year. In the summer of 1862, after we had in our hands plenty of prisoners of war, Harry Stinson was exchanged.

"Did you give a rebel for Harry, papa? You say confederate."

Yes, just one confederate soldier.

I think the first of Harry's serving on my staff was in that Maryland battle between General McClellan and General Lee^{that of Antietam} which was fought the 17th of September 1862. After he came back from the south he was made a second Lieutenant in the 5th Maine. My request to have him sent to me as an aide de camp was granted. He continued with me in the subsequent campaigns and battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. How well I remember his youthful appearance and his modest pleasant face. He was very retiring in manner, but he always answered

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promptly to call, and did his work with
diligence and thoroughness like one who loves
to work. After Gettysburg my corps, the
Eleventh, was sent from the Potomac to the
far west. Lieutenant Stinson helped us get horses,
mules, guns, wagons and all the soldiers of
the command into railway cars. It took a
great many to hold ~~all~~ all. Then we set forth
with several trains following each other, by
night and by day; now we were whirling
along, winding and twisting like serpents among
the hills of West Virginia, — across the Ohio in
curious flat boats; then, chasing on like
Indians in file through Ohio and Indiana.
Again we are ferried back over the Ohio ~~at~~
~~at~~ Louisville, — pass on through Kentucky and
Tennessee, and at the end of five days
find ourselves and our material dumped
down on the banks of the broad swift river
at Bridgeport, Alabama. After a while recovering
from the confusion of such a journey, we cross
the Tennessee river and go up through the
roughest and grandest of mountain passes.
When not far from Chattanooga, where Gen. Geo.
H. Thomas commanded, we were threading our
way ^{through} the Lookout valley, the enemy amused
himself at the top of Lookout Mountain
by hurling ^{long} bombs down upon us.

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One of them struck close beside Harry Stinson. It buried itself in the ground and then burst, tossing up the stones and soil, but fortunately it did nobody any damage. On the night following this singular bombardment, occurred the famous battle of Wauhatchie. It was the night when our men drove the enemy from their intrenchments with the bayonet. The night when the frightened mules broke from their tethers and rushing upon the confederates made them think it was a charge of horsemen. During this night Harry & I had a long, dangerous ride to form a junction with General George. In this and in many subsequent engagements he was more than an aide; he was a trusted companion and a brave true friend.

Passing by the numerous engagements from Chattanooga to Dallas Georgia, ~~it is now~~ we come to the latter part of May 1864. General Sherman told me to take one of my divisions of the Fourth Corps and one of the Fourteenth and move off through the woods to the left and attempt to get beyond the enemy's flank. so, I marched nearly all day under the protection of the extensive forest. Before halting my troops I continued to watch every opening and to search

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for every sign of intrument or hidden gathering. I came at last to the edge of a broad field. Leaving my officers and orderlies in a sheltered position behind some thick underbrush I had stepped near to the opening and was sweeping the opposite wood with my glass, thinking that nobody on the other side had seen us, when Harry Stinson who had just obtained a new fieldglass approached me and said that he wanted to look. He had hardly raised his glass to his eyes when a ^{sing} shot was fired. I turned and saw Harry fall. The bullet had hit its mark, it had passed through his lungs and as he fell forward upon his face I could see the hole through the back of his blouse. At first I thought he was dead, but in a few minutes he rallied. Captain Sladen whom you all know, though not then a captain, ran for the surgeon and a stretcher. Harry was taken back to the field hospital. After he left that night we had a desperate battle, the battle of Peckett's Mill. It was the 24th of May.

"Papa, weren't you wounded in that battle?"

Yes, a fragment of a shell struck me in the foot just as I was raising it from the ground.

"Did you go home?"

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No, fortunately I did not have to leave the field. A very thick sole to my boot, which the jagged iron struck, saved my foot from everything except a severe bruise.

"Who took care of Harry?"

Two of our clerks, Marble and Sladen, waiting on him by turns. At first he thought his wound must prove fatal. He then, loved to have the Bible read to him. "One night" Sladen says in his diary, "I read, at Harry's request, the 14th of John and the 23^d Psalm." surely those were beautiful selections whether for life or for death. Before long he was able to go back to East Tennessee, where in Cleveland at the house of a good friend he was delicately cared for for several months.

"Did he ever return to you?"

Yes, we had been through all the battles about Atlanta. - had finally broken off from besieging that city and had gone south toward Jonesboro, a small hamlet some twenty five miles south of Atlanta. Here Harry, now Major Stinson, joined us. General Hood, the confederate, had divided his Atlanta Army and sent half under General Hardee by the cars to meet us. Approaching the town from the west I had

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come to the Flint river. The bridge about six miles from the railway was undisturbed. Across the river there was a high, long sloping bank covered with trees. I wanted to get possession of that bank - so I sent over the skirmishers; and by the time they were in line and ascending the slope a few officers of us rode across the bridge. We had hardly done so when to our surprise we received a furious fire from the wooded heights beyond us. Luckily for us, the enemy aimed too high, so that we escaped unharmed. My eyes were just then upon Harry and I saw him spring suddenly in his saddle. Hearing that he was hurt, I said, "Are you wounded, Harry?"

He answered pleasantly, "No, sir, it was nothing!"

He had returned too soon, - was really not sufficiently well and strong to stand the shock of battle. That night at our camp the wound reopened and he bled freely at the lungs.

Poor boy, with painful regret he was obliged to leave us to his mother's home. Here he remained

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for several months to return to us after "the march to the sea". I believe he never saw a well day again, though he lived for a few years and did an abundance of hard work.

Where did he die, papa - was he at his home?

No, my son. Take up papa's Order Book and read that circular marked with black lines.

Harry read aloud the last few paragraphs as follows: "He kept on duty for the most part till the time of his death which took place in Florida on the 22nd of February (1866).

An uncomplaining sufferer, he continued to render useful public service in the field and in the Bureau work.

The government has lost no officer more able, more patriotic, more pure and unselfish than Lieutenant colonel Stinson.

His numerous friends and sadly afflicted family have their consolation in the contemplation of his past uniformly useful Christian life and in the complete assurance of a happy immortality."

"He was a good man wasn't he?"

Yes, indeed, Harry. I missed him very much

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for he was a faithful friend, such an
one as I have learned to prize above
rubies, a friend who always spoke the
plain truth without flattery.

I hope that you, my son, never forgetting
the good name you bear, will not
fail to pattern by the noble example
of this youthful soldier.

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