

roduction gained him admission to the rebel leaders, and his profession as an engineer rendered his opinion at times valuable, so that he was often in correspondence with the generals in the field. At the time of his arrest many of these letters were found upon his person, together with a pretty accurate estimate of the number and position of our forces in that immediate vicinity. No stronger proof was needed, and after a summary trial he was condemned to be executed as a spy. With that fate awaiting him he had prepared farewell messages for the loved ones at home, and placed them in my hands to be forwarded to their destination. Having obtained this information, I determined, if possible, to avert his fate, and while I believed that proper representations to the English Minister at Washington would ultimately secure his release, I preferred rather than to risk the delay to cut at once the meshes which bound him, and set him free. Accordingly, a couple of hours later I sallied forth from my tent with a plan fully matured for his escape. Remembering our close resemblance, I had donned two uniforms, in one of which it would be an easy matter for him to personate me, particularly as the night was remarkably favorable. In my campaigning I had witnessed many violent storms, but the storm of that evening surpassed them all. As night set in a calm that was ominous of a conflict among the elements had settled down on the mountains and in the valley. The army, quick to read the signs of the heavens, and knowing by experience how sudden and terrific were the storms in that vicinity, made preparation for its coming. Soon a low wailing sound announced its approach; huge masses of murky clouds rolled up from the horizon to the zenith; a pall of darkness that could almost be felt fell upon the earth; the wailing increased to a roar; the clouds poured out blinding torrents of rain, while flash followed flash of

lightning, and the thunders crashed and reverberated among the mountains as though the artillery of the heavens would fain show puny man how weak and futile were his efforts to approach the sublime with all his engines of destruction.

I had reached the guard house before the storm broke upon us, and immediately communicated my plan of escape, first exacting a pledge that the information he had obtained should not be used against the Union army, and secondly, that he should return to England at the first opportunity. With full and explicit directions for reaching a place of safety, and the countersign to enable him to pass the pickets, I bade him God-speed, and with a fraternal clasp of the hands we parted. Stepping to the door, I silently opened it, and discovered the sentinels screening themselves from the severity of the storm; returning, I found the window on the windward side of the building open and Chester free. Closing the window, I waited until the storm had somewhat abated, and then returned to my quarters.

The next morning an attack from the enemy drove all thoughts of the prisoner from the mind of the General, and when the fight was over the sentinels who were on guard the previous night were either prisoners or slain, and although the escape of the spy was soon after reported, and as no one could be found to be punished for his flight the matter dropped.

In 1870, I had the pleasure of visiting Earl Chester, at his manor house at Clifftondale. Having succeeded to his father's estate he resigned his commission, and while he continues his archeological studies he abates not one jot or tittle of his interest in Freemasonry, but if possible is more zealous than ever, and as Master of Chester Lodge is active and earnest in all its Masonic charities, having been fully converted to the utility of the institution. On taking leave of him at the close of my very