

this course or in any other, and if the fate of the Confederacy is sealed whatever we do, there is one other consideration which your soldiers have a right to urge on you, and that is your own military reputation, in which every man in this army, officer or private, feels the utmost personal pride, and has a personal property that his children will prize after him. The Yankees brought Grant here from the West, after the failure of all their other generals, as one who had whipped everybody he had ever fought against, and they call him 'Unconditional Surrender Grant,' and have been bragging in advance that you would have to surrender too. Now, General, I think you ought to spare us all the mortification of having you to ask Grant for terms, and have him answer that he had no terms, to offer you."

I still remember most vividly the emotion with which I made this appeal, increasing as I went on until my whole heart was in it, and it seemed to me at the moment one which no soldier could resist and against which no consideration whatever could be urged, and when I closed, after urging my suggestions at greater length than it is necessary to repeat, looking him in the face and speaking with more boldness than I usually found in his presence, I had not a doubt that he must adopt some such course as I had urged.

He heard me entirely through, however, very calmly, and then asked, "How many men do you estimate would escape if I were to order the army to disperse?"

I replied, "I suppose two-thirds of us could get a way, for the enemy could not disperse to follow us through the woods."

He said: "We have here only about 10,000 men with arms, and not all of those who could get away would join General Johnston, but most of them would try and make their way to their homes and families, and their number would be too small to be of any material service either to General Johnston or to the Governors of the States. I recognize fully that the surrender of this army is the end of the Confederacy, but no course we can take can prevent or even delay that result. I have never believed that we would receive foreign assistance, or get our liberty otherwise than by our own arms. The end is now upon us, and it only remains to decide how we shall close the struggle. But in deciding this question we are to approach it not only as soldiers, but as Christian men deciding on matters which involve a great deal else besides their own feelings. If I should order this army to disperse, the men with their arms, but without organization or control, and without provisions or money, would soon be wandering through every State in the Confederacy, some seeking to get to their homes and some with no homes to go to. Many would be compelled to rob and plunder as they went, to save themselves from starvation, and the enemy's cavalry would pursue in small detachments, particularly in efforts to catch the general officers, and raid and burn over large districts which they will otherwise never reach; and the result would be the inauguration of lawlessness and terror and of organized bands of robbers all over the South. Now, as Christian men we have not the right to bring this state of affairs upon the country, whatever the sacrifice of personal pride involved. And as for myself, you young men might go to bushwhacking, but I am too old; and even if it were right for me to disperse the army I should surrender myself to General Grant, as the only

proper course for one of my years and position. But I am glad to be able to tell you one thing for your comfort. General Grant will not demand an unconditional surrender, but offers us most liberal terms, the parolling of the whole army not to fight until exchanged. He then went on to speak of the probable details of the terms of surrender, and to say that about ten A. M., he was to meet General Grant in the rear of the army and would then accept the terms offered.

Sanguine as I had been when he commenced that he must acquiesce in my views, I had not one word to reply when he had finished. He spoke slowly and deliberately and with some feeling, and the completeness of the considerations he advanced, and which he dwelt on with more details than I can now fully recall, speaking particularly of the women and children as the greatest sufferers in the state of anarchy which a dispersion of the army would bring about, and his reference to what would be his personal course if he did order such dispersion, all indicated that the question was not then presented to his mind for the first time.

A short time after this conversation General Lee rode to the rear of the army to meet General Grant and arrange the details of the surrender. He had started about a half hour when Gen. Fitz Lee sent word to Gen. Longstreet that he had broken through a portion of the enemy's line, and that the whole army might make its way through. General Longstreet on hearing this directed Colonel John C. Haskell, of the artillery, who was very finely mounted, to ride after General Lee at utmost speed, killing his horse if necessary, and recall him before he could reach General Grant. Colonel Haskell rode as directed, and a short distance in rear of the army found General Lee and some of his staff dismounted by the roadside. As he with difficulty checked his horse General Lee came up quickly, asking what was the matter, but without waiting for a reply said, "Oh, I'm afraid you have killed your beautiful mare. What did you ride her so hard for?" On hearing General Longstreet's message, he asked some questions about the situation, and sent word to General Longstreet to use his own discretion in making any movements, but he did not himself return and in a short while another message was received that the success of the cavalry under General Fitz Lee was but temporary, and that there was such a gap in the enemy's line as had been supposed. Soon afterwards a message was brought from the enemy's picket that General Grant had passed around to the front, and would meet General Lee at Appomattox Court-House, and General Lee accordingly returned.

Meanwhile, as the Confederate line, under General Gordon, was slowly falling back from Appomattox Court-house, after as gallant a fight against overwhelling odds as it had ever made, capturing and bringing safely off with it an entire battery of the enemy's cavalry, General Custer, commanding a division of Federal cavalry rode forward with a flag of truce, and the firing having ceased on both sides, was conducted to General Longstreet as commanding temporarily in General Lee's absence. Custer demanded the surrender of the army to himself and General Sheridan, to which General Longstreet replied that General Lee was in communication with General Grant upon that subject, and that the issue would be determined between them. Custer replied that he and Sheridan were independent of Grant, and unless the surrender was made to them they would "pitch in" at once. Longstreet's answer was a preeminent order to return at

once to his own lines and try it all liked." Custer was accordingly escorted back, but fire was not reopened, and both lines remained halted, the Confederate about a half-mile east of the Court house.

General Lee, returning from the rear shortly afterwards, halted in a small field adjoining Sweany's house, a little in rear of his skirmish line, and awaited a message from General Grant, seated on some rails under an apple-tree. This apple-tree was not only entirely cut up for momentoes within two days afterwards, but its very roots were cut up and carried away under the false impression that the surrender took place under it. About noon a Federal staff officer rode up and announced that General Grant was at the Court House, and General Lee with one of his staff accompanied him back. As he left the apple-tree General Longstreet's last words to him were, "Unless he offers you liberal terms, General, let us fight it out."

It would be a difficult task to convey to one who was not present an idea of the feeling of the Confederate army during the few hours which so suddenly, and so unexpectedly to it, terminated its existence, and with it all hopes of the Confederacy. Having been sharply engaged that very morning, and its movements arrested by a flag of truce while one portion of it was actually fighting and nearly all the rest, infantry, and artillery, had just been formed in line of battle in sight and range of the enemy, and with guns unlimbered, it was impossible to realize fully that the war, with all its hopes, its ambitions, and its hardships, was thus ended. There was comparatively very little conversation, and men stood in groups looking over the scene, but the groups were usually silent. It was not at first generally known that a surrender was inevitable; but there was a remarkable pre-occupation in what ever General Lee should determine, and the warmest expressions of confidence in his judgment. Ranks and discipline were maintained as usual, and there is little doubt that had General Lee decided to fight that afternoon the troops would not have disappointed him. About 4 o'clock P. M. he returned from the Court-house, and after informing the principal officers of the terms of the surrender started to ride back to his camp.

The universal desire to express to him the unabated love and confidence of the army had led to the formation of the gunners of a few battalions of artillery along the roadside, with orders to take off their hats in silence as he rode by. When he approached, however, the men could not be restrained, but burst into the wildest cheering, which the adjacent infantry lines took up, and, breaking ranks, they all crowded around him, cheering at the tops of their voices. General Lee stopped his horse, and after gaining silence, made the only speech to his men that he ever made. He was very brief, and gave no excuse or apologies for his surrender, but said that he had done all in his power for his men and urged them to go as quickly and quietly as possible, to resume peaceful avocations, and to be as good citizens as they had been soldiers, and this advice marked the course which he himself pursued so faithfully to the end.

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