



The Story of a Common Soldier of Army Life in the Civil War: 1861-1865 (Classic Reprint)

Leander Stillwell

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Excerpt from The Story of a Common Soldier of Army Life in the Civil War: 1861-1865

When I began writing these reminiscences it did not occur to me that anything in the nature of a preface was necessary. It was thought that the dedication to my son Jerry contained sufficient explanation. But I have now finished writing these recollections, and in view of all that they set forth, I believe that a few brief prefatory remarks may now be appropriate. In the first place it will be said that when I began the work it was only to gratify my son, and without any thought or expectation that it would ever be published. I don't know yet that such will be done, but it may happen. The thought occurred to me after I had written some part of it, and it is possible that about at that point some change began to take place in the style, and phraseology, and which perhaps may be observed. So much for that. Next I will say that all statements of fact here in made, based upon my own knowledge, can be relied on as absolutely true. My mother most carefully preserved the letters I wrote home from the army to her and to my father. She died on February 6, 1894, and thereafter my father (who survived her only about three years) gave back to me these old letters. In writing to my parents I wrote, as a rule, a letter every week when the opportunity was afforded, and now in this undertaking with these letters before me it was easy to follow the regiment every mile of its way from Camp Carrollton in January, 1862, to Camp Butler, in September, 1865. Furthermore, on June 1, 1863, at Memphis, Tennessee, as we passed through there on our way to join Grants army at Vicksburg, I bought a little blank book about four inches long, three inches wide, and half an inch thick. From that time until we were mustered out, I kept a sort of very brief diary in this little book, and have it yet.

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