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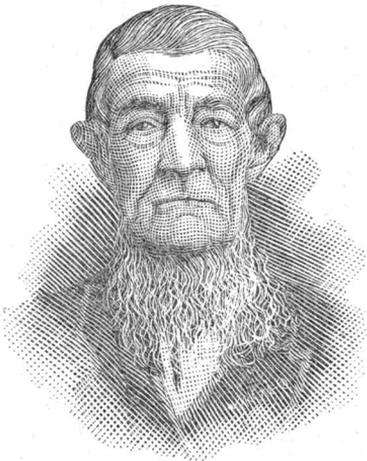
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PROSE AND POETRY.

BY J. W. REID





Yours truly,
J. W. Reid.

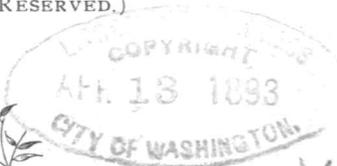
PROSE AND POETRY.

BY *Jesse* WALTON REID,

Author of "*History of the Fourth Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers.*"

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[Handwritten signature]

21118, Jan. 2, 1929.

THIRTY YEARS AGO.

It is well known by all the old Virginian soldiers that the Federal army had boasted that they would literally exterminate the Confederate army and go on to Richmond and have a big ball, and I have always understood that they brought dressing with them for that purpose. But they failed to carry them on to Richmond, or back to Washington. That march of the Federal army at that time has ever since been called the "On to Richmond March." The reader must also understand that Johnson's army came to our assistance in the evening and turned the tide of battle after a forced march of fifteen miles. This first great battle, as is well known, was fought on the 21st day of July, 1861, and on the 21st day of July, 1891, just thirty years from the day of the battle, I was sitting alone in my cabin thinking of times long gone by and of the scenes enacted just thirty years ago, and of my own lonely condition at present. Thinking over all these things, I seated myself and in a very short time had the following lines written :

Just thirty years ago to-day
The sun rose fair and bright,
And many saw the morning's ray
That never saw the night.
Just as the morning light appeared

We met our valient foe,
And soon the thundering noise was heard,
Just thirty years ago.

We saw the approaching legions come
Prepared to give us battle,
And soon the awful strife begun,
As cannon they did rattle.
'Twas "On to Richmond" they were bound,
But there they did not go,
For there we stopped them on that ground,
Just thirty years ago.

'Tis said we fought them three to one,
But this I only know
That when brave Johnson's army came
The Federal had to go.
How many brave and valient men,
Of friends as well as foe,
Was slain upon Manassas plain,
Just thirty years ago.

They came by herds across Bull Run,
No further could they go,
The "On to Richmond" was no fun,
And there they did not go.
They met the Southern boys there,
And soon they learned to know
At Richmond they would not appear,
Just thirty years ago.

The bleeding wounds and dying cries,
The thundering noise of battle
Did almost rend the very skies,
As firearms they did rattle.
The dead and wounded all around
Of friend as well as foe
Was embraced together, on that ground,
Just thirty years ago.

The smoke ascended to the skies,
And many brave men fell
Never more on earth to rise,
To bid their friends farewell.
The firing did not cease at all
Till the Federals had to go
The other road from the Richmond ball,
Just thirty years ago.

The place I'd like once more to see,
Where Bee and Barton fell,
But there I never more shall be,
To bid the place farewell.
Nor see the dead all strewn around,
Nor hear the dying groan,
The bleeding wounds was on that ground,
But the bleeding hearts were at home.

At length we found no foe to fight,
They were gone from whence they came,
They quickly fled from our sight
And left Manassas plain.
They did not dance at town that night,
But swiftly they did go
And dance the backward step just right
Just thirty years ago.

But thirty years are now gone by,
How few I now can see,
That heard the dying men's sad cry,
That fought that day with me.
They are gone to mansions on high,
Where I hope some time to go
And join the band that I stood by,
Just thirty years ago.

EXPLANATION.

When our army became decimated and nearly surrounded on all sides and provisions ran scarce and our currency became valueless, and when any man of common sense could see that all chance of success on our side was a forlorn hope, it was then that a most infamous law was passed, taking into the service all boys over fifteen years old, in the State of South Carolina, for the State service. At this time my wife was alone with our only child, then a mere boy, and under this act or call she had to give up the last tie she had on earth left to go into the service of his country. At that time I was a sergeant in the First Regiment of Engineer Troops, then in Virginia, and my wife seemed to prefer seeing her only child go to his father in Virginia and join the regular army than to see him go to Charleston with the other boys. She rightly conjectured that I could screen him in some degree from some of the hardships attending a soldier's life. I did so all I could. He had been in the service at Charleston three months previous to this as a substitute. The following lines will convey some idea of her feelings at the separation :

The time has come, my darling boy,
That you and I must part;
To give up now my only joy,
It almost breaks my heart.
When you are gone I'll be alone,
No one to fill your place,
No one to cheer my lonely home,
O, Father! give me grace.

When your father went and left us here
It almost broke my heart,
But now for you to go, my dear,
And from your mother part!
When first this cruel war began
Your papa went away,
And now they take my only son
From his mother's arms to-day.

Your father has faced the cannon ball
Since first this war begun,
And now they make another call
And take my only son.
Though nothing but a child, my son,
You can not stay at home,
You have to take your sword or gun,
And leave me quite alone.

Go, only child, go join the crowd,
Where papa's been so long,
Although the cannon thunder loud,
Be valient. brave and strong.
O, will my husband and my child,
Or either of them come,
And once again be near my side,
Or friends will I have none.

Go, place yourself by papa's side,
And be a little man,
Your little faults he'll try to hide
And screen you all he can.

Although it nearly breaks my heart
To bid you thus good-bye,
The time has come that we must part,
O, darling, do not cry!

And when in distant lands you roam,
You'll have your mother's prayers,
That you may get back safely home,
Or in heaven meet her there.
And if on earth we meet no more,
Remember what I say,
Let's meet upon that happy shore,
In that eternal day.

Where cannon sound was never heard,
Nor sword was never drawn,
Nor charging bands were never feared,
Nor battles' raging storm.
Where ghastly wounds, nor dying groans,
Are seen nor heard no more,
All will be peace when Gabriel's horn,
Shall sound from shore to shore.

My son, don't fill a coward's grave,
Be mother's little man,
Be like the balance of the brave,
And do the best you can.
Good-bye, my son, go on to-day,
I'll neither weep nor sigh
Until I know you're far away,
And can not hear me cry.

Mrs. Reid did live to see her husband and her son both get home where we enjoyed ourselves for many years in each other's company, and I can also truthfully say that I have not enjoyed a single day of unalloyed pleasure since that good woman's death.

The rest that I'm seeking is where she is now,
I am trying to meet her the best I know how.

Amongst the brave Southern boys who went to the late civil war was Stephen Hicks, whose wife, my sister, is still living where he left her in Greenville County, S. C., on the same little home that her husband had bought before the war. He belonged to the Sixth Regiment of South Carolina Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Aiken. He was as brave a soldier and as honest a man as ever wore the Grey or drew a sabre. He was killed in October, 1864, somewhere down to the right of Petersburg. When he went off he left his wife, Zillah E. Hicks, with seven small children, the eldest, a girl, being but a little over ten years old. A year or two after the war one of her children, a boy, died, and several years afterwards her oldest daughter, Josephine, married a Mr. Turner, and after having one child old enough to be walking about, she and her child were both drowned in Grove Creek while walking. It is not known precisely in what way she got into the creek, but my supposition is that by some means the child fell into the creek and that she was drowned in trying to rescue the child; but be that as it may, they were drowned as before stated. So it is quite reasonable to presume that Mrs. Hicks has seen her full

share of trouble. The following lines are addressed to her by her only brother :

When the war trumpet sounded in our happy land,
And the noise of battle was heard,
My husband soon joined the brave little band,
That no earthly foe ever feared,
Left home and his dear ones to face our foe,
And undaunted went forth to meet them,
To the front of our army he quickly did go,
With the Southern brave boys that was with him.

Amid sulphur and smoke he often times went
Where cannon and muskets did rattle,
Where the bravest of the brave often underwent
The thundering storms of battle.
Half clothed and half fed, in cold and in heat,
How oft did he think of his home,
And the ones he left that he'll never more meet,
For my loved one is now dead and gone.

My Stephen was shot and fell to the ground
Without a sigh or a groan,
He breathed his last and heard not the sound
Of the cries of his loved ones at home.
His bones are now rotting in a far distant land,
His soul I hope is in glory,
O, how he was missed in that little band,
That related to me the sad story.

How oft have I lain in the stillness of night,
And thought of the time I last saw him,
But now he's removed far, far from my sight,
In this world I will never more see him.
Many years are new past since I've been alone,
My children have nearly all left me,
I still keep the same pleasant little home,
Where I was when Stephen last left me.

How oft do I dream of those happy days
That are past and gone now forever,

How often I think of in how many ways,
We enjoyed ourselves here together.
When the days and the hours appeared to go slow,
I refer to the times that've gone by,
And try to prepare to be ready to go,
To him in the mansions on high.

My Jimmie has joined his father on high,
And is now in the angelic band,
The time of my departure is drawing very nigh,
When I'll join them in Canaan's bright land.
My Josephine and child are also gone,
I hope to the mansions on high.
I am now left here almost alone,
And will meet them no more till I die.



It is useless for me to undertake a description of the case of William Wilson, who was recently hanged at Anderson Court House, South Carolina, for wife murder. As the public is already well acquainted with the facts of the case I will only say that being familiar with the circumstances of the case, I some time ago composed the following lines, thinking it probable that it might fit his case. The reader will see that the lines represents him under the gallows and whether these lines fitted his case exactly or not, he gave his consent for me to have them published. Mr. Wilson on several occasions, after I had wrote these lines, sent for me to come and write something more for him; what it was I do not know for I did not go to see him. I concluded that if there was anything that he wanted known after his death that he could make it known on the day of his execution. The public will know whether he did so or not.

All you that doth around me stand
My wretched state to see,
My time to die is near at hand,
O, can you pity me!
In an unguarded moment
I took my Laura's life,
And now I pay the penalty
For the murder of my wife.

Now listen to my story
Whilst yet I have my life,
And I'll relate the manner
In which I killed my wife.
Near the heart that loved me dearly
I cut a ghastly wound,
And the one that loved sincerely
Fell fainting to the ground.

And then with fiendish vengeance
I stamped upon her breast,
O, can I get forgiveness
And ever go to rest!
'Twas then I took a razor
And caught her by the hair,
And prepared to give the fatal stroke
For which I now am here.

O, then she cried, "don't cut me,
I am already killed,"
But nothing then could stop me
Till my purpose was fulfilled.
And then without reflection
I cut that ghastly wound,
From which she is now sleeping
Beneath the silent ground.

O, then I left my Laura
Sweltering in her blood,
I went into the dungeon
And she went to her God.
To-day her body's mouldering
Beneath the silent sod,
And though her body's rotting
Her soul is with her God.

I was carried to the dungeon
To think upon my fate,
O, how I did repent it
But, alas! it was too late,

I could not call back my Laura
From Canaan's happy shore,
'Tis there she is at present
And will be evermore.

Look now at my condition,
Take warning now from me,
Don't fly into a passion
When its only jealousy.
O, can I get forgiveness
And join the heavenly host,
All sins can be forgiven
But against the Holy Ghost.

O, how I have repented
And prayed to be forgiven,
I hope before the sun doth set
I'll be with God in heaven.
Although the stream of Jordan
I shall shortly have to cross,
I know our Savior pardoned
The thief upon the cross.

Farewell to all around me,
Farewell my children dear,
Farewell to brothers and sisters
And all that is pleasant here.
Farewell to all that is earthly,
I bid this world adieu,
Farewell to you my Laura
I die for killing you.

O, look with some compassion,
I pray you pity me,
I know the world's against me,
And evermore will be.
I now must take my journey,
Be put beneath the sod,
I may not meet my Laura
But to-day I'll meet my God.

THE OLD PAPER MILL.

I will now leave Virginia and the scenes of conflict for a while and refer back to times and things long gone by, which causes me to have inexpressible feelings when referred to. When I was a boy fourteen years old I moved to McBee's factory, seven miles below Greenville city, on Reedy river. I often went up to the paper mill, something over a mile above the factory, to visit the boys there, and about the beginning of 1840 or the latter part of 1839 I moved to the paper mill, owned and run at that time by Andrew Patterson, and with his three youngest sons, Daniel, Valentine and Jackson, and others I have spent many pleasant days and nights. The names that these three Patterson boys went by were Dan, Val and Jack. After Patterson left the mill it fell into the hands of Col. Benajah Dunham about 1843 and John A. Cargill came to the mill and we have been together more or less ever since; we are now (1892) both at Piedmont mills. About the beginning of 1844 I moved to the Pendleton factory; came back to McBee's factory about January, 1846. In the meantime, and while I was at the Pendleton factory, Mr. John Tripp had moved to the paper mill with his family, among

whom was my dear little Polly. As soon as I became acquainted with her I found that my future happiness was in her hands. We married October 22d, 1846. Cargill married her sister, Matilda, five weeks afterwards.

How oft I think of boyhood days,
That can not be called back,
The pleasure I've seen in various ways,
With Dan and Val and Jack.
Long years ago we roved around
On meadow, grove and hill,
And played on every foot of ground
Near the old paper mill.

O, happy days now long gone by,
We never can call back,
My bosom often heaves a sigh
When I think of Dan and Jack.
We sang and played and busied around
Near every creek and rill,
And traversed every foot of ground
Near the old paper mill.

Those boys are gone and I'm alone,
To think of times gone by,
I'm here alone without a home
And may be till I die.
I never more expect to see
The house upon the hill,
Nor the same boys that played with me
At the old paper mill.

In '52 the mill changed hands,
And I remained to see,
John Cargill come on the same lands,
Who has been a brother to me.

We were then both young, spruce and gay,
We are a fraction that way still,
And we spent many a happy day
At the old paper mill.

At length I moved to Pendleton,
And there remained two years,
And then my courting times begun,
But who do you reckon cares?
I came back near the same old ground,
Whilst John remained there still,
And there my darling I first found,
At the old paper mill.

Now comes the time, the happy time,
The happiest of my life,
When I found that darling girl of mine
That was to be my wife.
I loved my Polly at first sight,
I love her ashes still,
I loved her on the very first night,
I saw yer at the paper mill.

Cargill too at the same time
Was courting Polly's sister,
But he never interfered with mine—
If he had I'd have drawn a blister.
In October, eighteen and forty six,
Our engagement to fulfill,
Our little property we then did mix,
Near the old paper mill.

Just five weeks from our wedding day,
John married to his loved one,
And all was happiness that day.
And sorrow there was none.
In a short time I moved away.
But John remained there still,
How oftentimes I think of the day,
That we left the paper mill.

What happy times, now long gone by,
No happier could there be,
John was happy, and so was I,
Such times I'll never more see,
Time soon slipped by and I got away
From the house upon the hill,
I never shall forget the day,
That we left the paper mill.

1892

Again I visit the same cherished place,
After an absence of many long years,
The old water wheel lies low in the race,
And everything lonesome appears.
The old floor is rotten and all gone to ræck,
And bushes and weeds on the hill,
I think of the scenes that I can not call back.
That occurred at the old paper mill.

The old mill is rotten, O, sad to look on,
What thoughts it brings to my mind,
Polly and Matilda are both dead and gone,
No more pleasure at the mill do I find.
No more can I see my darling's sweet face,
She is now lying dormant and still,
Again I will visit the same sacred place,
Where we met at the old paper mill.

The time will soon come when I must go too,
Like those that are already gone,
And nothing I can say or nothing I can do,
Can keep me from going ere long.
O, Father, let me go where Polly has gone,
If its according to thy sacred will,
With those I knew that are now dead and gone,
Whom I knew at the old paper mill.

In dreams I revisit the scenes of my childhood
And view every spot of the ground,
River and brook and the deep tangled wildwood

The sacred spot where my darling I found,
O, fond recollections when called to my mind,
How often I think of them still,
Of all the loved ones that I can not now find,
That I knew at the old paper mill.



Last April a young lady, an acquaintance of mine, requested me to write her an April fool for mischief. She requested me to put it in rhyme and to describe the young man as ugly and bad looking as possible. I wrote the following lines and gave them to her, but whether she sent it to her paragon of beauty or not I do not know, but as the lines may amuse some of the young people I will insert them here.

To my beloved red headed, freckled sweetheart :

My dear, darling boy, I write you this note,
To show that you remind me of a peach orchard
shoat,
You are dudeish and ignorant, you stammer and
stutter,
You eat buggy-grease and think it is butter.

To say that you are ugly is putting it mild,
And you act like a booby, and talk like a child,
You are twisted like a corkscrew and can not walk
straight,
Your legs they are crooked and your feet do not
mate.

The one it turns out and the other turns in,
And you have a carbuncle right plumb on your shin,
You have plenty of corns all over your toes,
And a very large wart on the end of your nose.

Your head it is red, but your eyes they are green,
Like yourself darling, you know what I mean,
You are long jawed and freckled and dreadfully lean,
You're a bragger and boaster and dreadfully mean.

Your hands they are bony and harder than rocks,
And you look just like you had had the small-pox,
Your knees knock together and your ankles strike
fire,

If I am not telling facts you may call me a liar.

There is a wen on your neck and a hump on your
back,

Large enough, darling, to fill a corn sack,
But you know I am pretty to write such as this,
And I know when you see me you will want a sweet
kiss.

Although thus deformed, I rather should guess,
If you should just pop the question my answer
would be yes.

I will now stop writing and go on to school,
And thus quit writing to a poor April fool.

Good-bye Mr. Hunchback, I bid you adieu,
I can't fool much longer with a beauty like you,
Come over next Sunday and we'll talk it all over,
My parents will be gone and we'll just be in clover.



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