

For many weeks the army had lain in front of Atlanta, the Western Stronghold of rebellion, Long lines of Earth works stretching for many @ mile around the doomed city, indicated the position of the Union forces, while close upon the outskirts of the town, and upon an interior line, in more elaborate defenses lay the defiant rebel army. At several points - these growing defenses were plainly visible through the forest from the Union position. On the rolling ground between, heavily timbered with oak, were posted the picket lines of the rival powers. Here in the dense forest behind hastily constructed barricades were the undetailed from time to time to "watch and wait over the border" and at most dangerous service it was for many a blue coated sentinel fell at his post in the dead of night a victim of some lynx eyed rebel prowling among the oak trees - and faithful comrades would bring back his lifeless form to the trenches and bury him under the wide spreading branches of that Southern forest.

Often times in the stillness of night, the sharp report of musket on the picket line, would ring out clear and distinct from the picket line, while the almost instant response from the rebel line, would bring on a rattling desultory fire from the skirmishers. Soon this would be taken up by the line of battle, and deepen into the continuous roar of ten thousand muskets. And once the booming of rebel artillery would mark the

battle the grim faces of the soldiers, and dispel the darkness of night - and plunging plunging far into the brick walls of the City - carrying death in its fiery course - Soon the fearful tumult would abate the firing slacken, until only an occasional shot could be heard: the useless alarm thus over. The sentry resumes his silent watch and the line of battle sinks again into its blankets.

But the crisis came at last, and orders were received for the 20th Corps to fall back seven miles to the Chattahoochee, no one considered this to be a retreat - neither was it, for the remainder of the army moved rapidly to the south west & placed itself upon the Southern railroad communication of the rebel forces, thus it was they were obliged to fall back from the City - to defend their only line of communication. At once the 20th Corps was ordered to advance again and occupy the City. And so that gallant old Corps that had preserved the Army from starvation at Chattanooga, that had wrested the Lookout Mt. from the Enemy's grasp that had been in the van at New Hope Church at Lost Mountain & Pine Knob. That had withstood the entire shock of the rebel onslaught at Peach Tree Creek. was now the first to enter the gates of Atlanta. At the head of the Column led by the splendid band of the 33d Mass. passed through over the rebel fortifications, with their huge 64 pounder still in position - the band struck up "Rally round the flag boys", immediately

the troops took up the song, and regiment after regiment - swelled the grand Chorus, till ten thousand men marched down Whitehall Street to the City Hall, to the tune of this grand old Song. Many a haughty Southern belle gnashed her teeth that lovely evening as she beheld the waving banners, and heard the resounding Chorus of the Union Army. But Atlanta had fallen, had the loyal heart of the Nation beat in glad ^{happy} union with this glad song of freedom sung by men who had borne the flag over a hundred battlefields, from the Ohio to the Chattahoochee.

The army slept that night in the squares of the conquered City, and many a veteran dreamed of peace, and a happy return to his home on the Northern hill side, now rendered measurably nearer by the fall of Atlanta.