

# FIRST MARYLAND INFANTRY.

## CHAPTER I.

**D**URING all these days of dread, excitement and anxiety, men went about their daily occupations half-heartedly, and with their thoughts always bent on the possible disasters of the near future. The first act of a drama that had a continent for its stage had opened. The pageant of military array was unfolding itself all over the country ; " the trumpet to the cannon spoke, the cannon to the heavens, the heavens to earth," and while the hosts of the North were being marshaled, those of the South, too, were gathering, and her people were being roused to a sublime enthusiasm of self-devotion. Hundreds of young men, firm in a spirit of resistance to what they conceived to be the exercise of arbitrary power, and with an unconquerable faith in the future, left the State to cast in their fortunes with their brethren in the South. Every day it became more difficult and hazardous to pass through the cordon of troops that had been drawn around the City of Baltimore ; but this did not daunt them, and by the middle of May the greater part of those who were afterward to compose the First Maryland infantry and the other organizations early in the field, stood safely upon Virginia soil. During the ravages of the four years' struggle thousands of others also made their way through the Union lines, and either filled up the gaps which war had left in the ranks of the earlier organizations, or helped in the formation of other commands.

The late gallant old Confederate, General Isaac R. Trimble, for years before his death endeavored by every means possible to ascertain the number of Marylanders in organized commands and those scattered throughout the various regiments in all the armies of the Confederacy. He even went so far as to employ a clerk to search the Confederate archives in the War and Navy Departments at Washington, and to his surprise he discovered that there were twenty-two thousand of them in the army, besides those in the Confederate navy.

At the time referred to (April 19, 1861) there was only a comparatively small body of uniformed militia in Baltimore, but it was composed of excellent and soldierly material. The Maryland Guards and the Baltimore City Guards were the two largest organizations, and then came the Independent Grays and the Law Grays. From each of these bodies the First Maryland drew largely.

Three companies were formed in Richmond principally of this material — those of Captains J. Lyle Clark, E. R. Dorsey and William H. Murray. These companies were mustered into the service of the State of Virginia for one year, and subsequently transferred to the Confederate Government with the other