

REMINISCENCES OF FOUR YEARS AS A PRIVATE SOLDIER

IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY

1861-1865

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NOTICE

This little pamphlet is printed for my own pleasure and use, without pretense to historical accuracy—it is a personal reminiscence only.

A few copies will be printed for my immediate family and friends.

The matter contained has been jotted down at odd moments as the memory of days long ago came back to me.

JOHN GILL.

Dedicated to the memory of my dear brother, who gave his life to the cause of the South.

He sleeps on the battle-field, but will awaken at the call of the redeemed, and be blessed for evermore.

"There is a bright abode reserved for all good soldiers who die in action."

MEMOIRS

My grandfather, John Gill, of Alexandria, Virginia, the son of Thomas Gill of Notton, Yorkshire, England, came to this country just after the close of the American Revolution, as the resident partner of the shipping firm of Abernethy, Lowry & Gill, of London, one of the leading firms of that time.

My grandmother Gill was Esther Lowry, daughter of Col. William Lowry and Olivia Pickens, his wife, both from Castle Blaney, County Monaghan, Ireland.

Colonel Lowry came to Baltimore in 1794, and shortly after was commissioned by Governor Lee, of Maryland, Major of the 27th Regiment, Maryland Volunteers. He was subsequently made Colonel of the Regiment.

His son, J. Lowry Donaldson, was Adjutant of the 27th Regiment in the battle of North Point, in which he was killed. He was a distinguished lawyer and a member of the

Maryland Legislature. His name was changed by an Act of Assembly from Lowry to Donaldson, in compliance with the request of a rich uncle of that name, residing in London.

My father was Richard W. Gill, son of John Gill, of Alexandria, Virginia. My mother was Ann E. Deale, daughter of Captain James Deale, West River, Anne Arundel County, Md. My great grandfather, Captain John Deale, was an officer in the 31st Weems Battalion, and served during the Revolution in defense of Annapolis and that portion of the county bordering on the Chesapeake Bay. My maternal grandmother was a Franklin, whose family were large property and slave owners in Anne Arundel County.

I was born August 15, 1841, in the City of Annapolis. My father died February 28, 1852, when I was only ten years old.

My mother was left with four children, two girls and two boys. Fortunately my father had left an estate sufficient to provide comfortably for all of us, and my mother, being a woman of most excellent sense and judgment, made the best possible disposition of her income with the view of educating her children.

My father's death left a scar that time could never efface. One of his associates at the bar, in announcing his death to a full bench of the Court of Appeals of Maryland, said: "I will not attempt to eulogize the dead, but I cannot refrain from saying that I have never known one who more deservedly and universally possessed the esteem of all who knew him."

For several years after my father's death we were all kept at home. My mother had secured a most excellent governess, a Miss Boyce, who proved most satisfactory and was liked so much that she soon became part of our household.

At the age of about 15 I was sent to the Preparatory School of St. John's College. In 1856 my mother and sisters concluded that it was best for me to go to a boarding-school, and the Lawrenceville High School, near Princeton, New Jersey, was selected.

I shall never cease being grateful to my dear mother for sending me to this school. At the head of it was a very distinguished educator, Dr. Samuel Hamill, well known throughout the country, and the best man I ever knew to train boys in the way they should go.

I graduated at Lawrenceville during the fall of 1859, and from there went to the University of Virginia.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, 1861, I enlisted as a private soldier in the Confederate Army.

"All things have worked together for my good."

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CHAPTER I

It was forty-two years ago last spring since the first mutterings of the Civil War alarmed the country. Already several of the Southern States had withdrawn from the Union, and in the early part of 1861 it was evident that others would soon follow.

As I was born a Marylander, my early education and training pointed in one direction. My family for many years, especially on my mother's side, had owned slaves, and I had never been taught to believe that slavery was a sin or a crime. All my early sympathies and associations were decidedly averse from these opinions.

Therefore, when the question as to the right of these States to separate peaceably from the compact formed by their forefathers was resisted and denied by one section of the country, I was not long in deciding the question for myself. I determined at once