

WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN

By

Dr. George L. Barton

Paper read before the SpheX Club, December 14, 1962.

Some thirty years ago, when the cadets at Virginia Military Institute were first beginning to acquire a few of the privileges associated with modern college life, a group of about forty first classmen obtained weekend furloughs extending from reveille Saturday morning until taps Sunday night. Now it so happened that the State Teachers' College at Harrisonburg was giving its young ladies a gala dance Friday evening. These resourceful two score cadets, eager to attend this dance, hired an equal number of civilians to sleep in their cots, chartered themselves a bus, slipped out of the barracks windows a few minutes after taps and betook themselves rapidly to the college town some sixty miles north.

There was a certain Captain Turner - one of my assistants, from whom I got this story - who was Officer in Charge that Friday night. Someone - he would not tell me who - tipped him off that there would be a mass exodus just after ten P. M. About midnight he started to make a close inspection of barracks. By two A. M. he had forty thoroughly scared civilians packed into the guard room. No harm, of course, came to these live dummies other than the inconvenience of being routed out of bed at such an hour. But the next morning a first classman who was not on furlough sent a telegram to his roommate, addressing it to his home in Richmond. The telegram read: "Sherman marched through Georgia; Captain Turner marched through our room. Sherman was right."

There is doubt even to this day whether Sherman ever actually used the brief harsh sentence which for nearly a century has been associated with his name and has come to characterize the man to the exclusion of any other qualities which he may have possessed. His name has always been anathema in the South, especially in Georgia and the Carolinas, and understandably so. But those who excoriate him most severely are the ones who fail to look before April, 1861 or April ____, 1865, who refuse to look into the man himself and can see in Sherman only the villainous Yankee general who shamelessly and soullessly laid waste the heart land of the Confederacy. In their eyes he is an ogre, a monster, a vandal, a Hun and a Goth all in one person.

Although this does not purport to be a biographical sketch of the general, some facts about his life are needed; these we will treat as briefly as possible. He was born in Lancaster, Ohio, February 8, 1820. His father, who was a judge of the supreme court of Ohio from 1823, died suddenly in 1829, leaving a widow, eleven children and a meager estate. The children were cared for by friends and relatives; young "Cump" as he was known, was taken home by a wealthy close friend and neighbor, Thomas Ewing, to whom Cump's father had been of considerable assistance in getting a start as a practicing attorney. Ewing was a Roman Catholic and, when the lad was baptized into that church, Ewing added the name William to the Tecumseh with which his father had endowed him. Ewing obtained for the lad his

appointment at West Point. There Sherman spent the years 1836-1840, being graduated in the latter year sixth in his class. He later said that he would have been fourth in his class had it not been for his slipshod dress and conduct; he managed to collect about 150 demerits a year. After graduation he was stationed in Florida and then in Fort Moultrie. In both places he entered readily into the social life and was generally accepted. He once remarked that the brass buttons of his uniform were an open sesame to the homes of Charleston. He became engaged to Eleanor (Ellen) Boyle Ewing, a daughter of his early benefactor, in 1843, but they were not married until 1850. Some of the letters which he wrote to Miss Ewing during this long engagement are curiously descriptive of the many charming young ladies that he met in the south. By 1850 he was a captain in the subsistence department of the Army. Finding the routine of army life inexpressibly dull and apparently holding little hope for advancement, he resigned his commission in 1853 and became a partner in the San Francisco branch of a St. Louis bank. This bank failed in 1857 but Sherman was sent to the parent bank in New York. This too failed in October of that year and Sherman found himself not only without a job but also with a heavy moral debt. Some of his friends (Bragg) had sent him money to invest for them; all this was lost in the bank failure. Sherman voluntarily assumed this moral obligation and subsequently repaid these losses in full. He then tried to return to the army but there were no vacancies. He had studied law from time to time and he now entered practice with two of the Ewings - his foster brothers.

The loss of his first and only case made him decide that the law was not his forte. Again he made a vain attempt to get back in the army. Just at this moment, when the day seemed darkest, he was recommended for the post of Superintendent of the new Military Academy at Alexandria, Louisiana, and here, from October 1859 to January 18, 1861, he spent some of the happiest days of his life, for he was conspicuously successful in his task and he made many friends in that state. (Bragg, Beauregard). He had let it be known that, if Louisiana withdrew from the Union, he would not remain in the state. Nevertheless, before Louisiana actually seceded, Sherman received an offer of a fairly high command in the provisional army of the C. S. A. His happiness in Louisiana can perhaps best be illustrated by a quotation from a letter which he wrote to his wife just before she joined him there: "If Louisiana will endow this college properly, and is fool enough to give me \$5,000.00 a year, we will drive our tent pins, and pick out a magnolia under which to sleep the long sleep."

The happiness of these eighteen months was ended when Louisiana seceded from the Union. Sherman settled up his affairs at the Seminary and late in February 1861 he hurried north. Once again his personal fortunes were at ebb tide, for at the moment he had little idea what his next move would be.

Let us pass over, for the moment, his participation in the War that was approaching and glance at his life after the close of the conflict in April, 1865.

At the end of the War, Sherman was a major general of volunteers and a brigadier general in the regular establishment. By the act of July 28, 1866, Grant was made general and Sherman a lieutenant general. On March 4th, 1869, the day Grant was inaugurated as President of the United States, Sherman was made General of the Army. In 1882 a law was passed which required the retirement of all officers, regardless of rank or physical condition, at the age of sixty-four. As Sherman would be sixty-four on February 8th, 1884, he at once began planning for his retirement. For the convenience of the Army, he actually surrendered his office to Lieutenant General Sheridan on November 1, 1883, and went to his home in St. Louis to await his legal retirement. In 1886 he moved to New York City. Mrs. Sherman died there in 1888 and on February 14th, 1891, her husband followed her. There were impressive funeral services with military honors both in New York and in St. Louis. One of the pall bearers was Joseph Eggleston Johnston, late general in the army of the C. S. A. The other eleven bearers were Union generals.

During Sherman's brief residence in Louisiana, he was, of course, occasionally asked to state his position on such increasingly vital questions as slavery and secession. His statements on the former subject were generally in line with those of his associates, although he did voice his feelings against the separation of slave families by sale and against the law which forbade teaching a slave to read and write. On the other subject - secession - he was consistently a unionist and, on January 18, 1861, he addressed to the then governor of the state a letter

which began as follows: "As I occupy a quasi-military position under the laws of the State, I deem it proper to acquaint you that I accepted such position when Louisiana was a State in the Union, and when the motto of this seminary was inserted in marble over the main door: "By the liberality of the General Government of the United States. The Union - esto perpetua."

"Recent events foreshadow a great change, and it becomes all men to choose. If Louisiana withdraw from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the Constitution as long as a fragment of it survives; and my longer stay here would be wrong in every sense of the word." The remainder of this letter really constitutes an official resignation of his position as superintendent the moment the State should actually secede. Eight days after the date of this letter, i. e., on January 26th, 1861, Louisiana State Convention adopted the Ordinance of Secession. To the end of his life, Sherman never wavered in his attachment to the Union.

When he left Louisiana about March 1, he did not go to his brother, John, in Washington, or to the Ewing brothers in Lancaster, Ohio, but to a friend in St. Louis. He wrote later: "It looked like the end of my career, for I did not suppose that "Civil war" could give me an employment that would provide for the family." He did pay a brief visit to John Sherman, in the course of which John introduced him to President Lincoln, as one who had just come from Louisiana. "Ah!" said Mr. Lincoln, "How are they getting along down there?" Sherman said, "They think they are getting along swimmingly - they are preparing for war." "Oh, well," said Lincoln, "I guess we'll manage to keep

house." Sherman, damning all politicians, went back to St. Louis to become president April 1, of the Fifth Street Railway - the horse-drawn street cars of the city. Missouri was in considerable turmoil at this time and it is at this point in his memoirs that Sherman first begins to speak of "damned rebels."

Five days later he received a telegram offering him a position as chief clerk in the War Department, with assurance that, as soon as Congress should assemble, he would be made assistant Secretary of War. This offer he declined on the ground that he could not financially afford to accept it. His declination, added to his residence in the South, caused some questioning of his political position. Accordingly, a month later, he addressed a letter to the Secretary of War in which he said that he would accept willingly a recall to Army duty for three years - but not for three months. On May 14th, only a week after he had written this letter, he was appointed colonel of the Fourteenth Regular Infantry.

Soon after the debacle at Bull Run (Manassas), in which Sherman perforce participated, he was promoted brigadier general and sent to Kentucky to replace the ill and retiring General Anderson. Here he acquired his reputation for being crazy; he at once began to bombard Washington with requests for reinforcements, saying that it would require 250,000 troops in Kentucky alone to put down the rebellion. He had objected to being placed in a position for which he did not feel himself yet qualified by experience, and he must have been in an unusually nervous state. He was relieved, given a twenty-day leave of absence, and upon his return was assigned to a command under Grant at Cairo, Illinois. This

was the beginning of a combination that proved valuable to the Union. Later in life, Sherman is said to have remarked: "Well, Grant stood by me when I was crazy and I stood by him when he was drunk, so we still stick together."

With the assumption of his command under General Grant late in 1861, Sherman's real participation in the War between the States begins, a participation that was to continue almost without a break until late in April, 1865. We see him at Shiloh on April 6 and 7, 1862, where he and Grant were, in the opinion of most competent historians, rather ignominiously surprised. Six weeks later we see him at Corinth, Mississippi, commanding a division under Halleck and Grant in an amphibious operation, the real goal of which was Vicksburg and control of the Mississippi. And then we see him at Vicksburg, which finally surrendered July 4, 1863, just as Lee was starting to return to Virginia from Gettysburg. A little later he is in the severe fighting around Chattanooga (November 23-25.) A few months later (March 1864) Grant was made general-in-chief of all the Union armies. He at once decided to go east to be with Meade's Army of the Potomac and leave Sherman in command of the Military Division of the Mississippi. Before Grant left, he and Sherman had a clear understanding as to what Sherman's next move would be.

Sherman's campaign aiming at the capture of Atlanta and the destruction of General Joe Johnston's army began May 5th, 1864, and we follow him southward with his 100,000 men as he skillfully

outflanks Johnston who, for his part, was conducting a masterly and equally skillful retreat in the face of superior forces. When Jefferson Davis replaced the skillful Johnston with the fiery Hood, Sherman is said to have remarked that he felt that the Confederate president had presented him with an additional army corps.

Within ten days Sherman had chased Hood into the defences of Atlanta and the siege of the city began July 28, 1864. We will not dwell here upon the horrors of that siege but will merely remark that the city fell into the hands of the Union general on September 2nd. Sherman immediately began to plan his march to Savannah and, after some correspondence with Grant, he obtained permission to go ahead with what seemed to many of his associates a foolhardy adventure - one more sign that Sherman was a lunatic. Be that as it may, on November 16th, his preparations were complete and he began his march across Georgia just as Hood started north into Tennessee in a futile attempt to draw Sherman away from Atlanta.

A famous piece of successful strategy or a notorious exhibition of fiendish vandalism - each of us must choose his own characterization of the march of this army of soldiers, stragglers and "bummers" as it tramped and trampled its way across the Heart of the Confederacy. Of opposition it had little. Beauregard had little to concentrate against Sherman; still less did he have the means to concentrate what little he did have. Reaching the outskirts of Savannah early in December,

Sherman besieged the city from December 10 to 21, and then sent a telegram to President Lincoln offering him Savannah as a Christmas gift. He then turned his attention to South Carolina.

Charleston, S. C., did not have to undergo siege; Sherman merely cut all lines of communication as he worked north and the city folded up. But the march north into South Carolina was far from being the prolonged picnic that the march through Georgia had been.

To reach Columbia, which is due north of Savannah, Sherman had to march his men across flat swampy country intersected by many rivers. Most of these were in flood. Canny little Joe Johnston, who at last had been restored to command when there wasn't much left to command, thought that no army could cross such terrain in winter. And when he did realize that they were crossing, he wrote: "I made up my mind that there had been no such army in existence since the days of Julius Caesar." Bruce Catton calls that army a "collection of western pioneers on the march" and quotes one of Sherman's privates as having remarked on one occasion: "Uncle Billy seems to have struck this river endways." On another occasion, when a staff officer complimented a detail of soldiers for getting wagons and guns out of the almost bottomless mud, a corporal replied: "Yes, we got the mules and wagons out but we lost a driver and a damn good whip down in that hole."

But march they did and into Columbia they came on February 17, 1865. Here again we pass over the horrors of the sacking and burning of the city and follow Sherman and his men as they march

north and east toward the general's ultimate goal, that of providing the anvil upon which the hammer-blows of Grant's army could fall with increased effectiveness. In North Carolina, as Sherman in two columns marched east of Raleigh toward Goldsboro and fresh supplies, Joe Johnston, March 19-21 struck savagely at the left flank of the northerly column at Bentonville, North Carolina. When the Confederates had been finally repulsed on the third day, Sherman marched on to Goldsboro and was for the first time since he had left Atlanta in direct communication with Grant and with Washington and with supplies for his army. Here he would await a call from Grant for assistance. Grant, however, thanks to Sheridan's cavalry, needed no help from Sherman. April 9 and Appomattox were close at hand, and soon thereafter Sherman was to meet Joe Johnston again, not on the field of battle but at the conference table.

Thus there rode and raged through the War, from First Manassas to a time even a little beyond Appomattox, this tall, spare, wiry figure, often unkempt and careless in dress, a restless chain-smoker of "segars" who was forever flicking ashes all around him, talking hurriedly with vigorous, incisive gestures, never confused yet never composed. One wonders whether he was ever still even in his sleep.

Sherman's great contribution to the bitter art of waging war was his decision to abandon his railhead in Atlanta and march across Georgia and the Carolinas without any line of communications behind him. The Civil War was the first great

war of the new industrial civilization. Up to that time, transportation and communication had been unchanging, -- foot and hoof on land, and sail by sea. Now the locomotive, the steamship and the magnetic telegraph began to play a great part, with a consequent effect upon strategy. Weaponry had not yet made equal advances; in range and accuracy the smoothbore musket of the Napoleonic wars was not much better than the bow and arrow, while the cannon of Napoleon's time were not vastly superior to Julius Caesar's catapults. The Civil War began with weapons very much like these but improvements during the war caused some changes in tactics, especially in the use of defensive earthworks. The new transportation, however, brought great changes, among them a dependence upon railways that was sometimes used too enthusiastically.

Sherman had a sound sense of logistics. When he started south from Chattanooga in the spring of 1864, he realized that he would have to depend for supplies on a single line of rail running south to Atlanta. He knew that trains were subject to accidents; he also knew that there was a man named Nathan Bedford Forrest who had an uncanny knack of creating accidents to railways behind Union lines. He accordingly calculated his needs for supplies upon the supposition that he would lose at least two trains every day, i. e., that of all the trains starting south on a given day, on the average, two would fail to reach his army. Of course, he protected the supplying railway as closely as he could, in order to keep such accidents at a minimum, and the result of this planning was that his army was never

short of supplies and ammunition as it worked and fought its way into Atlanta.

Once in Atlanta, he began preparing for his march to the sea. He sent Thomas (The Rock of Chickamauga) and Schofield back to Tennessee to take care of Hood. He sent back to Chattanooga all supplies not needed in Atlanta, and he cut to the bone the supplies that would travel with his army. On November 16, 1864, Sherman started eastward from Atlanta with 60,000 men in two columns. With them were 2,500 wagons, 65 guns and 600 ambulances. In addition to the cavalry mounts, there were 17,000 animals in the trains. These, like the men and the cavalry horses, were to feed off the land. Sherman later wrote: "... the beginning of the march made me feel the full load of responsibility, for success would be accepted as a matter of course, whereas, should we fail, this march would be adjudged the wild adventure of a crazy fool."

Some military critics, among them especially the British B. H. Liddell-Hart, maintain that Sherman was the first modern strategist, supporting their belief for the greater part upon his march through Georgia and the Carolinas. They also say that no other modern strategist arose until the Second World War. (The deadlocked trench warfare of the First World War tends to support their belief). Their thesis is given succinctly by Liddell-Hart in one paragraph:

"A further and far-reaching change arose in the nineteenth century from the growth of population and the trend toward centralization that were the products of industrialization. They brought increased dependence on manufactured and imported supplies, on manufactured weapons, and on means of communication -

including newspapers as well as transport and telegraph. The sum effect was to increase the economic target, and also the moral target, while making both more vulnerable. This in turn increased the incentive to strike at the sources of an opponent's armed power, instead of attacking its (their) shield - the armed forces." (Sherman's Memoirs, p. VII).

Sherman's grasp of this situation may be illustrated by a few quotations from his own letters. On October 19, 1864, a few weeks before leaving Atlanta, he wrote to Major General Halleck: "This movement is not purely military or strategic, but will illustrate the vulnerability of the South." The next day, in a letter to General Thomas, he said: "I propose to demonstrate the vulnerability of the South and make its inhabitants feel that war and individual ruin are synonymous terms." A few days before leaving Atlanta, he addressed a letter to General Grant, in which he said, "I propose to act in such a manner against the material resources of the South as utterly to negative (Jefferson) Davis's promises of protection. If we can march a well-appointed army right through his territory, it is a demonstration to the world, foreign and domestic, that we have a power that Davis cannot resist. This may not be war, but rather statesmanship." (Memoirs, pp. IX-X).

This strategy, of course, came to full fruition in the strategic bombings of World War II and comes to even fuller fruition in the threat of thermonuclear war which darkens the world today.

Tactically, Sherman probably did not contribute as much to the defeat of Robert E. Lee as he liked to think he did but there was an indirect effect which Lee himself acknowledges in a letter

which he wrote on February 24, 1864, just as Sherman ended his sweep northward through the Carolinas: "The state of despondency that now prevails among our people is producing a bad effect upon the troops. Desertions are becoming very frequent, and there is good reason to believe that they are occasioned to a considerable extent by letters written to the soldiers by their friends at home . . . that our cause is hopeless, and that they had better provide for themselves."

Sherman's thoughts and actions while he was in Goldsboro do not add greatly to his stature. It is true that, ever since he had been in North Carolina, he had enforced discipline more rigidly in his army and that there was less plundering and pillaging than there had been in Georgia and South Carolina. This, in turn, lends credence to the belief that his soldiers had looked upon South Carolina as the birthplace of secession -- the hotbed of rebellion -- and that there had been a certain vengeful satisfaction to them in plundering that state. But, aside from this better discipline, Sherman has been sharply criticized for not following up his successes in the recent battle of Bentonville. The truth seems to be that he was very eager to share with Grant the honor of finally defeating Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Grant, in turn, was equally determined to do the job alone; he did not want to leave room for anyone to say later that easterners could not subdue the battered Confederates without the assistance of the rowdy westerners of Sherman's outfit. Sherman made a trip to City Point near the end of March to try to persuade Grant to wait until he could bring his army up to Grant's assistance, and it was in the course of this visit to Grant at City Point that Sherman had his two

conversations with President Lincoln aboard a steamship named RUSSIA. From these conversations he felt that he would have a wide discretion in dealing with Joe Johnston across the conference table.

It would be tedious to follow Sherman in the moves which finally led to the truce and to the conference table, at which he sat with Joe Johnston and Breckenridge. From that conference table came a document which Sherman always claimed to have written without any assistance or interference, and which he stated he was willing to submit to President Johnson. (Sherman Memoirs, II, 353). "Neither Mr. Breckinridge nor General Johnston wrote one word of that paper. I wrote it myself, and announced it as the best I could do, and they readily assented."

This document I quote in its entirety: Memorandum, or basis of agreement, made this 18th day of April, A.D. 1865, near Durham's Station, in the state of North Carolina, by and between General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the Confederate Army, and Major-General William T. Sherman, commanding the Army of the United States in North Carolina, both present:

"1. The contending armies now in the field to maintain the status quo "until notice is given by the commanding general of any one to its opponent, "and reasonable time - say, forty-eight hours - allowed.

"2. The Confederate armies now in existence to be disbanded and conducted to their several state capitals, there to deposit their arms and "public property in the State Arsenal; and each officer and man to execute "and file an agreement to cease from acts of war, and to abide the action "of the State

and Federal authority. The number of arms and munitions of "war to be reported to the Chief of Ordnance at Washington City, subject "to the future action of the Congress of the United States, and, in the mean "time, to be used solely to maintain peace and order within the borders of "the States respectively.

"3. The recognition, by the Executive of the United States, of the several State governments, on their officers and Legislatures taking the oaths prescribed by the Constitution of the United States, and, where conflicting State governments have resulted from the war, the legitimacy of all shall be submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States.

"4. The reestablishment of all the Federal Courts in the several States, with powers as defined by the Constitution of the United States, and of the States, respectively.

"5. The people and inhabitants of all the States to be guaranteed, so far as the Executive can, their political rights and franchises, as well as their rights of person and property, as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the States respectively.

"6. The Executive authority of the government of the United States not to disturb any of the people by reason of the late war, so long as they live in peace and quiet, abstain from acts of armed hostility, and obey the laws in existence at the place of their residence.

"7. In general terms - the war to cease; a general amnesty, so far as the Executive of the United States can command, on condition of the disbandment of the Confederate armies, the distribu-

tion of the arms, and the resumption of peaceful pursuits by the officers and men hitherto composing said armies.

"Not being fully empowered by our respective authorities to fulfill these terms, we individually and officially pledge ourselves to promptly obtain the necessary authority, and to carry out the above program."

(Signatures)

W. T. Sherman, Major-General

Commanding Army of the United States in North Carolina

J. E. Johnston, General

Commanding Confederate States Army in North Carolina.

All this from the pen of the man who was already being reviled throughout the South as a vandal of the worst sort. One cannot avoid wondering whether the denunciation of Sherman in the South would have been as severe and as permanent if the final peace settlement had not been governed by the vindictiveness of the Northern extremists who gained the upper hand after Lincoln's assassination. And in the North, Sherman was immediately reviled as a traitor for offering the enemy any such terms. The fact that he did go far beyond the legal rights of a field commander in offering such terms does not alter the fact that he was merely putting into practice what he had in effect said all along - win the war any way you can, then bring the country together again as quickly and effectively as possible. He never swerved from either clause of that sentence.

When President Grant's second term was nearing its end and the Republicans were casting about in the spring of 1884 for names to present at the convention soon to be held, Sherman's

name was mentioned more than once. Sherman had very definite ideas on this subject; these ideas he finally embodied in a letter, the relevant parts of which I shall now read.

St. Louis, Mo., May 28, 1884.

"I ought not to submit myself to the cheap ridicule of declining what is not offered; but it is only fair to the many really able men who rightfully aspire to the high honor of being President of the United States, to let them know that I am not and must not be construed as a rival. In every man's life occurs an epoch when he must choose his career, and when he may not throw off the responsibility, or tamely place his destiny in the hands of friends. Mine occurred in Louisiana, when, in 1861, alone in the midst of a people blinded by supposed wrongs, I resolved to stand by the Union as long as a fragment of it survived on which to cling

"I will not, in any event, entertain or accept a nomination as a candidate for President by the Chicago Republican Convention, or any other convention, for reasons personal to myself Any Senator can step from his chair at the Capital into the White House and fulfill the office of President with more skill and success than a Grant, Sherman or Sheridan, who were soldiers by education and nature, who filled well their office when the country was in danger, but were not schooled in the practice by which civil communities are and should be governed. I claim that our experience since 1865 demonstrates the truth of this proposition I remember well the experiences of Generals Jackson,

Harrison, Taylor, Grant, Hayes and Garfield, all elected because of their military services, and (I) am warned, not encouraged, by their sad experiences."

His ambition had been fulfilled; the uproar against him in the North had long since subsided and he was recognized as one of the real soldiers of the late War, and he would have none of the Presidency. And here we might leave him. But, in conclusion, I am going to repeat one story that is told of him, - the story of an incident that would appear utterly trivial, were it not for the fact that it throws some light upon the character and temperament of this not-easy-to-understand man.

When Sherman, Johnston and Breckenridge gathered in the Bennett farm house near Durham Station for their final conference, Sherman bade an orderly bring in his saddlebags. To the surprise and gratification of the two Southern officers, Sherman drew from his bag a bottle of good whiskey and offered it first to his fellow conferees. Then they got down to the business in hand. Somewhat later, when Sherman was intently writing out the terms which he proposed to offer and which we read a few moments ago, he suddenly got up from the table, went to the saddlebags, pulled out the bottle, took a good draw on it, and immediately went back to his furious writing - he wrote as he did everything else, - in a hurry. Breckenridge afterwards spoke of Sherman as a "hog" for not having offered the bottle to Johnston and to him. Frankly, I think that Breckenridge was wrong. I prefer to believe that Sherman, as was his habit, was so engrossed in what he was doing that he was simply oblivious of the fact that anyone else was in the room. He wanted rein-

forcements in the way of a stimulant; he obtained them in the quickest and most direct way possible and, having done so, returned to his task. It was always his way of doing things.

We began this somewhat squandering discourse with a reference to Sherman's belief that war, no matter how fought, is hell, and as we have followed his career through the Civil War, and also agree that he helped to make it so, we can agree with him. Nevertheless, we should remember, in our attempts to assay his character, that he was fighting with fanatic fervor for the preservation of the Union, the Union which had become a religion with him. Once he was assured that that Union would be preserved, no one was more eager than he to diminish the afflictions of the conquered and heal their wounds. And so it is not unfitting that the monument erected to his memory in the City of Washington bears the simple but eloquent inscription

"THE LEGITIMATE OBJECT OF WAR IS A MORE PERFECT PEACE."

CHRONOLOGY

1864

- March 9 Grant made commander of all U.S. armies and Sherman put in command in the West.
- May 5-9 Opening of Sherman's Atlanta campaign at Rocky Face Ridge, Georgia. Wilderness May 5-6-7.
- June 9-30 Kenesaw Mountain period of Sherman's Campaign
- July 6-10 Sherman crossed the Chattahoochee River
 - 18 Johnston replaced by Hood
 - 20 Battle of Peach Tree Creek
 - 22 Battle of Atlanta (Crater at Petersburg July 30)
- July 28 Siege of Atlanta
 - to Sept. 2 Atlanta surrendered to Sherman
- Oct. 1-15 (Hood's raid in force against Sherman's communica-
(tions (Big Shanty, Acworth, Allatoona Pass, Resaca,
(Dalton)
(
 - 22 (Hood started on his Tennessee campaign
- (Chattanooga September 19-20, 1863
(Missionary Ridge November 25, 1863
(Nashville December 15-16, 1864
- Nov. 16 Sherman left Atlanta on his March to the Sea
- Dec. 10-24 Siege of Savannah
 - 21 Savannah evacuated
- Feb. 1 Sherman started north from Savannah
 - 17 Columbia taken. Charleston evacuated.
- March 10 Fayetteville, North Carolina, and arsenal taken.
 - 19-20 Battle of Bentonville
- April 9 Army of Northern Virginia surrendered at Appomattox
 - 14 Lincoln shot
 - 17 Sherman and Johnston meet

April 18 Sherman and Johnston (with Breckenridge) meet
and sign agreement

26 Army of Tennessee surrendered at Greensboro (to
Schofield?)

May 4 Department of Alabama and Mississippi surrendered

10 Jefferson Davis captured at Irwinsville, Georgia

June 2 Galveston surrendered

28 The last shot of the War fired by the Confederate
Cruiser Shenandoah, which was isolated in the
northern Pacific. She then sailed 17,000 miles
more to Liverpool and there hauled down the last
Confederate flag November 6, 1865.

TERMS OF A MILITARY CONVENTION, ENTERED INTO THIS 26th DAY OF APRIL, 1865, AT BENNETT'S HOUSE, NEAR DURHAM'S STATION, NORTH CAROLINA, BETWEEN GENERAL JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON, COMMANDING THE CONFEDERATE ARMY, AND MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN, COMMANDING THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN NORTH CAROLINA:

1. All acts of war on the part of the troops under General Johnston's command to cease from this date.

2. All arms and public property to be deposited at Greensboro, and delivered to an ordinance-officer of the United States Army.

3. Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate; one copy to be retained by the commander of the troops, and the other to be given to an officer to be designated by General Sherman. Each officer and man to give his individual obligation in writing not to take up arms against the Government of the United States, until properly released from this obligation.

4. The side-arms of officers, and their private horses and baggage, to be retained by them.

5. This being done, all the officers and men will be permitted to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by the United States authorities, so long as they observe their obligation and the laws in force where they may reside.

W. T. SHERMAN, Major-General
Commanding United States Forces in North Carolina

J. E. JOHNSTON, General
Commanding Confederate Forces in North Carolina

Approved: U.S. Grant, Lieutenant-General

(NOTE: Grant's approval was added that evening. He was not present at the meeting of Sherman and Johnston, and Sherman did not tell Johnston that Grant was nearby).

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

(NOTE: These supplementary notes were used only for discussions by members of the SPHEX CLUB at the end of the meeting, and after the reading of the paper).

You will note that, in my paper, I made no attempt to assess the blame for the destruction in Georgia and the burning of Columbia, South Carolina. That is a question which can never be satisfactorily answered and partisans will hold their own views. In the discussion I merely pointed to one fact - at least, I believe it is a fact. As soon as Sherman's troops crossed the state line into North Carolina, they were held to a much stricter discipline than in Georgia and South Carolina. One infers that they could have been held under the same kind of discipline in those two states, if the commanding general so desired.

The random notes in this book may be of some use to you in the discussion following the paper.

I did not run across the extract from Bishop Lay's diary until after I had completed my paper, and I did not feel like recasting my paper so as to include it. I accordingly used it in the later discussion, for I consider it the best brief evaluation of Sherman's character. Bishop Lay's diary has an especial personal interest for me. He was at that time Bishop of the (Episcopal) Missionary District of Arkansas but in 1868 he was translated to the Eastern Shore of Maryland as First Bishop of Easton. Here he and my grandfather, the Rev. John Oliver Barton, became strong friends, a friendship which lasted until Bishop Lay's death in 1885. Thirty years later, at the University of Virginia, I met a sixty-year old man whose name was Lay. He proved to be Bishop Lay's son, and, when I told him who my grandfather was, he said, "My son, your grandfather was the best friend my father had in this world." Bishop Lay had another son, George, who was for years head of St. Mary's School in Raleigh, and that probably accounts for the fact that his diary is preserved in the University of North Carolina Library.

Note also the sheet following the Bishop Lay sheet. This is the only reference I can find in print to the origin of Sherman's famous "war is hell". Note that it does not appear in print until 1914, although it is attributed to a speech made by Sherman in 1879.

BISHOP LAY'S DIARY

As I arose to take my leave, General Sherman apologized for not having a bed to offer me. He said he would forward me tomorrow under General Thomas's protection, and he would see to it that I should return within our lines without inconvenience. He then sent a staff officer with me to the hotel with directions to see that I was comfortably accommodated.

In person, General Sherman is spare and of good height. His hair is (not unpleasantly) red; his forehead very fine, his eye clear and restless. He impressed me as a man of active temper, who must needs be doing. His face is somewhat dyspeptic in expression. He would be accounted ordinarily a kind-hearted man; but when aroused, severe and utterly unrelenting. His manner is very frank and out-spoken. He does not seem to keep a large staff about him, and told me that he threw the business of the army into the staff of the corps, so that he keeps himself unembarrassed with details. At Gen. Hardee's headquarters the officers had been much amused by a sarcastic letter of his in reply to a Confederate chaplain who had lost a horse and claimed indemnity. It was in Gen. Sherman's own handwriting, two pages long. I judge him to be forty-five or forty-six years old.

[Quoting Sherman's remarks): This war ought to be arrested. It is intensifying the greatest fault and danger in our social system. It daily increases the influence of the masses, already too great for safety. The man of intelligence and education is depressed in value far below the man of mere physical strength.

These common soldiers will feel their value and seek to control affairs hereafter to the prejudice of the intelligent classes.

I am tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell. (Attributed to an address before the graduating class of Michigan Military Academy (June 19, 1879), in a letter published in the National Tribune, Washington, D. C., November 26, 1914.)

SONG COMPOSED BY SOUTHERN SOLDIERS AS THEY RETREATED AFTER
THEIR DEFEAT AT NASHVILLE, DECEMBER 15-16, 1864:

And now I'm going southward,

For my heart is full of woe,

I'm going back to Georgia

To find my 'Uncle Joe! (Joseph E. Johnston)

You may sing about your dearest maid,

And sing of Rosalie,

But the gallant Hood of Texas (John B. Hood)

Played hell in Tennessee.

BARRETT p. 273:

To Johnston, Sherman expressed the hope that the animals "loaned" to the farmers would be enough to insure a crop. In closing, he repeated the familiar promise: "Now that the war is over, I am willing to risk my person and reputation as heretofore to heal the wounds made by the past war" He went on to say that he thought his feeling was shared by his army and that of Johnston's also. In his reply, Johnston informed Sherman that in all of their interviews he had been impressed by his (Sherman's) sincere desire "to heal the wounds made by the war." The most amazing line in this letter was the usually impassive Johnston's confession that the misfortune of his life was that of having had to encounter Sherman in the field.

CATTON, THIS HALLOWED GROUND, p. 369:

Thomas comes down in history as the Rock of Chickamauga, the great defensive fighter, the man who could never be driven away but who was not much on the offensive. That may be a correct appraisal. Yet it may also be worth making note that just twice in all the war was a major confederate army driven away from a prepared position in complete rout - at Chattanooga and at Nashville. Each time the blow that routed it was launched by Thomas.