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Letter with attachment: W.L. Dunn to Ida M. Tarbell, April 4, 1901

Dunn, W.L.

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Glade Spring, Va.
April 9th 1901

Miss Ida, M. Garbell

Dear Madam

I enclose your manuscript of the
Blundering of Capt. Mosby's Command. You can
condense as much as you think proper.

Respectfully

W. L. Dunn, M. D.
Late Surg. P.A.G.S.
On the afternoon of the 4th day of April 1865 with Capt. John Murphy I left the Hague in Westmoreland County, where I had been on duty since Feb. 14th, to return to Richmond. I was joined the next day by a man who had not returned to Charinghiers with the detachment which had been interested in Northern neck of Virginia. On night of the 5th reached Ripper end of King George and learned that Richmond had fallen. Remainned here until the 12th of April to gain information, then resumed my way to Charinghiers, where I arrived on the 14th and learned Col. Higby had heard of Gen. Lee's surrender. Col. Higby disbanded his command at Salem Charinghiers County Va. on the 21st. When the battalion was formed in line Col. Higby rode out in front, raised his hat in salute, and made his final
address. The men and horses seemed as statues, not a muscle of man or horse seemed to quiver in the entire battalion. No champing of bits by horses. No whispers from men. When he concluded, "I am no longer your commander, break ranks." The officers and soldiers who had made the reputation of his command and were his "veterans" about two hundred and fifty, seemed to detach themselves from those who had lately joined, and grouped themselves together, as though they were loth to sever the organization that had bound them together. The confidence in each other's courage and skill as soldiers, their devotion to their comrades proved in so many fields. It seemed that their hearts could break to have to separate. To give up the cause they lived so well was worse than death. After remaining, probably an hour, with sad tears streaming down their faces, a man of family could seize
his most intimate friends by the hand; then turning to the remainder, with hat-off, would say, "Goodbye and may God bless you," and ride slowly off to be followed by another, leaving equally as reluctantly.

A few days after, with the hostler and three horses of St. Mountain Beattie, who gave me twenty dollars in gold and five dollars in pocket loaned by a conrade, I started home and found the roads open. On reaching home in May I found fences dilapidated, and stock mostly stolen. Two of my fathers negroes had stolen his my good team of horses and ran off to Tennessee. The corn was planted, but not enough provision to last until harvest. With two negro men, four negro women, 80 or 85 negro children to feed, in addition to my father, three sisters, two brothers and the not recovered from a wound, recent received in battle. Fortunately this was a grass country
and by over-working the horses too hard and a good crop, by letting the horses run to graze every night, Saturday and a part of every day. We were just getting to feel like we could live, when a man named Bark with a band of outlaws made their appearance, claiming to have U.S. authority to seize property, and if unlicensed, persons also. His headquarters was on an adjoining farm. Before he done much damage, Gov. Pierpoint authorized us by telegraph, to organize a company, capture him and his band of cutthroats and he would see that he was tried by a court having power to mete out justice. The company was organized at once, and our old friends thought we could hear carbine crack and revolvers do their deadly work in some time. But Bark concluded it was time for
him to hunt his native mountains, and he did so. All trouble of this kind then ceased except a few marauders from mountains of East Tennessee to steal stock. Towards Fall the Rail Road was repaired and made a demand for Circlenood. I delivered enough for Rail Road to buy the absolute necessities of life, and winter clothing for white and black.

To illustrate the rebound from the depth of despair of the laboring classes, I will tell you of my first fall. Late in the evening I was called to see Mrs. O., on the edge of the neighborhood, suffering with colic. How the poor people had settled in some land owned by parties in Pennsylvania. The house and of unknown log with the board covering held down by a log laid lengthwise. The top we is called
the ridge pole. Just before entering, from the noise coming from the house, I concluded I must have stumbled on to a churn making. It seemed that two ladies had gone to the sickroom for assistance. As she was suffering they concluded to do something for her. One put in a pot of wort to boil, the other gathered peppermint and a few coriander put them in the pot of boiling wort and after boiling a while stirred in cornmeal to thicken it into a poultice. This she spread red hot as it was on an old arm. The married lady went to the bed, gently laid down the cover, when the young one by mistake, applied to Mrs. the husband, this red hot poultice, instead of to Martha, his wife. She smirch'd the three women laughing at Mrs. lying flat on his back in bed trying to kick the ridge pole off in his frantic endeavors to get the hot thing off "dag gone it."

W. L. Dunn, M.D.
Late Surg. O. A. L. S.