

WHEN DID THE CIVIL WAR END.

The surrender of Lee to Grant on April 9th, 1865 is almost universally set as the end of the Civil War. But if by the "end" of the War we mean the return of peace, the Civil War was still many months from a close in April, 1865. The surrender of Lee in fact was merely the beginning of the end.

It was not until April 26 that Johnston surrendered to Sherman, but for some time after Lee's and Johnston's armies had been paroled bands not included in the capitulation waged War in the East. It was not in fact until the end of June that the hostile military organizations had all surrendered. But even then guerillas existed in various parts of the mountains and in secluded villages and prowled about the towns. General Halleck who commanded the military division of the James after Lee's surrender reported the presence of numbers of these bands but called them simply outlaws, and said too, that in most cases they were probably made up as much from deserters from the Union armies as from rebel guerilla bands.

Such a state of things was really to be expected. The disbanding of the armies threw great bodies of men adrift. Those from the North went back to an organized society. Shops, farms and factories cried for them. The great mass of men freed was absorbed almost at once. Yet even in the North the effect of the breaking up of the army was visible in ~~many~~ spots and uncomfortably so for a time. In the South the condition was a thousand times more implicated. All those commercial and industrial enterprises which took up the men of the North were destroyed. Plantations were ruined, industries had disappeared. Most serious of all the whole system of labor was disorganized. Men who had been property owners went back to their homes to find hopeless desolation awaiting. Because of their superior pluck and intelligence they took hold of the task of reconstruction immediately. There was more chance for them than for the thousands of men who before the War had lived by salaries or day's wages. For this class there was almost

no hope. The men who had employed them were forced to do their own clerical and menial work now. Hundreds of these men seeing no chance kept up their warlike attitude. They found arms in one way or another and taking to the forests or the mountains for months they carried on a bushwacker's War.

In the West the surrender of organized forces was slower than in the East. It was not until May 4 that General Richard Taylor commanding in Mobile surrendered his army, and the Trans-Mississippi Region was much more obstinate about joining in. It should be said for them, however, that it was sometimes before they know of Lee's surrender and even then their information was by rumor only. As late as May 11, a battle of some importance was fought in Texas. This engagement is known as the Battle of Palmetto Ranch. It came about in this way:

Near the mouth of the Rio Grande is an island known as Brazos Santiago, where in the spring of '65, a considerable force of federal troops was stationed. A few miles up the river was a station, Palmetto Ranch, where confederate force guarded a quantity of cattle and supplies. On the evening of May 11, some 250 men all colored infantry with a small detachment of unmounted cavalry was dispatched from Brazos Santiago against Palmetto Ranch. Early the morning of the 12th, the post was reached and after a vigorous attack the Confederates were driven out and a large quantity of stores were seized by the attacking party. The commands of the federal party did not feel strong enough to hold the place and so fell back and sent for reinforcements. On their arrival he attacked again and again at the Confederates. This time he burnt up barracks and stores, cleaning out the post entirely. The victory was shattered for that same day (May 13) the Confederates came back with a larger force and drove off their assailants. The federals retired fighting and the battle was kept up for 3 hours but finally the Confederates gained the day. This battle is called by many the last battle of the Civil War. Jefferson Davis in his Rise and Fall of the Confederacy speaks of it so and adds: "Thus in the last as in the first battle of the War the Confederates were successful." The commanders of

the colored troops who did the bulk of the fighting at Palmetto Ranch writes in his official report of the affair: "The last volley of the War, it is believed, was fired by the 62nd United States colored Infantry about sunset of the 13th of May, 1865, between White's Ranch and the Boca Chica Texas."

This battle is remarkable for other reasons than its date and the gallantry of the colored troops. It is one of the times when the Imperialists of Mexico forgot themselves so far as to lend aid to the Confederate cause. The Federals were fired upon several times from the Mexican side of the Rio Grande in their advance upon the Confederates and a body of the Imperial cavalry actually came across the river and aided the confederates in their finally successful attack. This was believed by the federals at the time though not reported as a positive fact. I have it, however, from one of the officers of the Confederates side. Nor was this by any means the only time the Imperials took sides with the Rebellion. Nor was it remarkable that they ~~should~~ should have done so. Maximilian had the sympathy of the confederacy. Nearly all the Southern newspapers supported him and overtures of various kinds were made to the Emperor by many persons high in authority in the South. The following remarkable letter from Kirby Smith shows how many of the Confederates felt towards the Emperor of Mexico and what they were willing to do to help establish his cause:-

Shreveport, La., Feb. 1, 1865.

Hon. Robert Rose,

Shreveport, La.

Sir: Whilst in the City of Mexico I desire you, on some fitting occasion, to make known to His Majesty the Emperor, that in the case of unexampled catastrophe to our arms and the final overthrow of the government which I have the honor to represent as the military chief of the states west of the Mississippi River, an event I do not now apprehend, but which yet may possibly occur in the future. It is my fixed purpose to leave my native land and seek an asylum in Mexico. Bred to the profession of arms, having such education in my profession as the best

4

military schools in the United States offer, with the benefit of foreign travel and some experience, such as is acquired by the command of armies actively engaged in the field for more than two years, it is my desire still to continue in the exercise of the profession of my choice. Having some knowledge of the French and Spanish languages and having been on duty once on the Mexican frontier, my humble services and such influence as I could exert might be rendered available to his Majesty's Government. I, therefore, authorize you to tender them to him in the possibility of the contingency above alluded to. The national antipathy that would exist in the minds of many citizens of the Confederate States to those of the North, together with their intelligence, endurance, and daring as soldiers, might in contemplation of possible collision between the Imperial Government and the United States of the North, render very desirable such a corps of Southern soldiers as might be induced by the offer of liberal terms to colonize the Empire, and thus greatly strengthen it. Should you find that this offer and ~~XXXXX~~ the accompanying views are not wholly inappropriate to be attended to, you will please tender my service to the Emperor, and at the same time assure him of my heartfelt wish for the eminent success of his reign, and the honor, welfare and happiness of his people.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. Kirby Smith,

General.

#

But while Palmetto Ranch is called the last battle of the War there was as a matter of fact much desultory fighting west of the Mississippi later. Kirby Smith who commanded the troops of that region did not surrender until May 26, and then the surrender was a farce for Smith fled to Mexico and his troops who had declared they would never lay down their arms fled to their homes destroying the magazines and carrying away arms and ammunition to renew the fight some later day they said.

In Arkansas, Missouri and Louisiana there were a succession of hostilities which kept the federal forces busy, though none of the

collisions can be dignified by the name of battles. They were merely skirmishes with wandering guerillas and the floating of the Confederate army men who had no homes, and sense of responsibility, and who saw no life so attracting as that of the bushwacker. Sometimes they were caught robbing farms or stores, again they were traced to their hiding places in the swamps and mountains. Their hunting of "jayhawkers" as the federals called them lasted for many months. ~~Indeed~~ it was not until April 2, 1866, that President Johnson issued a proclamation that War was legally terminated a proclamation which brought from Senate and House both of which bodies was at that moment in conflict with Johnson, the sneering inquiry: "Will the President tell us in what part of the South the War has ceased and in what place peace is really restored?"

The President, however, had specified what parts of the South he considered tranquil, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi and Florida were the states he named. Texas was omitted. It was not until August, 20th 1866, that Johnson issued a proclamation which included Texas and which ~~proclaimed~~ proclaimed "the insurrection is at an end" and "peace, order, tranquillity and civil authority now exists in and throughout the whole of the United States." The next year in March, 1867, Congress declared that the date of this second proclamation should be considered as the legal termination of the War.

It is so considered in cases before the courts in which such a date is necessary as it has been more than once in settling pension claims. The whole subject was prettily argued only a few years ago in a pension case of considerable interest. This case arose from the passage by Congress in June 1890, of an omnibus pension bill giving pensions to all persons who had served 90 days or more in the Rebellion and had been honorably discharged. Among those who took advantage of this was one John Barleyoung, who had enlisted in April 19, 1866, and had been discharged on April 19, 1869. Barleyoung claimed ^{that since} the War had ended on August 20, 1866, and he had served more than 90 days ^{he had served more than 90 days} and was entitled to a pension. The ^{Court} constitution, however, disagreed with him.

The Bill of 1890 does say the court agreed all who served "during the War of the Rebellion" are entitled to pensions but evidently Congress meant only those whose military service was in some way connected with the suppressing the Rebellion did not mean those of the army who in ~~xxxx~~ their mind were doing ordinary military service such as filling of final posts in a foreign country, fighting Indians, protecting fisheries in Alaska. To receive a pension a man's service must have been connected with the War. Now Barleyoung^{va} claims a pension because of service in the War between April 19, his enlistment and August 20th, the legal date of the close of the Rebellion.

Where did the United States government require War service at this period? On April 2, President Johnson had declared that peace was restored in Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi and Florida.

Evidently then the only state in which military service against the Rebellion was needed later was in Texas. Did John Barleyoung serve in Texas? Unfortunately for John his papers showed that he had not been anywhere in the vicinity of that state between April 19 and August 20, 1866, and accordingly he did not get his pension. #

The end of a War like its beginning is not made by a single act. It can not be marked by a single date. It is a progressive action and can only be fairly represented by several dates. In the case of the Civil War the dates which are of chief importance in its end are the following:

April	9,	1865	--	Surrender of Lee.
"	26,	"	--	Surrender of Johnston.
"	29,	"	--	Muster Out began.
May	4,	"	--	Surrender of Taylor.
"	11-13,	"	--	Last Battle -- Palmetto Ranch.
"	26,	"	--	Surrender of Kirby Smith.
June	13,	"	--	Tennessee Declared at peace.
"	23,	"	--	Blockade raised.
July	22,	"	--	Grant's Last official Report.

~~Appendix~~

April 2, 1866 -- Proclamation that Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi and Florida are tranquil.

Aug. 20, 1866 -- Proclamation that the War is at an end and that peace, order, tranquility and civil authority now exist in and throughout the whole of the United States.

Lee's Surrender = April 9, '65

Mustering out began April 29 - '65

Last battle - May 13 '65 (?)

Last Confederate force surrendered May 26 '65

Blockade raised June 23, '65

Cranth's first official report dated July 22 '65