

**LIFE IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY;
BEING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF
A PRIVATE SOLDIER IN THE
CONFEDERATE ARMY; EXPERIENCES
AND SKETCHES OF SOUTHERNLIFE**

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Life in the Confederate Army; being personal experiences of a private soldier in the Confederate Army; Experiences and sketches of southernlife by Arthur P. Ford & Marion Johnstone Ford

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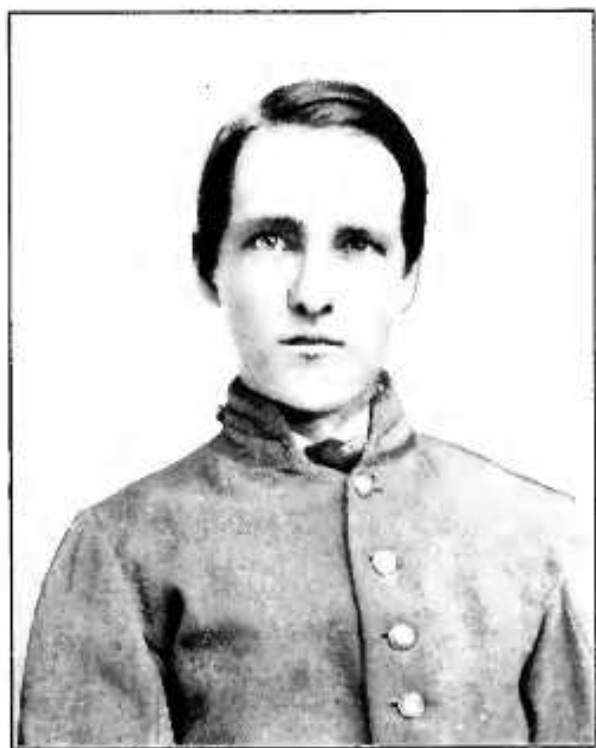
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ARTHUR P. FORD & MARION JOHNSTONE FORD

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AND SOME
EXPERIENCES AND SKETCHES
OF SOUTHERN LIFE



Arthur Peronneau Ford

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BY
MARION JOHNSTONE FORD

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LIFE IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY

BEING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF A PRIVATE SOLDIER
IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY

The following account of my experiences as a private soldier in the Confederate Army during the great war of 1861-'65 records only the ordinary career of an ordinary Confederate soldier. It does not treat of campaigns, army maneuvers, or plans of battles, but only of the daily life of a common soldier, and of such things as fell under his limited observation.

Early in April, 1861, immediately after the battle of Fort Sumter, I joined the Palmetto Guards, Capt. George B. Cuthbert, of the Seventeenth Regiment South Carolina Militia. Very soon after, the company divided, and one half under Captain Cuthbert left Charleston, and joined the Second South Carolina Volunteers in Virginia. The other half, to which I belonged, under Capt. George L. Buist, remained in Charleston. Early in the fall Captain Buist's company was ordered to Coosawhatchie, and given charge of four howitzers; and thenceforth for three years, until December, 1864, it served as field artillery. I did not go with my company, as at that time I was a clerk in the Charleston post-office, and

really exempt from all service. On April 2, 1862, however, then being about eighteen years of age, I resigned my clerkship, and joining the company at Coosawhatchie, with the rest of the men enlisted in the Confederate service "for three years or the war."

About May 1st the company was ordered to Battery Island at the mouth of the Stono River, where with another company, the "Gist Guards," Capt. Chichester, we were put under the command of Major C. K. Huger, and placed in charge of four 24-pounder smooth-bore guns in the battery commanding the river, our own four howitzers being parked in the rear. Cole's Island, next below, and at the immediate entrance of the river, was garrisoned by Lucas' battalion of Regulars, and the Twenty-fourth Regiment South Carolina Volunteers, Col. C. H. Stevens. An examination of a map of this locality will show that Cole's Island was the key to Charleston; and this question has given rise to considerable acrimonious discussion. But whatever the merits of the case may have been, the facts are, that under the strange fear of the Federal gunboats that obtained on the South Carolina coast at that period, it was believed that our positions on Cole's and Battery Islands could not be held against an attack from the gunboats, which then were off the mouth of the river; and the islands were evacuated. On the 18th the Federals sent a couple of small boats into the mouth of the river to reconnoiter, but they were soon driven back by our pickets. On the next day, and

day after, all the guns were removed from both islands to Fort Pemberton, higher up the Stono River—a very strong earth fort that had been built in preparation for this move. A day or two after, while our men were still on Battery Island, but Cole's Island having been deserted, several Federal gunboats entered the river, shelling the woods and empty batteries as they advanced. On their approach we set fire to the barracks and then withdrew across the causeway to James Island. We had to make haste across this causeway, because it was within easy range of the enemy, who soon began to rake it with shells.

This was my first experience with shell fire, and I soon learned that at long range, to men in the field, if the shells did not explode it was more alarming than dangerous. But being quite fresh I thought it unbecoming to appear concerned, and although at first, after crossing the causeway, I had stood wisely behind a friendly oak tree for protection, after the first shell or two I stepped aside and stood in the open, foolishly thinking that this was more soldierly. I had not yet learned that a soldier's common sense should prompt him to make use of what protection there may be at hand and to avoid exposing himself unnecessarily. But only when duty calls, to throw precaution aside and face whatever there is. While we were standing on the James Island side of the causeway a time-fuse shell fell near us, and one of our men, a new recruit, ran up to it, and stood over