

**A BRIEF RECORD OF
THE ARMY LIFE OF
CHARLES B. AMORY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649318261

A Brief Record of the Army Life of Charles B. Amory by Charles Bean Amory

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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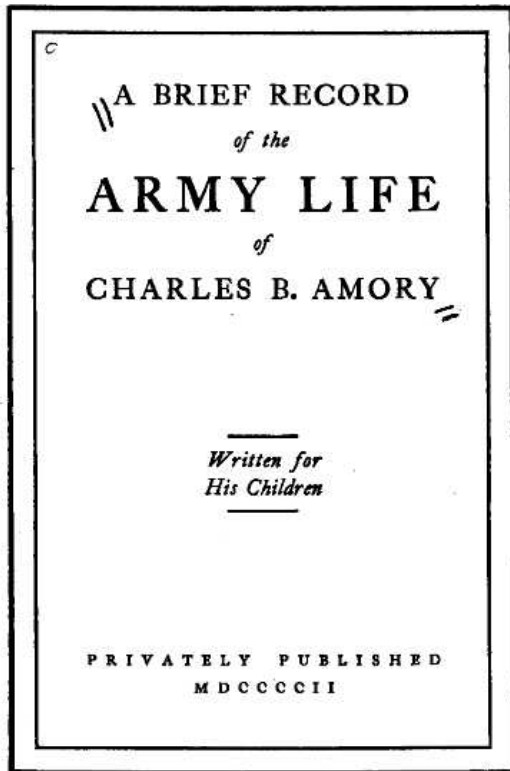
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Chas. W. Amory



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THE Presidential Campaign of 1860 was a most exciting one. The people of the South were very much afraid that if the Republican Party was successful in electing Mr. Lincoln, the institution of slavery would be in great danger, and their leading men openly declared in case he was elected, the Slave States would secede from the Union and war must be the result.

When the election took place and Lincoln was made President, people prepared for war and the young men of the North began joining militia companies and learning the duties of soldiers. I joined the New England Guard Battalion, as in this organization were many of my friends.

In the Spring of 1861, the Battalion, under command of Maj. Thos. G. Stevenson, was ordered to garrison Fort Independence in Boston Harbor and I went with it. The command was at the

Fort for about a month and during that time we were subjected to the severest military discipline, and when we returned to Boston and marched up State Street, people declared we were the best drilled body of militia that ever paraded through Boston's streets. Almost every man of this command became a commissioned officer early in the War of the Rebellion. I myself was commissioned by Governor Andrew as 1st Lieutenant in Co. F (Capt. Robert F. Clark) of the 24th Massachusetts Volunteers, on the 2d of September, 1861. The Colonel of the 24th was Thos. G. Stevenson, the former Major of the New England Guard Battalion, a born soldier, and a splendid specimen of a man in every way. The line officers of the regiment were selected by him and were mostly members of the 4th Battalion. We went into camp at Readville, some ten miles south of Boston, about the middle of September; and during the next three months the officers were engaged in recruiting the regiment and drilling the recruits. Our ranks were completed by the 1st of December and on the 9th we were embarked on cars and

began our journey to the seat of war. Our first resting-place was at Annapolis, Maryland, where we found we were to be one of the thirty or more regiments who were to compose General Burnside's expedition. We formed a part of Gen. Jno. G. Foster's Brigade, the other regiments of the brigade being the 23d, 25th and 27th Massachusetts and the 10th Connecticut. The month of January was passed in camp near Annapolis and our time was occupied in drills and reviews and in target practice. Many of our rank and file were green country lads, who had never fired a gun; but they became a finely disciplined body of men and the regiment had the reputation early in the war of being one of the very finest that Massachusetts had sent to the war.

Towards the end of January General Burnside's troops were embarked on transports and after getting well out to sea, our orders were opened, and we then learned that our destination was Roanoke Island, North Carolina, which was then garrisoned by the Confederate troops. We were to pass through Hatteras Inlet into

Albemarle Sound. Before reaching Hatteras we encountered a terrific storm, which disabled many of the transports and made it most uncomfortable for the soldiers, who were crowded in "between decks" of the vessels and suffered much from seasickness. After getting inside the Sound the water was shallow and calm, but the storm had lowered the water so much on the bar that the larger vessels could not proceed, and we were all detained here for more than a week.

Finally, on the 7th of February, we all got over the bar and then proceeded towards Roanoke Island. Our regiment was on the two steamers, *Guide* and *Vidette*, my company being on the latter vessel. As we neared Roanoke, the companies on the *Vidette* were transferred to the *Guide*, but this made the latter vessel draw so much water that when we were about a mile from the Island she grounded and all efforts to get her off were futile. The other troops passed us and landed that night, and sent out their pickets. Early on the morning of the 8th a smaller steamer was sent to us and by making

two or three trips in this, we at last all safely reached the shore. As we were landing we heard the brisk fire of musketry and the slower fire of the cannon, and realized that a battle was on and that we should soon be actors in it. The regiment was soon formed on the beach and then the order was given "Right face, march!" and we marched up the country road in column of fours in the direction of the firing. Soon we met wounded men going to the rear and after this the dead and dying were seen lying where they fell,—this their first and last fight. It was a terrible sight, but not a man flinched; many faces were pale, but there was a look of determination to do or die on all these. Soon we heard the cheers of a charge and in a moment we came in sight of the rebel breastworks and saw our bluecoats going over them.

We marched through these earthworks and halted, when General Foster and staff rode up to our colonel and gave him orders to follow up the retreating rebels. The organization of the other regiments was somewhat destroyed and we rushed after the enemy and went some two miles