

**MEMORIAL OF
EDWARD B.
DALTON, M.D.**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649307494

Memorial of Edward B. Dalton, M.D. by John Call Dalton

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JOHN CALL DALTON

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*His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate ;
His heart as far from fraud, as heaven from earth.*

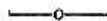


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MEMORIAL.



EDWARD BARRY DALTON, sixth child and fifth son of John C. Dalton, M.D., was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, September 21, 1834. In early youth his physical organization had an appearance of extreme delicacy, notwithstanding that, in bodily activity, endurance, and freedom from illness, he was fully equal to those of more robust external frame. The generous and companionable disposition, which was afterward so distinguishing a trait in his character, was noticeable even in childhood, and his intellectual superiority became abundantly manifest as soon as he commenced the more serious and practical studies of professional life.

He entered the Academic Department of Harvard University in 1851, and passed through the usual course with credit, taking parts in the Spring Exhibitions of his Junior and Senior years, and at Commencement at the time of his graduation in 1855. In the autumn of the same year he commenced the study of medicine under the direction of his father, and entered as a student in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York; passing his winters in attendance upon the lectures at the college, and continuing his studies in the intervals at Lowell, in

the office of his father, who was then engaged in active practice in that city. After following the regular course of study for three years, he received the degree of Doctor in Medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1858; his graduating thesis being a treatise on "The Disorder known as Bronzed Skin, or Disease of the Supra-renal Capsules." The disease was at that time comparatively a new subject, having been first made known to the profession by Dr. Addison in 1855; and Dr. Dalton's thesis was marked by so much merit and originality that it was recommended for publication by the Faculty of the College.*

In March, 1858, he passed a successful competitive examination for the position of Interne at the Bellevue Hospital in New York, where he became in due time House Physician. He remained in this position until May, 1859, when he was appointed Resident Physician at St. Luke's Hospital, an institution then in the second year of its existence. He continued to discharge the duties of this post for nearly two years, until the commencement of his military life.

At the opening of the rebellion in 1861, he offered himself to the Medical Examining Board of the State of New York for the position of Regimental Surgeon, and was at once approved by them and placed upon the list of medical officers awaiting appointment. About the same time it was found that a surgeon was needed to serve upon the "Quaker City," a steamer of 1,500 tons burden,

* It appeared accordingly in the *New York Journal of Medicine* for May, 1860.

then recently chartered by the Union Defence Committee of New York, and afterward by the Navy Department of the United States, to cruise as a blockading gunboat off the capes of Virginia and the mouth of Chesapeake bay. Dr. Dalton was temporarily appointed to this post. He reported for duty on board the "Quaker City" in May, and served with the vessel as medical officer for four months, at the end of which time her charter expired and she was permanently attached to the Navy, having been purchased by the Government of the United States. Dr. Dalton then returned to New York, awaiting further orders.

On the first of November he was commissioned by the State of New York as Surgeon to the 36th Regiment of New York Volunteers, then in the service of the United States at Camp Brightwood, near Washington, and at once joined his regiment, under orders from Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac.

During the winter of 1861-62, the troops remained in camp about the city of Washington, occupied for the most part in completing their organization and in practicing the routine military duties of a stationary force. This continued until the 10th of March, 1862, when the entire army, under General McClellan, moved into Virginia toward Manassas Junction, and finding that post abandoned by the enemy, returned to the Potomac river and encamped in the neighborhood of Alexandria. From this point was commenced the transfer of the army to Fortress Monroe, for the Peninsular Campaign. At that time

the organization by corps had been effected. Dr. Dalton's regiment was in the Third Brigade of General Couch's Division, and formed part of the Fourth Army Corps, commanded by Major General Keyes.

The arrival of the troops at Fortress Monroe was completed during the last week in March, and on the fourth of April the army began to move up the Peninsula. It remained stationary, however, before Yorktown, for the following month, until the fortifications of that city were abandoned by the enemy; when the army resumed its movement up the Peninsula, and, with its base of supplies at White House, advanced to the line of the Chickahominy. The Fourth Corps was the first to pass this river, which it crossed on the 23rd of May. It continued its march on the south bank, forming the extreme left of the army; and a few days afterward occupied the positions of Seven Pines and Fair Oaks, within five or six miles of Richmond. Here were fought the battles of May 31st and June 1st, which, though not absolutely defeats for our army, yet arrested its advance, and placed it more or less distinctly on the defensive. During this time Dr. Dalton was constantly with his regiment, sharing in all the fatigues and hardships of the campaign.

For the next three weeks the army became infested with sickness. The river was swollen by frequent rains, and the wide and marshy bottom-lands, on each side the narrow channel, were alternately flooded and exposed under a summer temperature. The men were employed almost incessantly in making

intrenchments and in building bridges and trestle-work, often working for hours up to their waists in water. These causes soon produced their necessary effects, and the regimental and depot hospitals became filled with cases of febrile disease, many of which proved rapidly fatal, while the numbers of the sick and disabled were daily augmented. After a time Dr. Dalton's health also began to yield, under the influence of excessive professional labor and the unwholesome exhalations of the Chickahominy swamps. He continued, however, to attend to his duties until the last, when his strength completely failed, and he was prostrated by the same insidious form of malarial fever which had already made such havoc among both officers and men. On the 23rd of June, he was found by his friend, Dr. William H. Carmalt, of New York, in a tent near Seven Pines, emaciated and exhausted, without appetite, and so far under the influence of the fever that he was incapable of providing for his own wants, or even of appreciating his own dangerous condition. Dr. Carmalt had come to the Peninsula, with several other physicians, in charge of the hospital and supply steamboat "St. Mark," provided by the Sanitary Commission, and had proceeded to the army in order to afford any required assistance in respect to medical services or supplies. He at once urged Dr. Dalton to leave the camp, and as soon as the requisite authority for his removal could be obtained, had him transferred to the hospital ship at Yorktown, which afterward proceeded to Fortress Monroe.

It was undoubtedly to this accidental meeting,

and to Dr. Carmalt's prompt and friendly action, that Dr. Dalton owed his life ; as he was then so far reduced that a longer exposure to the same evil influences would, in all probability, have placed him beyond the hope of recovery. At Fortress Monroe he was met by his father, who had been notified of his condition, and had come from Massachusetts to find him. Under his father's care he sailed for the North early in July, and at once returned to his home in Massachusetts.

As happened in many similar instances of malarial fever, the most threatening signs of physical prostration soon disappeared under the influence of a northern atmosphere and appropriate medical care. At the end of two or three weeks Dr. Dalton was evidently out of danger, but his subsequent recovery took place more slowly. From time to time his leave of absence was extended until he should become again able to engage in active service ; and it was only in the latter part of August that he had regained strength sufficiently to resume his duties as regimental surgeon.

During this time the disastrous period of the seven days' battles on the Peninsula, and the retreat of our forces to the James River, had been followed by the defeat of General Pope in northern Virginia. The Peninsula had just been evacuated under the orders of the Government ; and the Army of the Potomac, having come by transports to the neighborhood of Alexandria, was hastening with all speed to meet the victorious enemy in Maryland. Dr. Dalton arrived in Washington and reported to the Surgeon-General on the first of September ; but such was