

**FOUR YEARS OF
PERSONAL
REMINISCENCES
OF THE WAR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649492756

Four Years of Personal Reminiscences of the War by M. A. Newcomb

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

M. A. NEWCOMB

**FOUR YEARS OF
PERSONAL
REMINISCENCES
OF THE WAR**



Mrs. A. Newcomb

FOUR YEARS
OF
PERSONAL REMINISCENCES
OF THE WAR.

By Mrs. Mary A. Sturcomb

CHICAGO:
H. S. MILLS & CO., PUBLISHERS.
1898

TO THE
RAPIDLY DIMINISHING RANKS
OF
THE BOYS WHO WORE THE BLUE
THIS
RECORD OF FOUR YEARS' WORK
FOR
THE RELIEF OF THEIR SUFFERINGS
ON BATTLEFIELD AND IN
HOSPITAL,
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY
"MOTHER NEWCOMB."

PREFACE.

This work is written at the earnest request of some of my best and most influential friends. And as I make no pretensions to being an author, or even a good epistolary correspondent, I do not expect to rank as an author or a historian. I shall only give the facts as they occurred at the different places where I was stationed.

You will ask, "Who is it that wrote this book?" We very naturally like to know not only what we are reading about, but also who wrote it. I was born in Cayuga county, New York, in 1817, and attended the schools of Cayuga county and of Geneva, New York. In the year 1833 I was married in the city of Rochester, then my home, to Hiram A. W. Newcomb. The marriage was performed by the Rev. Mr. Fillmore, a cousin to President Fillmore, a resident of Buffalo, N. Y.

In this volume I shall tell you what occurred in connection with my own work in the different hospitals; on the boats that conveyed the sick and wounded from places of conflict; on the battle-field; in tents; in the woods; on the march; and in the various camps. Now after thirty years have passed I am still here; but my hair is as white as the paper on which I write, and my days are fast waning; and before I leave the world, I want to leave a record, from my own personal knowledge and observation, of the terrible hardships and privations many of the brave boys passed through, that we might have a home and a republic.

No merely historical events will be related in this book; the history of the war has been often repeated, and it would take a far abler pen than mine to trace correctly the movements of a large army, as it was constantly moving over thousands of miles in different sections of country. I leave all that to the historian, whose writings I gladly peruse with interest.

It is my purpose to give the reader a view of the work of an army nurse, in its true light. No fictitious matter

is presented here; and as you peruse these lines, remember that the half has not been told. If memory served me better, I might make the story more interesting; but there is no pen made, nor any hand to guide it, that could tell all the hardships our dear soldier boys passed through during the years 1861-5. We often read of war and say it is sad; but one must see the battle-field and be with the wounded and dead to have an adequate idea of war. Although I passed through the last war and saw many conflicts and many hard scenes, I still feel that I realized but little of the actual hardships that the soldiers endured during those five years of struggle for the liberties that you and I enjoy. And as they gather around their camp-fires and sing the old familiar war songs, and tell the oft-repeated story, and smoke the pipe of peace; and as they sit under their own vines at home, with wife and children about them listening to the story of their hard-fought battles and their sufferings on the field and in the hospital, I feel to join with them and wish them joy, as I ever shall while I am able to get to their camp-fires. When I am gone will some other, more worthy than myself, take up the story.

And when the last veteran has laid aside his knapsack, unbuckled his sword and laid away his canteen; when the drum beats his last tattoo, and younger comrades bear him away to his last resting-place, and the bugler at the head of his grave sounds "lights out"—remember it was he who helped to put down the greatest rebellion the world ever heard of; and as the decoration days return, lay a wreath of fragrant flowers upon his grave. When he enters the haven of rest, may he find the gates ajar.

Sons of veterans, never pass a poor, broken-down soldier without a friendly word to cheer his old age. Rally around the old flag, and cherish the memory of those noble men who fought for the liberties you enjoy. May God bless you and keep it ever in your minds, that your freedom was dearly bought with many a soldier's life.

M. A. NEWCOMB.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

It is with sincere sorrow that we announce the recent death of the author of this book. While the manuscript was in the hands of the printer the death angel's bugle sounded "lights out," and Mother Newcomb passed over to join the hosts of the boys in blue whose last hours were soothed by her ministrations on the battle-field and in the hospital.

We are reminded anew that the surviving fragment of the past generation who shared in the unhappy strife now more than a quarter of a century past, is daily growing smaller, as nature spreads the successive green and white mantles of oblivion over scarred battle-fields and shallow graves.

Survivors of the civil war will feel added interest in this story of a noble woman's heroic work now that the record of her life is closed. This volume was her last and cherished work. Mother Newcomb is no more on earth, but her memory will be cherished as long as an old soldier lives.

