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THE JAMES D. DAVIDSON FAMILY

OF

ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

SEP 17 1961

A Thesis submitted on the 8th day of May, 1961,  
to the Department of History of Washington and  
Lee University in partial fulfillment of the re-  
quirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with  
Honors in American History by

*Clinton Lee Anderson*

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James D. Davidson

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## Chapter I

### A Family of Rockbridge Before the War

Between the Blue Ridge and the Alleghany ranges lies the beautiful Valley of Virginia. Within the valley stands the Natural Bridge, a symbol of God's omnipotence in nature. Its strength and rugged beauty and balance are in keeping with those bold, rugged Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who filtered down from Pennsylvania into the Great Valley, where they carved out of the wilderness their homes, their churches, and their future. Soon the settlers became so numerous that a separate county was formed and called Rockbridge in honor of the area's magnificent natural monument.

Slowly, the settlers formed a small hamlet near the center of the county, directly east of the House Mountains. Their small farming community was named Lexington after the Battle of Lexington which had just taken place. The "shot which was heard around the world" had been fired. The Scotch-Irish never had any love for the English, so they enthusiastically joined the patriots in the cause of liberty and freedom against the oppressor.

The little hamlet grew and prospered as more and more people came into the Valley. Liberty Hall Academy was built just west of the village by William Graham. This Presbyterian school was later to become Washington College when it moved to new quarters in Lexington. Virginia Military Institute was established in 1839, and was located just north of Washington College. By 1855, the village had become quite a sleepy little town. One observer called Lexington "an indifferent town and rather small, with muddy streets."<sup>1</sup> A Baptist minister, Florence McCarty, wrote: "It looked as though it had been finished

twenty years earlier, a new house being a very rare event."<sup>2</sup> In 1861, the town was able to support eight groceries. The atmosphere was quiet, peaceful, and calm, except on court days when all the farmers from the surrounding countryside would come to town. On these occasions drinking became unpleasantly conspicuous. Decent ladies would absent themselves from the streets. Yet, most of the time it was a place where the amateur poet could reside and write his verses with a clear conscience. The county newspapers devoted most of their front page to poetry and news, or to general advice concerning agriculture, unless it was election time, or the President of the United States, the Governor, or the county delegate to the General Assembly had made a recent speech. These speeches usually were published in their entirety, many of these covering the front pages of several issues in a series.

These Scotch-Irish Presbyterians were a people of a different race from the Tuckahoes in Eastern and Southern Virginia, or the Germans just north of Rockbridge in the upper part of the Valley. J. S. Wise, who came to V. M. I. as a student in 1861, describes this tribe of Presbyterians, among which he was living:

At Lexington, Virginia, these folk were and are, as their ancestors have been for centuries, men of earnest, thoughtful, and religious natures; simple in their lives to the point of severity, sometimes severe to the point of simplicity; intense in their religious fervor, yet strangely lacking, as it seems to us, in that quality of mercy which is the greatest attribute of religion; loving and possessing education, yet often narrow-minded, in spite of through training; almost ascetics in their wants, not bountifully hospitable, but reasonably courteous and considerate towards strangers,

and methodically charitable; regarding revelry and dissipation of body or mind as worthy of supreme contempt; or dogged obstinacy, pertinacity, and courage; dominant forces in all things wherein they take a part.

This character sketch adequately describes families like the McDowells, Paxtons, Grahams, Prestons, Houstons, Barclays, Davidsons, and many others who made up the vast majority of the 17,248 people living in Rockbridge in 1860.

A Presbyterian home had an atmosphere of austerity about it. It was characterized by the prominence of the family Bible, grace at all meals, and daily family devotional services, either immediately following breakfast or just prior to the family's retiring at night, or at both times. A strict Presbyterian young lady could be courted by meeting her at church on Sunday morning or by taking her to the Sunday night service which, in reality, meant as much to her as the ordinary dancing party would mean to a Tuckahoe girl at a plantation manor house. In romance as in her religious faith, she was firm and resolute. If a daughter of one of these families was won by a young man, he had accomplished quite a feat. Wise, humorously describes an evening spent among strictly reared young female Presbyterians as "like sitting upon icebergs, cracking hailstones with one's teeth."<sup>4</sup>

The chief occupation in the area was farming. The fertile limestone soil brought forth excellent crops of wheat, corn, and other small grains. McCormick had invented his famous reaper and tested it out on several farms, one of them being just south of Lexington. Then he took his invention North and finally arrived at the frontier town of Chicago where he began to manufacture them. Other new techniques were being discovered by these mentally alert Scotch-Irish.

Intellectually, the people on the whole were remarkably well-educated by the field schools, private day schools, and the church through their Sunday schools, catechisms, and Bible studies. A small rural field school in Rockbridge had Greek and Hebrew as a part of its curriculum before the Civil War. Many boys from the county and town attended Washington College and V. M. I. The Washington College library contained over 2,000 volumes in 1840.<sup>5</sup> By 1855, J. W. Paine was operating a book store in Lexington.<sup>6</sup> Its citizens were interested in poetry, the ascetic qualities of life, and the questions which required deep thought and searching of the soul. Once Greenlee Davidson noted in his diary:<sup>7</sup>

Tonight Pa, Ma, Dr. Dick, Cousin James and myself discussed the probability of all the different nations of the earth being descended from Adam. We also discussed the question whether the 7 days spoken of in Genesis, were the 7 literal days, or 7 ages. We finally wound up by reading the proverbs of Solomon.

Yet, these forces which promoted education, culture, and dignity had not defeated all the crudeness in these hot-tempered people. On February 20, 1858, Lexington received quite a shock when George Junkin, the President of Washington College, and John Brockenbrough, an eminent judge of the federal court and a law professor, had a fight on the street of Lexington. The good judge "undertook to make Old Junkin apologize for some harsh things, he had said about him. Old Junkin boldly refused. Thereupon, the Judge called him a 'vile caluminator', and the Dr. returned the compliment by calling the judge 'a vile rum sucker'." The old judge's passion then rose above the boiling point. He proceeded to give the Doctor's ears a good boxing. Several law students who happened to have been standing nearby gave out a



great shout. Junkin, wanting to avoid any further display, calmly walked away.<sup>8</sup> This small episode illustrates the type of society and the period of time just prior to the Civil War.

At this time, a family, whose name was Davidson, lived on East Washington Street. The father of this family was James Dorman Davidson, born November 7, 1808, the eldest son of a prominent Rockbridge County Presbyterian minister, Andrew Baker Davidson. The younger Davidson was an outstanding chancery lawyer who had "exceeded all of his brethern at the bar in volumes of written pages on file in the court."<sup>9</sup> He had been educated at Washington College in the 1830's, and, in 1858, he was to become a Trustee of that institution and remain one until his death in 1882. The clerk of the faculty once wrote that throughout Mr. Davidson's long life he had never lost an opportunity to promote the interests of the college and advance its claims. "He was among its students in early manhood, its patron in the person of three sons in middle life, and an official custodian of its affairs in his later years."<sup>10</sup> He had become a lawyer under the tutorage of General Dorman, his uncle, with whom he became a partner."<sup>11</sup>

The mother of the family was Hannah Greenlee Davidson, a very patient and kind woman. She was a loyal wife and mother of eight children. The first, a son, died in infancy; the others grew into adulthood. The five boys were Greenlee, Frederick (Seddie), Charles (Charlie), Albert (Allie), and William Weaver (Willie). The two girls were Mary and the youngest member of the family, Clara. In every respect, this family represented the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian spirit so prevalent at the time. Its roots extend back into the best families of Rockbridge, including the Paxtons, Grigsbies, Greenlees, Dormans, McClanahans, as well as the Davidsons.

The children grew and developed in a closely knit home. Their father had been described as a "man of broad humanity, a kind heart and gentle disposition, of genial hospitality and undeviating honesty." As a lawyer, he would never encourage strife, but would act as a peacemaker in trying to work out agreements outside of the court room if at all possible. He was courteous and "known for his charity and unstinted benevolence." At times, his health was very poor, but he continued to labor conscientiously. Their mother was a cheerful woman, who, by qualities of "kindness of heart, and of manner, her patience, courage, and fidelity to duty," ran the household and helped her children grow up."<sup>12</sup>

One day, Mr. Davidson sat down and began thinking about his wife and her general disposition, character, virtues, and weaknesses. Then he decided he would copy down on a sheet of paper, a large number of traits and qualities by which a person can be measured. These ranged from anger, jealousy, and pride, to love, prejudice, and modesty. He analyzed his wife according to those traits or qualities. For example, he found modesty to be the perfection of her virtue. He listed prejudice, "your prejudices are strong for you are your father's daughter;" suspicion, "though you have much virtue, yet your prudence has taught you to suspect others of lacking it, and you will often times suspect unjustly"; and avarice, "there is a spice of avarice in your character, not enough to render you sordid, but to give you that economy which is a mark of your good sense."<sup>13</sup>

In this home, and from these parents, the children received their instruction and guidance. Mr. Davidson gave his children counsel as a father, but, more important, as a friend. On June 17, 1856, while on a trip to "Washington City," he sat down and wrote Willie, urging him to study hard, read extensively, and take exercise:<sup>14</sup>

Do these when you are young, and you will lay up for future life, a store of mind and muscle, that will avail you to fight its battles, with the strong will of a soldier and stand before kings. Prepare yours thus, when you are young, and you will be able to when you come with the battle strife of life, to make every opportunity available. Mind thus, my son-train yourself to make every opportunity that offers itself available. This is the secret of success in life.

These kind words of advice to his children did not fall on deaf ears. These boys loved their father, as much as their father loved them. Greenlee wrote his "Pa", who was going "across the waters" on May 6, 1851.<sup>15</sup>

We get very loansom (sic) without you, who is the kindest of Fathers to us, indulging all our wishes and sharing us all the paternal affection in your power.

But to me especially you have been, a, a; (I cannot express it, there is not a word in the English language which has force enough to express, what you have been to me) a more than father, who has spared no expense or trouble to make me happy; and which I am afraid I shall never be able to repay in the slightest degree.

Greenlee appears to have been the beloved son in the family. He was a tall boy, lithe and well-proportioned. "His features were high, his profile clear cut and strikingly handsome."<sup>16</sup> His mother spoke of him in these terms:<sup>17</sup>

He was always obedient--I never remember an instance of disobedience. He was never an anxiety but ever the greatest comfort--assisting me by his good example in bringing up his younger brothers.

Greenlee entered Washington College in September, 1852, and took his Master's degree in June, 1855. During his educational career at the College, he was persuaded by William Weaver that he

should keep a diary from day to day. With a sudden spurt of enthusiasm, he began his diary on November 22, 1854. In it, he writes in an unrestricted manner concerning his thoughts, activities, ambitions, and general character. The daily life of a nineteenth century Lexington boy is quite interesting compared with that of the modern student, and his life at Washington and Lee University. In his first entry, he reveals himself as a normal American youth who is continually dreaming of the opposite sex. Here, Greenlee is going to bed with a piece of Ned Graham's bridal cake under his pillow, which is supposed to help him dream of Miss Cantz McDowell, or one of the other four ladies whose names appeared on the envelope which covered the dream cake.

One afternoon, he escorted a girl across the pasture field to Col Alto. As he was being royally entertained with female company, he suddenly caught a whiff of a strangely familiar odor, and then happened to look down at his shoe. To his horror, he had carried part of the pasture field into the parlor. After much embarrassment and attempted concealment, he managed to excuse himself, and hurried out of the house.

Greenlee was able, but, like the modern student, he was lax in class attendance, and in preparation of his lessons. Several times, he mentioned that he went to class unprepared or only partially so; usually he would manage to luck out in recitation, and, to his surprise, receive a hundred. He wrote on December 27, that his speech which he was supposed to make before one of the societies was coming along quite slowly. "I am now convinced that I am the laziest mortal in existence. I have been lounging about home for nearly 2 weeks, and have scarcely written a line of my speech. God only knows when it will be completed."

This youth seems to have taken his work quite lightly and would "stroll" over to classes whenever he felt the urge. If he felt the least bit sick, he would stay in bed and continue his sleep. Needless to say, he was ill on quite a number of

occasions. In fact, an innocent reader might receive the impression that the boy was in bad health. Although laxity and day-dreaming, and several other adolescent traits, were a part of his collegiate character, he was always the ever-obedient son whose conscientious moral qualities marked him as a rising star among Lexington youth. He was honest and clever, yet modest and gentlemanly. His enthusiasm for keeping a regular diary waned during January. Finally, he quit altogether on February 19, 1855. Examinations were being held during that time, and, being quite unprepared for them, he had to spend every second studying.

After finishing his studies at Washington College in June, 1855, Greenlee entered law school at the University of Virginia the following semester. He found his studies and the environment of Charlottesville different from what he had previously experienced. The new system of instruction was difficult for him. A professor would lecture for one and a half hours one day and then would examine the students on that lecture the next day. Young Davidson had not been accustomed to working very hard on his studies. Mail from home came only rarely. His father was not well at home and finances were in a bad way. When Greenlee wrote to "Pa" on December 10, 1855, he was quite discouraged. Everything was going wrong for him. A bench had overturned and mashed his little finger. His father seemed to be having a mental depressive illness. He gave his father some advice and also expressed in no uncertain terms his feelings toward the University of Virginia: <sup>18</sup>

By one determined effort of the will,  
you can shake off the imaginary trouble,  
which depresses you so much, and those  
chimeras, which formerly seemed so  
terrible, will vanish into thin air.  
Will you make the effort?

After mature deliberation and reflection, I have decided to return home at the end of the month. In order that you may know my reasons for this course--my services are required at

home, where I can assist you in your business.

. . . I can learn more law with you than I can here (for in my opinion the University is very much overrated).

Greenlee rationalized his return home, but from all indications he was suffering from a chronic case of homesickness, and that it was he who could not shake off his imaginary troubles. Within eight months the same boy, whose father could not afford two hundred dollars for the second semester tuition, was on an extensive trip taking him to Washington, Chicago, and New York.

He wrote from Washington that he had seen Mr. John Letcher, a close family friend and the congressman from the Valley district. He had heard Mr. Letcher and a number of other congressmen speak of the "Army Bill," and it seemed that the consensus was that "our Government is nearer a collapse than it ever has been before."<sup>19</sup>

After leaving Washington, he sped west via the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at the rate of forty miles per hour. "...the speed with which we flew around some of the sharp curves frightened me nearly to death." Greenlee was greatly impressed with the West, especially Chicago. This was the town which was bound to become the "City of the West." A person could not "walk twenty steps in any direction without passing new buildings" which were being erected. He was told by a former Lexingtonian who was now living there that as a young lawyer in Chicago, he could make in one year what it would take ten years to make in Virginia. John Hamilton, another former Rockbridge County resident, had bought forty acres of land only four years prior to that time for \$4,000. Now he was refusing offers of \$60,000 for that same land. Greenlee fell in love with the great Mid-west and found it filled with promise of adventure and riches. He

seriously considered settling in Chicago, and making it his home.<sup>20</sup> With this enthusiastic picture of the West, he moved on to New York. He stopped at Buffalo, New York, the home town of the American Party candidate, and former President of the United States, Millard Fillmore. Greenlee made the observation: "Mr. Fillmore's residence is very plain...It is nothing more than an ordinary weather boarded frame house. I am a great admirer of Mr. Fillmore, but I do not believe he will carry a single state."<sup>21</sup> He then traveled to Niagara Falls, New York City, Philadelphia, and home. Inspired by this extensive trip, Greenlee finished his law course under the guidance of Judge John Brockenbrough in June, 1857.

The young lawyer then hung out his shingle and occupied a desk in his father's office. Soon his private practice was united with the responsibilities and duties of Master Commissioner in Chancery. His personal advertisement soon appeared in the county newspapers:

GREENLEE DAVIDSON

Attorney at Law, Notary Public, and Commissioner  
in Chancery -Lexington, Virginia

Practices in the Courts of Rockbridge and  
the adjoining counties.

Particular attention given to the collection  
of Claims Office - with his father - J. D.  
Davidson, Esq.

This notice remained in the papers until he was chosen by John Letcher, then Governor of Virginia, as his personal aide-de-camp, with rank of Lt. Col. of Cavalry, May, 1861. He was also chosen as a director of the Bank of Rockbridge in March, 1861, for the ensuing year.<sup>22</sup> His law practice grew and prospered. Greenlee was now probably the most promising young man in Lexington.

Meanwhile, his brothers were also receiving college or preparatory education. All of the boys had college training at one time or another. Allie and Seddie attended Washington College while Charlie was graduating from V. M. I. Willie attended V. M. I. after the war. Allie, who had been graduated from college when only eighteen years old, and Charlie entered graduate school at the University of Virginia in that fateful winter term of 1860-1861. Their letters reveal the tension of the time, and the trend toward secession to which they were ardently opposed.

Charlie took only thirteen hours of graduate work while Allie struggled with sixteen, which included Latin, Greek, Moral Philosophy, and Political Economy. Allie, even though complaining about his overload, always seemed to be the life of a good party. He usually made a big hit with the ladies. On New Year's Eve, 1861, Allie tells of a party near Charlottesville, where he played the piano, sang, and told jokes for the young ladies. Even a young Yankee schoolteacher, a Miss Thurber, admired and enjoyed his talents. She later complimented him as being "the only Virginia gentleman she had ever met with who knew how to entertain ladies."<sup>23</sup> Charlie and Allie studied under such great professors as Dr. McGuffey and Dr. Gildersleeve, but it was a time of disquietude and conditions made it very difficult for real concentration. Allie, in one of his letters, expressed a regret that he had come that semester, but that he would do his best anyway.

Charlie wrote on November 9, 1860, his twenty-first birthday, describing the National election which had just taken place. It seems that Bell would have won a majority vote in Albemarle County if the Breckenridge men had not gotten the mountain people to come into town and had supplied them amply with liquor so that they were so drunk they could not stand up. They "kept them in



town all night and carried them into the halls so drunk that they could scarcely stand." Most of the students were secessionists and apparently sanctioned this action. But Allie and Charlie were irritated and deeply disturbed by the whole situation. 24

Conditions had grown steadily worse over the months. By January, 1861, Allie wrote to his "Pa" that everyone at the University expected "to be called to defend his country or protect his fireside." South Carolina boys had already gone home. Two military companies had been organized but probably would have to dissolve because of the lack of arms. Allie, his father, and his sister attended the Virginia State Convention, which had been called to take up the question of secession. After returning to Charlottesville, he had a most difficult time holding on to his conservative view point because a vast majority of his school-mates were avid secessionists. On March 11, he writes that the students were calling Lexington "an abolition hole." Then, on April 20, H. R. McKennie wrote to J. D. Davidson:<sup>25</sup>

The young men of all ages seem to be wild with the most intense excitement. At dinner on Wednesday, your son Charles had determined to go, and Albert said he would wait and write home to you to get him a place with Col. Smith, but, at 6 o'clock which was out supper, to my surprise Albert came in all ready for the march.

Tell Mrs. Davidson her sons were both well, and went off with high spirits. I feel the greatest faith that the great God of Heaven will be with us in this terrible struggle.

Mr. McKennie concludes with a note of pleasure that all parties are now united. A common spirit had been molded together into a fighting army. This army was soon to become famous as the Army of Northern Virginia.

However, just twenty days earlier, Allie had sent his father a copy of the original words of "Dixie" which he had been fortunate enough to locate in a little book of popular songs. Allie

pointed out very carefully to his father that he had copied the song on crimson bordered paper, for he thought this "would be most suitable for the adopted song of the Secessionists."<sup>26</sup>

Chapter II  
War Affects a Family

J. D. Davidson was active in politics but held party affiliations on the opposite side of the fence from those of his old friend, John Letcher. The Davidsons adhered to the old Whig principles, while the Letchers proudly held up the Democratic Party banner. The elder Davidson strictly supported the Whig candidates.

He had bitterly opposed President Andrew Jackson and expressed his feeling by ~~concocting~~<sup>conceiving</sup> a letter supposedly written by Aaron Burr in Hades to Andrew Jackson in Washington. Burr wrote Jackson: "...since your Presidential career, Pluto considers you a fit companion for himself alone, and has kept in reserve a fury lake, in his deepest cavern, where he can commune with you exclusively. Pluto seldom speaks of you, without mentioning his favorite, Van Buren, and in fact often doubts whether he should not give him the preference."<sup>1</sup>

Greenlee wrote in his diary on December 1, 1854, that his father had given a farewell dinner in honor of Mr. Letcher, who was going to Washington the next day to take up his duties as congressman. It is also interesting to note that the other guest mentioned by Greenlee was Judge John Brockenbrough. Six years later, these three men were to lead the three separate factions in Rockbridge in the election of 1860. Greenlee added that they and several other gentlemen "seemed to enjoy themselves and the champagne very much."<sup>2</sup>

The Democrats in the decade of the fifties began to sweep the elections in Rockbridge, which had previously been considered a close county, usually giving the edge to the Whigs. The official Whig Party had died and its remnants were called by

several names such as: the Conservative, Know-Nothing, American, and Opposition Party. The old Rockbridge Whigs used the name Opposition Party to indicate their political affiliations. The name itself, suggests the party's primary function which was to oppose the Democratic administrations in Washington and Richmond. In June, 1857, J. D. Davidson and F. T. Anderson, candidates on the Opposition Party ticket for House of Delegates seats, were defeated by E. F. Paxton and J. W. Massie, Democrats. The Valley Star, Lexington Democratic newspaper, observed that the election had "permitted Mr. Davidson quietly to retire to his little office, back of the court house."<sup>3</sup>

This same issue of the Valley Star published a letter written by Mr. Davidson, which indicated his political cleavage with Letcher:

Lexington, Va.  
May 25, 1857

Dear Sir:

Constant vigilance, until the evening of the election is the price of success. Our opponents are moving Heaven and Earth. Leap into the ranks and bring every man into the field, and the victory is ours. Letcher has been out upon our heels, and many Democrats who intended to vote with us...may have been changed in their purpose. Too much confidence may hazard the day. One vote may decide the election.

See that those of our party are committed: and whilst you bring all to the rescue, let your movements be quiet and unknown, until the Ballot Box declares that you have fought and won.

Yours truly,  
J. D. Davidson

Davidson's political enemies claimed that this letter connected him with the Know-Nothing Party, but he had, publicly boasted that he had never been associated with that group.

In 1860 Greenlee Davidson was a delegate to the Opposition

Party State Convention, which was to review the matter of secession. The Lexington Gazette, a staunch Opposition Party newspaper, edited by Josiah McNutt, urged the Rockbridge delegates for this convention "to go by all means, and go determined to carry out as far as their influence can be felt the national object for which they were sent."<sup>4</sup>

It is now necessary to consider the reasons why Rockbridge was a strong Union county, why the Lexington Gazette used the slogan, "The Union Must Be Preserved," why the University of Virginia students called it "an abolition hole," and why the entire V. M. I. cadet corps started to march against the town of Lexington. Unionism seemed ingrained in these Scotch-Irish, whose fathers had come down from Pennsylvania and had settled the area. They had been eager fighters for American Independence and vigorous supporters of the Constitution of 1789. The United States Government had been established on a plan similar to, and partly derived from the organizational structure of the Presbyterian Church. They had only a few slaves in comparison with the planters of Eastern and Southside Virginia. There were many personal ties between Rockbridge and the North, especially with Princeton and Chicago. Indeed, Rockbridge had no quarrel with the Union. Intrastate quarrels had been much more serious questions and came to a head in the decade of the 1840's. In 1847, the Ruffner Pamphlet was written by H. R. Ruffner and endorsed by many of the leading citizens of the county including John Letcher. This pamphlet expressed anxiety and even anger over the discrimination against the Western area by Eastern Virginians. The Westerners demanded internal improvements, railroads, free enterprize, and, most of all, a deemphasis of slavery. Western Virginians felt that slavery should be abolished, especially in their area. The pamphlet also implied that the consequences would be serious if discrimination against

Western Virginia were to continue. Eastern Virginians made a few concessions to the West, one of them being the support of the James River and Kanawha Canal. However, much bitterness and rivalry still remained.<sup>5</sup>

The election of 1860 was the beginning of the real crisis in Rockbridge.<sup>6</sup> James D. Davidson and most of the former Whigs supported John Bell, the Constitutional Union candidate. The Democrats were split. The loyal Democrats, such as John Letcher and James B. Dorman, were campaigning for Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Douglas was also supported by the Valley Star. Judge John W. Brockenbrough, E. P. Paxton, Col. James W. Massie, and Col. T. J. Jackson supported the Southern Democratic candidate, Vice-President John C. Breckenridge. Bell was the county's over-whelming choice, winning with 1214 votes. Douglas received just under half that number with 630. Breckenridge made a poor third place with 361. This vote was significant in light of things which were to come. Rockbridge, as well as Virginia, had given her vote to a candidate who had little chance of winning the election and who stood on such a vague platform of "do-nothingism" that it avoided the whole issue of slavery and secession. The results of this election can be interpreted as evidence of the county's strong Union sentiment.

The election of Lincoln was certainly a great shock to the region, but most people seemed to think that the South would continue to stick with the Union. This belief was rudely shaken in December with the secession of South Carolina. More states were to secede after the new year. Yet Charlie Davidson wrote his father that "the Governor seems to think that if Mr. Lincoln will behave himself, all of the seceding states will come back before long."<sup>7</sup>

Toward the end of November, preliminary meetings were being held; committees were being formed. Rockbridge citizens were noticeably disturbed by the serious state of affairs. In December and January several mass meetings were called. At

first, all party factions attended the same meetings. The mass meeting held on December 15 produced a set of resolutions, and a committee of fifteen was appointed to review those resolutions. Each party was represented by five men; Davidson represented the Union point of view. These efforts were of no avail. The harmony of the group declined as both the Secessionists and the Unionists held separate meetings.<sup>8</sup> A Unionist meeting took place on January 15 in Davidson's office.<sup>9</sup>

Governor Letcher called the Legislature into session, which, in turn, called for the election of a State Constitutional Convention to take up officially the question of secession. In Rockbridge, the Conservatives nominated James B. Dorman and Samuel McD. Moore. They were opposed by John Brockenbrough and J. B. Baldwin, who were more inclined toward immediate secession. Dorman received 1,869; Moore, 1,839; Brockenbrough, 293; and Baldwin, 72. This vote clearly indicates the solidarity of the population against leaving the Union, unless it was the very last resort. It more or less upholds the Gazette's claim that there <sup>were</sup> not more than 250 real secessionists in the entire county. But the movement for leaving the Union was growing. Davidson commented once that "one secessionist could make the noise of ten Unionists." But he held firmly to a policy of "dignified inaction by Virginia."

James D. Davidson, Allie, and Mary went to Richmond for the first part of the State Convention which convened in January.<sup>10</sup> Mary stayed in the Governor's Mansion as a special guest of the Letchers. On February 25, Samuel McD. Moore introduced five resolutions. These were, in part, as follows:<sup>11</sup>

1. That in resisting the fugitive slave law, depriving the South of common territory, circulating incendiary pamphlets, and furnishing arms to hands of assassins, the South demands full and ample security that these wrongs shall not be repeated.

2. That Virginia can never join a confederacy with African slave trade.
3. That Virginia refuses to endorse a government by direct taxation.
4. That the state expresses its approval of the Crittenden program.
5. That if such amendments are not adopted, Virginia will enter into a compact with such states that will agree to adopt them, whereby the present government of the United States will be dissolved as to the states so agreeing.

Davidson made a personal trip to Washington shortly before the inauguration where he talked with a number of prominent persons including Gen. Winfield Scott and John J. Crittenden, a former student of Liberty Hall and an acquaintance of the Davidson family. He met Lincoln in the Willard Hotel among a crowd of other people. Davidson had gone to meet him with a predetermined prejudice. But he found the President-elect a congenial, moderate gentleman with whom he was impressed. He later wrote Governor Letcher that he was "agreeably disappointed" in Mr. Lincoln, after having been "most unfavorably impressed against him, from the accounts in the papers." Davidson tried to impress upon Lincoln that the Virginia Unionists, for whom he was speaking, would not countenance any coercion. Lincoln, in turn, was apparently reassuring that there would be no war. Davidson now felt that Virginia had saved the Union.<sup>12</sup>

Everyone anxiously awaited Lincoln's inaugural speech, and by March 6, a copy of it had reached Lexington. Davidson was doubly reassured that war would not come. He observed that Lincoln's "avowed determinations" were "so much qualified by buts and ifs and unlesses that speech, in fact," amounted "to a message against coercion."

However, Mr. Davidson could see that more and more people



were turning to the idea of secession. The ever-constant pro-Union Gazette called for: "Speedy Action or Immediate Separation." This brought quick response from Davidson who immediately asked McNutt, the editor, to account for this apparent loss of faith. McNutt denied that it had any significance relevant to the paper's official position. The Valley Star changed ownership and went over to the secession movement. In the meantime, Davidson had been writing articles in the Richmond Whig against the tide of secession under the pen name of "Robert of Rockbridge." The Whig also switched across the fence. Davidson was fighting for a lost cause.<sup>13</sup>

At the beginning of Spring, 1861, the Presbyterian minister, Dr. W. S. White, found his family and congregation enjoying "a measure of prosperity rarely possessed in this world." It appeared to him that the secessionists wanted "to burn the barn to kill the rats." He was not at all in sympathy with the separation movement. A little later, April 13, he wrote to the Reverend William Brown:<sup>14</sup>

Thus forced to fight, I claimed the poor right of choosing whom to fight. Necessity was laid upon me to rebel against him (Lincoln), or my native State. I chose the former, and became a rebel, but never a secessionist."

Meanwhile, on April 13, the V. M. I. Cadet Corps actually began marching against the town.<sup>15</sup> This action was precipitated by the two strong antagonizing spirits of pro-secession V. M. I. and pro-union townsmen. Several unpleasant incidents between V. M. I. Cadets and town citizens occurred that Saturday. One violent townsman, probably drunk, pulled a revolver and knife. Other persons stepped into the situation and the difficulty was quelled. But a Cadet named Thompson was assailed by a Lexingtonian named Davis and a personal combat ensued. The cadets in town sent

word to the barracks asking for help. This was like throwing a match into a gasoline tank. The "long roll was beaten" and the cry resounded: "Get your guns! We'll storm the town." Professor McCausland advised them that if they must go, they should go in some system. Meanwhile, uptown the Unionists were arming themselves for the assault. Every doorway, window, and balcony was filled with townsmen armed for war.

The cadets began their march, but just as they arrived at the bottom of the hill ready to proceed up Main Street, Colonel Francis H. Smith, the Superintendent of V. M. I. stepped out in front of the battalion with its "glittering bayonets, ready to be bathed in the blood of Lexington's Citizens," the Colonel stretched out his hand, the buzzing gradually subsided, and then complete silence. Firmly, yet courteously, he asked the battalion to follow him back to V. M. I. The Cadets obeyed with the exception of two, one of whom was Robert E. Lee's nephew. Upon arrival back at the Institute, the Colonel "took them into one of the halls, gave them good advice, and showed them their rashness and how it near it had led to a tragedy, written in their own blood."<sup>16</sup> It was at this major meeting that T. J. Jackson said, "Military men make short speeches, and as for myself I am no hand at speaking, anyhow, the time for war has not yet come, but it will come, and that soon; and when it does come, my advice is to draw the sword and throw away the scabbard."<sup>17</sup>

After hearing of the firing on Fort Sumpter, many of Lexington's Unionists', mostly mechanics and working people, were determined to show their resentment by flying the federal flag from a very high flagpole in front of the Court House. On April 15, 1861, the spirit of Unionism died in Rockbridge. It was on this day that President Lincoln called on Virginia to produce 75,000 volunteers for the purpose of forcing the seceded states back into the Union. Francis T. Anderson, a staunch Rockbridge Unionist, received the telegram in Lexington which had come by courier from Staunton

containing Lincoln's Proclamation; and immediately, thereafter, he went in person to the court house lawn. As he stood by the newly erected federal flag pole, he said, "I love that flag. For eighty years, it has been the flag of my country. Under its folds, that country has grown rich and prosperous. But, fellow-citizens, that flag is now in the hands of our enemies." At this, Anderson was drowned out by hisses and boos for the townspeople had not received an inkling of what had happened. Then, when the crowd had calmed down, he proceeded to read Lincoln's Proclamation and interpreted its significance concerning the Southern people. At the end, Anderson received a tremendous cheer from all the people. Unionism had died.<sup>18</sup> Davidson made a comment to James B. Dorman that the "Union pole raised on yesterday, with the eagle upon it, has been cut down by those who raised it. Everything is quiet, and at long last it seems we all think alike."<sup>19</sup>

On the 16 of April, a dispatch, signed by thirty of Rockbridge's most ardent Unionists, was sent to Delegate Samuel Moore in Richmond, which called for his support to "vote an ordinance of revolution at once."<sup>20</sup> The next day, the convention enacted a secession ordinance which took the State out of the Union. The Convention called for a plebiscite to be held on May 23, either to adopt or reject this action. Rockbridge cast 1,727 votes for the Ordinance and 1 voted against it. Even this single pro-Union voter publicly stated that he despised the Abolitionists. In reality, this was a unanimous vote against Lincoln, Seward, and the pro-Northern government situated in Washington.<sup>21</sup>

Rockbridge citizens were quite sincere in this love for the Union and there was never any general enthusiasm for secession. Yet, their basic concept of government was shattered by Lincoln's call for troops to suppress Virginia's sister commonwealths.

The majority of Virginians believed that, since the state had entered the Union by its own free will and accord, it had the right to secede from it. Lincoln had violated this concept of the nature of government, and Virginia would have no part

in a government run by rules which were basically different from those she traditionally held.

Rockbridge citizens stood by their native state with the same resolute spirit that they formerly expressed toward the Union. The Scotch-Irish were good lovers, but they were equally as good haters. They took up arms with regret, but also with a vengeance. They were filled with the same Old Testament religious zeal which had marked them since their arrival on the frontier. Now, they were fighting for independence and sovereignty.

By this time, the Presbyterian Church had also divided between the North and the South. The following resolution, passed in 1862 by the General Assembly of the new Southern Presbyterian Church, must have had significant effect on strongly Presbyterian Rockbridge:<sup>22</sup>

Deeply convinced that this struggle is not alone for civil rights and property and home, but also for religion, for the Church, for the gospel, for existence itself, the Churches in our connection have freely contributed to its prosecution of their substance, their prayers, and above all of their members and the beloved youths of their congregation...

The Assembly desires to record, with its solemn approval, this fact of the unanimity of our people in supporting a contest in which religion as well as patriotism now summons the citizens of this country, and implore for them the blessing of God in the course they are pursuing."

When the die was cast, Rockbridge citizens threw their property and their lives behind their state. Some had their fears and a few their forebodings, but for the most part the atmosphere was one of enthusiasm, hope, and patriotism. Three companies left Lexington immediately upon the call of the Governor. The Rockbridge Rifles with about one hundred fifty

men, marched to Staunton on April 18. Also leaving at approximately the same time were the Rockbridge First Dragoons and the Second Dragoons with about sixty men in each company.<sup>23</sup> On Sunday, the 21, Major T. J. Jackson began his trip with one hundred and fifty V. M. I. Cadets to Richmond where they were to aid in the training of new troops.

The Richmond Dispatch gave an editorial salute to the brave western county with an article entitled "Gallant Rockbridge."<sup>24</sup>

The instant marching of three companies of volunteers from Rockbridge upon the first announcement of hostilities, does infinite honor to that patriotic and gallant county. It is a county which was the first to move in the Revolution, and is in the front rank now, showing that the sons are worthy of their sires. It was a strong Union County up to the moment of the Proclamation, but from that moment, like all men of Virginia of all parties who deserve the name of Virginians or of men, it picked up the gauntlet that Lincoln had thrown down, and sent forth one shout from hill and glen, from mountain and valley, "To Arms! To Arms!"

We know the men who have gone from Rockbridge, and if the bodies of our invaders are not as small as their souls, which would render them entirely invisible to the naked eye, we will venture to say that every shot of a Rockbridge rifle brings down the game at any distance, and every cut of a Rockbridge sabre dissolves the Union of an abolitionist's head with his carcass.

The Davidson family became immediately involved in the Southern Cause. As has been formerly stated, Charlie and Allie had already gone with the student companies from the University of Virginia to Harper's Ferry. News came that they had arrived safely along with approximately three hundred other students. They were being drilled everyday by their professors. On April 25, the Rockbridge Rifles arrived at Harper's Ferry and met with

the Charlottesville Companies. On that same day, Allie and Charlie received a letter from their father which asked them to come to Richmond the next day in order to get permanent military positions. Both were ordered into the mountains of West Virginia.<sup>25</sup>

Fred Davidson left his studies at Washington College and marched with that first contingent of the Rockbridge Rifles as a second corporal.<sup>26</sup> His father visited the camp of the Rockbridge Rifles once in May, 1861. The elder Davidson wrote to his wife that Fred was well and hard at work. He was also happy to report that there was no drinking on the post. Davidson was greatly impressed by the order and enthusiasm of the camp. Fred was a "fine soldier" among an exceptional group of men.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile Greenlee was recruiting volunteers. A mass meeting of Rockbridge citizens late in April resolved "that able-bodied young men, not exceeding two hundred men, who desire to serve their country, be requested to report to Col. Davidson, at Lexington, immediately." A notice also appeared in the Gazette which further connected Greenlee with the military operations in the county:<sup>28</sup>

Attention: Officers of the 8th Regiment

The Training of the officers of the 8th Regiment of the Virginia Militia will take place on the 30th. of April, and the 1st and 2nd of May, and the General Muster of said Regiment at the same place, on the 3rd day of May next. By order of

Col. Davidson  
Greenlee Davidson, adjutant  
8th Reg. Va. Militia

Jamed D. Davidson wondered if other counties had the same enthusiasm as Rockbridge. He received a partial answer while on his trip to Harper's Ferry in May. He considered Rockbridge to

have been "fired up to almost a conflagration." But he found upon his "winding way" that "Augusta, Albermarle, Orange, Culpepper, Prince William, Clark, Shenandoah, Jefferson etc. were all like us on fire."<sup>29</sup>

An amusing article appeared in the Gazette June 13, 1861, entitled "Well Done Old Rockbridge." It first proclaimed that Rockbridge well deserved the title of banner county. Then it gave an insight into the type of troops Rockbridge was furnishing the Confederacy:<sup>30</sup>

They are the real mountain boys at that-- the chaps who were born with a rifle in their hands, who can pick a squirrel off the highest limb, play havoc with a flock of partridges on the wing, and have been accustomed to having a coon up a tree, signify as much to say, "don't shoot, Mister, I'll just come down." When they get a peep at the white in the Yankee's eyes, that miserable set of God forsaken wretches had as well begin to say their prayers and prepare for "Kingdom Come." Hurrah for Old Rockbridge. She was first in preserving peace and having failed in that she is now first in war.

Greenlee Davidson accepted Letcher's invitation in May to become the Governor's personal aide with the rank of Lt. Colonel of Cavalry. He gave up his profession and began placing all of his energies at the hands of the Governor. His letters, telling about his new position, don't begin until July, 1861. It was on July 8 that he met the Governor at Gordonsville and travelled with him to Richmond, where they remained until Letcher left on a tour of the Northwest front. Important fighting was taking place, which would decide the fate of the western counties of Virginia. The Southern forces were faring badly from Winchester to Charleston, Virginia. Johnston had fallen back from Harper's Ferry to Winchester and was being

pushed hard by Patterson's ever-increasing man power. Johnston was supposed to have been re-enforced by Beauregard. Greenlee said that "Uncle Watson" related to him that "the militia are flocking into Johnston's camp in large numbers from counties in the neighborhood of Winchester."<sup>31</sup> Yet the picture looked bad as the exaggerated forces of Patterson grew larger and larger.

Meanwhile, both Allie and Charlie were in the mountainous counties of West Virginia and in the Kanawha Valley. On July 6, they were encamped at Dry Creek not far from White Sulphur. Mr. Davidson had already asked Greenlee for a copy of the Trooper's Manuel by Davis for Allie because the company was relying upon him to help them drill. It seems that the companies had just left Lexington three days before coming to Dry Creek. The first night out, they camped at Frank Jordan's on the far side of North Mountain, probably at Long Dale. The second night was spent in Covington. About two weeks later, they were stationed nine miles northwest of Charleston. Allie has some very interesting details to tell about the life of new soldiers.<sup>32</sup>

Bill Moore, a member of the company, got someone in Lewisburg to make him a double canteen, one side for water and the other for whiskey. He brought this utensil along and would slip out of camp and get it filled. At one place Bill put the canteen under his coat and started to water his horse. Allie happened to see him and started to water his horse at the same time, and thereby, kept him from getting any liquor. The next morning Bill's horse had disappeared, and Bill sent Allie on a 'wild goose chase' looking for it. When Allie returned, Bill had found his horse and also had a well-filled canteen.<sup>33</sup> The Davidson boys' company passed through the beautiful Kanawha Valley on Sunday. The troops stopped and held "divine services." The next day they were ordered up the Elk River. While camped along the Elk



River, the Company's Captain gave a mock alarm to test the Company's ability to get into fighting position. Allie, who was the officer of the day, and the troops were complimented on their performance.<sup>34</sup>

Meanwhile, the whole Western front seemed to be caving in on the Confederates. Greenlee wrote from Greenbrier River in Pocahontas County on July 13, that Rich Mountain had been surrounded and cut off. There had been a regular stampede of Col. Scott's forces from Cheat Mountain until the Governor himself had brought it to a halt. Conditions had deteriorated to such a degree that a Mr. W. Sheen from Pocahontas Court House had written to James D. Davidson and asked him to form a couple of guerilla companies in Rockbridge from the mountain people who were living at the head of Kerr's and Collier's Creeks. There is no record that Davidson followed Sheen's request.

In the latter part of August, Allie wrote from Camp Butes, which was located thirteen or fourteen miles from Gauley Bridge, that a Capt. Jenkins and some three companies of Cavalry were ambushed near the Hawk's Nest. Allie's own company had been cut down to a very small number by those who had deserted or left for other reasons. Hardly fifty men could be mustered out of a company of seventy five. There was some talk that the entire company would return home after three months, but Allie said, "I have always been in favor of going in for the duration of the war." After a little more than a week, Allie wrote from the Hawk's Nest that it was the furtherest out-post in Western Virginia. Gen. R. E. Lee had taken command over the forces to the north of them. Around the first of September, Allie had carried a "despatch out to Valley Mountain to General Lee" and had spent the night there. While he was gone, there had been a light skirmish with the enemy, but its only purpose was to teach the men "the music of grape shot, cannon balls and shells."<sup>36</sup>

Allie had seen ninety-six prisoners on the road to Lewisburg with General Floyd. One of them was a free Negro. Allie heard one man say that this Negro had offered twenty-five hundred dollars to be released and allowed safe conduct to Ohio, but Floyd turned a deaf ear to him. Allie had no doubts that the Negro "would soon find his way to a cotton plantation, where he will find out that there is a difference between the white man and the negro."<sup>37</sup>

By September 30, Lee had taken full command, and Wise had been ordered back to Richmond. Winter was beginning to make its first appearance in the mountain regions with its cold and rainy atmosphere. A letter from Charlie in late November told that Allie had been taken home because of an extremely serious case of fever. He was not recovering as he should. Charlie himself, was quite well in spite of an epidemic of jaundice which was sweeping the camp. The men who were able had begun building huts for winter, since they had moved camp from Greenbriar Bridge to five miles east of Huntsville on the Monterey road. Charlie made the discouraging observation that the "country people have neither patriotism, hospitality or conscience and charge us the most exorbitant prices for everything we get;" for instance, butter cost them fifty cents per pound and corn meal two dollars per bushel. Charlie had been placed in charge of cooking.<sup>38</sup>

Meanwhile, tragedy had struck in the Davidson family. At First Manassas, Fred Davidson, a member of the 27th Virginia Infantry, Company H, was killed. By his own request he was buried on the battle field.<sup>39</sup> His father was granted permission by the Confederate Army to get inside its lines at Manassas to see that his son was properly buried.<sup>40</sup>

Later in early autumn a group of local citizens asked

Rockbridge people to pledge sums of money for the erection of a monument either on the grounds of Washington College or V. M. I. in honor of "those gallant young men, Paxton, Bradly, Davidson, Bell, Wilson, Att, Moffat, McClure, McCorkle, Goolsby, McManamy and Strickler, who fell on the immortal field of Manassas July 21, 1861."<sup>41</sup> Some funds were raised, but other battles and hard times overshadowed this endeavor.

As Fred Davidson's family was mourning his death, his grandfather, the Rev. Andrew H. Davidson, passed away.<sup>42</sup> He had been the senior member of Lexington Presbytery and a minister in the Presbyterian Church for about fifty-five years. He was well known for his evangelistic work having founded congregations at Collierstown, Kerrs Creek, and Rockbridge Baths. He died on Sunday, August 3, at a ripe age of eighty one.

While Allie was ill in West Virginia, his mother went to see him and took care of him until he was able to be moved to Lexington. Charlie had just been appointed a Lieutenant in the first battalion. Greenlee was preparing himself for the winter months, and was to board in the Governor's Mansion. As the Governor's aide he had various duties to perform. For example, he told of accompanying the Governor and John C. Breckinridge who were delivering battle flags to the regiments at Manassas. Yet Greenlee had an unquenchable desire to go directly into active combat. Even as far back on July, 1861, he had given several indications of his wishes. R. H. Cattlett, Greenlee's close friend and associate told his father about it, who in turn wrote Greenlee:<sup>43</sup>

Cattlett told us you had some ideas of going into the field. Your Ma and I think you ought not. You are the confidential aid of the Governor and I do not think you ought to leave him now. He would have to get a stranger for aid; who might not be comfortable to him. We have already three sons in the

field and one of them in his grave.  
Is this not enough?

Greenlee became more and more restless. The Confederates had fared badly in West Virginia; now during the winter the Yankees began pushing both along the east coast and the western section of the Confederacy. Disaster had struck at Fort Henry and Roanoke Island. These defeats brought panic into the minds of the Confederate leaders. On February 10, Greenlee wrote from Richmond that he had "determined to take the field and give benefit of my weak arm to the cause of Southern Independence."<sup>44</sup>

Greenlee's letter brought a quick reply from his father. Mr. Davidson indicated that he had not been surprised by his son's decision to enter directly into active service but that both he and his mother regretted having "to part" with him. His final words in this letter were: "Go with the Blessing of your Parents and may Heaven prosper and defend you, is the prayer of your Parents."<sup>45</sup>

### Chapter III

#### War and Family Tragedy

Greenlee Davidson was officially commissioned Captain of Artillery by Governor John Letcher on February 14, 1862.<sup>1</sup> Tremendous responsibilities were now placed upon the shoulders of the young captain. He had to obtain guns for the battery. Company officers had to be picked. Recruits had to be found. Financing the cost of organizing the company was also his own private responsibility.

Five guns were given to Greenlee by Governor Letcher, himself. For this reason the battery was named The Letcher Artillery Battery in his honor. These guns consisted of two twelve-pound Howitzers (brass), two iron six-pounders, and one eight pound Parrott rifle. They had been melted over at the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond. The original guns had been given to Virginia by France through the instrumentality of General Marquis Lafayette when it was a colony struggling for independence. They had been kept at the state arsenal until Letcher ordered them to be melted over.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately, Greenlee found able men to be officers in his company. John Tyler, Sr. and Thomas A. Brander, Jr. were commissioned First Lieutenants. Charles Ellis Munford, Sr., and William E. Tanner, Jr. received commissions as Second Lieutenants. Greenlee's brother, Albert Davidson, who had recovered sufficiently to join the company, was appointed First Sergeant. Other noncommissioned officers were R. C. Macmurdo, Second Sergeant; James E. Tyler, Third Sergeant; and Tom Worsham, Fourth Sergeant.<sup>3</sup>

Greenlee turned to his father for financial aid by borrowing five hundred dollars. The organization of the

company cost approximately one thousand dollars. After the company was in fighting condition, this amount would be partially refunded by the Confederate Government.<sup>4</sup>

On the eleventh of February, Greenlee began recruiting men by opening an office in Richmond. He sent his father a number of his recruiting advertisements so that he could circulate them in Rockbridge. The elder Davidson, in a reply to Greenlee, gave him a few words of advice:<sup>5</sup>

In recruiting your men, some wild characters may apply. The [sic] apparently objectionable, they afterward make the best soldiers. Treat them kindly and respectfully without exception. Be kind but decided and your men will obey you.

You must expect to take many rough fellows. Don't let the idea get out that your co[mpany] is to be formed of prudish young men. It won't do. In a word, use kind words always and never wound men's feelings of any applicant for your co[mpany].

By personal experience, Greenlee discovered his father's advice to be wise. He wrote the elder Davidson on April 27 not to send "any but common men" for his was a "company of regulars" and some tough characters were in it. He made it clear that whoever joined his company had to associate congenially with all of its members.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Davidson gave Greenlee some additional pointers which would help him in his relationship with his men. He felt that the Captain should take a sincere interest in seeing that his men were well fed and clothed. He also suggested that Greenlee write letters for the men because "little matters attended to for them promptly and cheerfully will insure their good will." He concluded these words of advice with the statement that the war had "swept away both law and Gospel" and now a

person had to decide for himself the moral action he must take.<sup>7</sup>

By mid April, Greenlee had twenty militia men from Madison County assigned to him. He asked his father to offer no more than a fifty dollar bonus in addition to the Government bounty for either drivers or privates. Toward the end of April, Greenlee had established camp near Guinea Station in Caroline County, calling it Camp Letcher. He had at the time four of his guns and seventy-three men. The horses and baggage wagons along with twenty-seven men were placed in the charge of Lt. Brander and Allie. Allie gave an excellent picture of the camp situation through one incident which happened:<sup>8</sup>

Brother Greenlee's men are the hardest cases I ever saw, they are even worse than Charly's Irishmen. They can't look at whiskey without getting beastly drunk, and then the only way we can manage them is to knock them down with a stick and buck them. On Saturday, I saw one of our men receive a bottle of whiskey from two low women who had brought themselves out to camp. I immediately reported the fact to the Captain, who ordered me to arrest the ladies (?) and carry them before the Provost Marshal. I did so though not without many tears on the part of the woman who had given the bottle of whiskey. The Marshal sent me back for the man who had received the whiskey, and as I was bringing him to the Provost office, he put the spurs to his horse and tried to escape, but I hauled out a pistol which I had fortunately put in my pocket, and fired away at him, and though he was a considerable distance ahead, it succeeded in stopping him immediately though it did not strike either him or the horse. I then took him before the Marshall, who had both him and the woman locked up for the night that they might mourn over their misdeeds.

While on one of his trips to Richmond, early in 1862, Mr. Davidson rode out to visit his sons. When he arrived, a great commotion was in progress at the camp. A man named Uteland had been thrown from a team of frightened horses which were pulling a battery wagon, and his head was crushed under the wagon wheels. The funeral for the man was held the next day in the Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond. Greenlee, with about fifty of his men arrived at the funeral just before the lowering of the coffin. The minister gave a short sermon for their benefit. The elder Davidson who was also attending, described the reaction of Greenlee's men:<sup>9</sup>

Those wild men, many of whom had scarcely ever heard or heeded the Word of God, bowed themselves before the preacher with uncovered heads, and wept like little children. These brave and hardy soldiers becoming as little children before the man of God, his kind presence, as he stood over them, and spoke to them, engraved deep on my memory a scene that will pass from it only when I have followed Uteland and his Captain to my grave.

The company drilled every day and on Saturdays they fired blank cartridges. Lt. Brander and Allie had moved the company horses from Richmond to a place twelve miles from Fredricksburg. Around the first of May, Greenlee expected General Jackson to come from the Valley and take command of the troops in that section. The Yankees were stationed only seven miles from Camp Letcher.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, James B. Dorman, a cousin of the Davidsons, paid a visit to Camp Letcher and found the brothers quite well and generally in good spirits. Allie felt that the artillery was rather monotonous and would have preferred the Rangers. Dorman mentioned the excellent dinner he received there,



consisting of boiled ham, stewed chicken, bread and butter, pickles, and other trimmings. Dorman said that his own troops were faring not nearly so well, having their diet confined chiefly to "méddling and black-eyed peas."<sup>11</sup>

During this time, Charlie has been with the First (Irish) Battalion, which wintered in West Virginia, near Huntsville. It was commanded by Major J. D. Munford, an Eastern Virginia gentleman lawyer, who had been an attaché, of a United States embassy in one of the South American countries before the war. He was a political appointee with no military training whatsoever. Charlie said that even after five months as commander of the Battalion he was still unable to give a command properly. "He knew as much about military matters and [was as] capable of managing a battalion as a schoolboy." He was afraid to do anything on his own responsibility, "but was in the habit of riding over to Huntsville, when General Loring was there, to consult him on the most trivial point of military routine." Charlie had little respect also for the captains in the Battalion, but the lieutenants, with the exception of two, were graduates of V. M. I. and were good officers.<sup>12</sup>

In the late winter and early spring, the First Battalion joined General Jackson in much of the Valley Campaign. Charlie wrote his mother concerning the battle of Kernstown which took place on March 23. It was the only major engagement General Jackson lost during the Campaign. The First Battalion suffered heavy loses. Of the one hundred and fifty men engaged, forty-seven were killed, wounded or missing. A Capt. Jones, Charlie's company commander, was killed. A Capt. Thorn was wounded in two or three places, but "a Testament in his left coat pocket was torn all to pieces by a minie ball;" thus his life was saved. At the first of the battle, the

Battalion misunderstood an order and broke to the rear, but the men were rallied by their officers and later fought fiercely and bravely, being among the last to leave the field.<sup>13</sup>

An advertisement appeared in the Lexington Gazette during the month of March calling for recruits. It was signed by C. A. Davidson, First Lieutenant, C. S. A., recruiting officer:

I desire to enlist for the Confederate Army 50 able bodied men. They will receive pay, clothing and board, from the date of enlistment. Each recruit will also receive a bounty of \$50, half pay on enlistment, and the other on joining their company.

I will pay the sum of two dollars to anyone, bringing in an accepted recruit.

Rendezvous at the office of J. D. Davidson.

In May, Charlie told of starting north from Harrisonburg with General Ewell's Division. The troops took an unexpected right turn and marched between the Blue Ridge and Massanutten Mountains and encamped ten miles south of Luray, where they were joined by Gen. Jackson's forces. The next day, they passed through Luray and took the road to Front Royal. Around five o'clock on the afternoon of the following day, May 23, the head of Ewell's Column encountered the enemy. The engagement was quite successful for the Confederates. Charlie wrote that they captured several pieces of artillery, and large amounts of commissary and ordinance goods. The troops started for Winchester. When they reached the Valley turnpike, the whole road was "strewn with Yankee knapsacks and baggage." They moved on to Winchester where a battle was fought on May 25.<sup>14</sup> After this encounter, the First Battalion was ordered toward Eastern Virginia.

During this troop movement, Charlie had an opportunity to

see Greenlee several times. He wrote from Camp McGunea's Station that they had plenty of blankets and that army life was not bad at all. Later they moved into Yorktown and prepared themselves for the Yankee Landing, which was to begin the so-called Peninsula Campaign.<sup>15</sup>

The Letcher Battery on May 13 was encamped near Telegraph Road between five and six miles from Fredericksburg. The company now contained approximately one hundred and twenty men ready for active duty. The men were behaving much better by this time. Meanwhile, Greenlee's father and Willie were in Richmond. Panic struck the city. On May 14, the elder, Davidson wrote that "things look badly here."<sup>16</sup> The next day, he wrote Greenlee that even though Richmond looked destitute, the Governor would not leave until the last minute before it really became imperative that he evacuate. Military action did not come as quickly as the Southern had feared. One bad scare took place in the last week of May when Yankee lines made a skirmish around Ashland. It caused much fright and a near stampede. The Letcher battery was divided, with two of its guns being sent to Ashland and the rest with the retreating troops.<sup>17</sup>

On May 30, Charlie wrote from Yorktown that the Yankees had landed, but were confined to an eight-to-ten mile stretch and were only about 6,000 strong. Col. Magruder had received information that the Yankees were to attack. Charlie himself, was stationed in charge of two pieces of artillery on the outside of the town. Thus, the Yankees began the long advance up the peninsula toward the Confederate capital.<sup>18</sup>

The first real engagement of the Letcher Battery took place on June 26 during the Battle of Mechanicsville, the second day of the Seven Day's Battle around Richmond. The battery, which had been encamped west of the Mechanicsville Turnpike

on a brow of a hill overlooking the Chickahominy, was ordered to take a position east of the road and fire upon the Yankees who were stationed on the opposite side of the stream. They fired until their own infantry movements were endangered.<sup>19</sup> There were no casualties in this engagement.<sup>20</sup>

On June 27, the battery was moved across the Chickahominy and advanced with Confederate forces on that side. It did not participate in the fighting, but was under fire part of the day. The battery was inactive until June 20, when it came under heavy fire at the battle of Frayser's Farm.<sup>21</sup>

One of the battery's most brilliant performances came on July 1, at the Battle of Malvern Hill. This was the last of the Seven Day's Battle of the Peninsular Campaign. McClellan was moving his troops toward Harrison's Landing. It was here that Lee made his final attempt to capture the Yankee forces, but the Northern Army held such an impregnable position that the Confederates actually had little chance for any success. Nearly all the superior artillery positions were held by the Yankees which made it extremely hazardous for the Confederate infantry and nearly impossible for the Rebel artillery companies to place their guns. The Battle of Malvern Hill is noted for the "comedy of errors" among Confederate generals and for the rebel suicidal infantry charges, especially those of D.H. Hill.<sup>22</sup>

Around 5 o'clock P. M., the Battery was ordered by General Longstreet to report to General Armstead on the battle field. Greenlee met with Armstead and the latter's commanding general, J. B. Magruder and received instructions to place his six guns directly in front of the enemy's batteries and in range of heavy enemy fire. Greenlee returned to his company and led it, with the help of a guide, "across a wooded ravine occupied by our infantry, and emerged into the open field in which the enemy's batteries,

numbering at least fifteen or sixteen guns, were located. Greenlee protested vigorously about the final location of the battery. He declared that there was no space to place the guns at proper intervals, the caissons could not be brought on the same line with the guns, the enemy's batteries were only a thousand yards away, and if his guns were crowded into such a small corner, the enemy could wreck them within minutes.<sup>23</sup>

Regardless of Greenlee's protests, the battery was stationed where it had previously been ordered. As soon as his battery opened fire, Greenlee realized that it was in line with the enemy's artillery bombardment. "We only saved the battery from utter destruction by loading the guns low down on the slopes and running them up near enough to the crest of the rise to fire them, and the recoil would run back into a sheltered position." This method of rapid firing continued for an hour and twenty minutes, during which time two infantry charges were made. After the second charge, neither friend nor foe could be distinguished, as hand to hand combat raged. The battery had done its duty and its soldiers had held fast. First Lt. Charles Ellis Munford, the son of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia and two other men were killed. Nineteen company men were wounded.<sup>24</sup>

The Letcher Battery was honored for its outstanding bravery and excellence. Newspapers like the S. C. Southern Guardian and the Richmond Enquirer continued stirring editorials praising this battery.<sup>25</sup> A special commission for conspicuous gallantry was given Capt. Davidson in a report by A. P. Hill.<sup>26</sup>

A short rest was now to be enjoyed by the Confederate forces. McClellan had stationed his troops and supplies at Harrison's Landing. By the end of July, all three of the older Davidson brothers were in A. P. Hill's Division. Willie now was determined also to become a soldier. James B. Dorman suggested to Willie's father that the boy should be sent to a school or

camp of instruction as were being provided by the new "Conscripti Act." Dorman thought that Instruction Camps were very good in preparing young boys for active field service, especially because they gave soldiers the necessary vaccinations and drilled them.<sup>27</sup> Later, in the fall of 1862, Dorman, himself, was placed in command over just such a camp located in Dublin, Virginia. He took Allie with him as his chief assistant, and Willie was there in training.

Before entering this camp, Willie had received some first-hand combat experience. His father had taken him to Richmond to be with the Governor during the Peninsular Campaign. Willie travelled with the Governor on several occasions which gave him an opportunity to see the mechanics of warfare. Willie's ardent desire to join his brothers in the army brought increased anxiety to his mother. She was seeing her baby boy go off to war. Her advice was "take good care of yourself my child and don't be ever tempted to gamble or drink. So long as you avoid those vices you will be safe; whatever situation you are placed in try and do your duty."<sup>28</sup>

The summer campaign soon began to move north and culminated in the Battle of Second Manassas and the Antietam Campaign. By the end of July, A. P. Hill's Division had been sent to reinforce Gen. Jackson at Gordonsville who was playing a defensive role against General John Pope. The Davidson brothers fought at Cedar Mountain on August 9 as a part of A. P. Hill's decisive counter-attack against the Federal east flank and turned defeat into partial victory for the Confederates. Charlie was nearly wounded when a minie ball hit only two inches in front of him.<sup>29</sup> The Letcher Battery next encountered the enemy near Warrenton Springs on August 22. It held a position along with Braxton's Battery on the west side of the road leading from Jefferson to Warrenton Springs.<sup>30</sup>

The next important engagement for the Letcher Battery came on August 26 when in cooperation with batteries of Capt. Pegram and Fleet Braxton, it guarded a bridge across the Rappahannock River, just opposite the Fauquier Springs. The enemy had stationed twenty-four guns on the heights of the far side of the River with the purpose of covering the infantry which ~~was~~ ordered to destroy the bridge.

Davidson's battery was engaged in a heavy artillery fight from nine o'clock in the morning until almost dark. Through Greenlee's vivid description, an account of this relatively insignificant battle has been given in detail.<sup>31</sup> The Confederate guns kept silence while the Yankee artillery boomed away. But when the enemy's infantry swarmed down toward the bridge, the Confederates opened fire with all eighteen guns. "Every shell burst right in amongst them and in five minutes the whole line broke and ran, officers and all and never stopped until they were safely behind the hill." Then two fresh Yankee regiments came crawling down a protected ravine attempting the same goal. The Confederates waited until one of the Regiments was at the bridge and the other not many yards behind and then gave a tremendous volley with ten guns. "At the second round both regiments broke like a flock of sheep and sheltered themselves behind the hills." After the failure of this expedition, the Yankees sent approximately forty five men down the river to sneak along the bank toward the bridge. They received the same treatment as their predecessors.

Meanwhile, the enemy's twenty four guns were literally pouring murderous fire on the Confederate battery position. "The only way for the cannoers to escape certain death was to lie as close to the ground as possible. Greenlee observed:

I had the safest position on the ground.  
We were nearest the enemy, but we  
stationed on the top of a high hill, the

slope of which behind us afforded almost a perfect protection to the men and horses. We would load our guns on the side of the hill, run them up near the top, just far enough to sight them and after firing a round or two we would lie down on the hill side and enjoy the music of the shell which burst over us and surround us by the hundred. Sometimes we would fire at the enemy whilst our batteries were silent and then it was like waking up a hornets nest. The enemy would concentrate all their guns upon us and the shells would burst around us so rapidly and furiously that it was impossible to carry on a conversation- the report of the shell and the whistling of the fragments was so deafening.

Many of the Yankee bullets would just glaze the top of the hill and come whizzing down the other side. Fortunately only two men in Greenlee's company were wounded and none killed. Greenlee's canteen which was hanging at his left side was shattered by a bullet:

How the canteen was struck without my arm being injured is incomprehensible to me. I suppose my arm must have been raised when the canteen was struck. I will send it home to Ma. She will prize it as it saved my life perhaps. Had it not been for the canteen I would have been struck in the left side.

Since they had used most of their ammunition and other supplies at Fauquier Springs, Davidson and his battery were unable to follow Hill's Division. After receiving supplies and additional horses, they set out on their way, unfortunately on the wrong road. After discovering this mistake and returning to the junction, they found Longstreet's Division jam<sup>ed</sup> up along the road. General Lee, who was riding with Longstreet, inquired of Davidson why he was there. After receiving the latter's answer, Lee temporarily assigned him to General Featherstone's Brigade whose fighting



reputation was one of the best in all the Confederate Armies. Davidson considered this assignment a compliment. The second battle of Bull Run was soon to begin.<sup>32</sup>

Greenlee's personal account of the Battle of Second Manassas has been lost, but, according to the War of the Rebellion, the "batteries of Braxton, Pegram, Lathan, Davidson, McIntosh, and Crenshaw were all engaged at intervals on the left and rear of the infantry."<sup>33</sup> The enemy made several advances against their positions, "all of which were promptly repelled by those batteries."<sup>34</sup>

After their overwhelming defeat of the Yankees, the Confederates moved north. General Lee felt that carrying the war into Maryland would swing that border state toward the Confederacy, strengthen the peace element in the North by driving war toward their own homes and relieve the Virginians of war's tragic destructiveness, at least for awhile. On September 8, the Letcher artillery moved cross the Potomac. Greenlee observed that the Maryland people rejoiced to see them, but held back open sympathy because they thought this invasion was a famed Jackson raid and the Army would return to Virginia soon. Frederick merchants kept their stores open and received Confederate currency without reservation. Prices were much cheaper than south of the border. Coffee sold for thirty cents a pound and bacon for only seven cents. Greenlee bought a number of things like calico dresses, tea, and yarn, and put them in his trunk in hopes of sending them by messenger back to Lexington. The army itself was stripped of all excess baggage. Only Quartermaster, Commissary, and Ordnance wagons were allowed. The soldiers threw away their knapsacks and extra clothing. During this time Charlie was near Greenlee and they saw one another nearly everyday.<sup>35</sup>

On September 13, the Letcher Battery left Frederick for

Martinsburg and Harper's Ferry. Jackson had been ordered by Lee to bring about the surrender of Federal troops at Harper's Ferry. Greenlee noticed, to his dismay, the intense Unionism of the people between Frederick and the Potomac and was extremely happy to leave that neighborhood:<sup>36</sup>

After passing through the City we turned into the National road and moved in the direction of Hagerstown. About 10 o'clock passed through Middletown—a village nearly as large as Lexington. It has the reputation of being the bitterest abolition hole in the state. The people are as valid [sic] as those of any village in Mass. or Vermont. We found the place almost deserted. The houses were locked up and all the merchants had closed their stores and fled. It looked indeed like a deserted village. After leaving Middletown we passed through a most beautiful country. The lands are in the highest state of cultivation and every farmer has a barn almost as large as Noah's Ark. But strange to say, I visited nearly a hundred farm houses during the day and did not succeed in buying a pound of meat or a bushel of corn. It is true that a considerable number of the houses were deserted, but where I found the owners at home, they all told me they had nothing to sell. It is perfectly evident that the people of this section of the State are as hostile to us as if we were north of Mason and Dixon line.

One evening on this trip the troops camped approximately one mile south of Boonsboro. Greenlee described a humerous adventure of Col. Bassett French, a high ranking official in the Adjutant General's office:<sup>37</sup>

Shortly after we halted Col. S. Bassett French (who is on a visit to Gen. Jackson) and some 30 of our officers and Cavalry went into [Boonsboro] to get their supplies. Shortly after they arrived, about 50 of the enemy's cavalry

dashed into the town and fired upon our men wherever they found them. All of our people immediately vamoosed except Col. F. His horse was shot where he hitched him on the street and as the Col. is not made for a foot race, he took to a cellar and hid himself under a pile of rubbish.

He unfortunately stumbled into a Union man's cellar fortunately the Yankees did not find him.

Pretty soon our Cavalry moved into the town and raised the blockade for poor F. I doubt whether you will ever find him again in advance of our lines.

On Thursday September 12, 1862, Jackson's Army came in sight of the Potomac:<sup>38</sup>

At 3 P. M. we reached Williamsport, a small village on the Potomac. Here we found a good ford and soon the whole of Gen. Jackson's Army was once more on the soil of Va. Every Co. gave a cheer as it formed on the South Bank of the River and I doubt whether there was a man in the army that did not rejoice that he was out of Md. For my part I have enough of Md. I don't want to hear anything more of "Maryland, my Maryland."

They received a cordial greeting in Martinsburg as the enemy retreated to Harper's Ferry. The Yankees had left at Martinsburg about 80,000 pounds of hard bread and a large quantity of corn. By nightfall of September 14, the Letcher Artillery was located in a woods near Harper's Ferry. Jackson had extended his lines in a form of a semicircle with his left on the Potomac and his right on the Shenandoah leaving the enemy only a "little tongue of land" between the rivers.<sup>39</sup>

At daybreak, Braxton's, Pegram's and Davidson's batteries with Crenshaw's Battery being held in reserve, began shelling Bolivar Heights, the stronghold of the enemy. Greenlee again

wrote of his battle experience:<sup>40</sup>

My section was opposite three of their heaviest guns and we were subjected to a hotter fire than all the balance of our guns put together. Shell burst in front of us, over us, around us, and between the guns and everywhere near us, but strange to say I only had one man killed and one wounded so as to disable him. Lt. Brander and nearly all the men at the Guns were slightly bruised or received slight cuts on the face and hands from small particles of shell, but providentially only one man was killed.

After approximately one hour and thirty minutes of firing, General Hill came up and complimented the batteries on their accuracy and ordered them to cease firing while the infantry made ~~the~~ attack. But before it could charge, white flags were hoisted by the Federals. Great rejoicing resounded from all the hills around about.

After the action was over Greenlee discovered that Joseph Loondee of Buckingham County, Virginia, had been killed by a twenty-four pound shell bursting directly in front of the caisson he was driving. Greenlee considered him one of the best men in his company. This father of nine children was the only man in General Jackson's army killed in the capture of Harper's Ferry. Davidson's battery and the brigade with which it was a part remained at Harper's Ferry and garrisoned the town after General Jackson had left. On September 18, after taking all possible supplies from the stores in Harper's Ferry, they marched to Shepherdstown where they learned that Lee's army had evacuated Maryland and had recrossed the Potomac.<sup>41</sup>

Greenlee also heard that at Antietam, Charlie had "carried 25 men into the fight and had 11 of them wounded." Charlie himself had been stunned by a fragment of shell, but it had no serious consequences. He also had been in command of his

Brigade for nearly a day after the battle. Greenlee remarked that he thought it "rather funny to think of so young an officer acting as a Brigadier General."<sup>42</sup>

The Letcher Battery moved back into Virginia and camped first at a place midway between Winchester and Berryville. Later it settled down just four miles outside of Winchester. Greenlee and several other company captains were placed under arrest by A. P. Hill for neglect of duty. Soldiers had been using fence rails for firewood. Hill ordered that this destruction be stopped. Apparently, Hill's warning went unheeded. Greenlee and several other company captains admitted their inability to keep men from taking rails and were willing to pay a just price for the destruction. A. P. Hill was not satisfied with this solution and he proceeded with the Court martial. He felt that "obedience and strict enforcement of order would have a good effect upon troops...and materially assist the Major General in pressing discipline." Obviously, this matter was not a serious one in itself, yet it demonstrates the method of discipline imposed on troops and their leaders.<sup>43</sup>

Greenlee had some trouble with his troops at Woodstock. One night some soldiers had gone into town without leave and had gotten drunk from apple brandy. Several of them had fought with pistols. A Corporal Simons, who had been drinking was wounded. After the shooting, the men returned to camp like raving maniacs. Greenlee with some help knocked them down and gaged them. The camp finally settled down, and Greenlee went into Woodstock himself. He located the culprit who sold the brandy to the troops. The angry captain rolled four barrels of remaining brandy into the street and smashed in the heads. Turning to the owner, Greenlee swore that if he sold any more brandy to his troops, he would burn his house down.<sup>44</sup>

For awhile it appeared that the Letcher Battery would winter near Winchester. Greenlee had built some stables for his horses and had proceeded to make the company as comfortable as possible. He had fixed up a large Sibley tent which he had captured at Harper's Ferry with a sheet iron stove and a few other conveniences.<sup>45</sup>

One day the company entertained two ladies, the wife and mother of Lt. Tyler. Tyler had been seriously ill with fever and his wife and mother were taking him home. The company celebrated the visit of the women with an "elegant" meal consisting of biscuits, beefsteak, scrambled eggs, butter, molassas, and coffee with cream and sugar. Greenlee found a room for Lt. Tyler at a nearby farm house. The owner's wife gave up her own room and slept on the floor.<sup>46</sup> The ladies occupied Greenlee's quarters while the courteous captain stayed with his men.

Toward the end of November, Greenlee became a little homesick. Winter brought suffering. The captain needed a new uniform. His boots and socks were worn out. Two boxes from home had been lost by a messenger. He ended his letter on November 21: "Would to God I could visit home even for a day or two."<sup>47</sup>

The day after Greenlee wrote his homesick letter, they broke camp and began a march which lasted twelve consecutive days and covered one hundred sixty-four miles. This march involved the crossing of the Massanutten and Blue Ridge Mountains. On those days reveille was sounded at 4:30 A.M., and the march began promptly at 6:30 A.M. The weather was bitter cold, especially before day break. They finally camped at Hamilton's Cross Roads approximately eight miles from Fredericksburg. This location was near where the battery had been trained that spring. Greenlee's description of that

area and the condition of the people of Fredericksburg is heart-rendering, indeed:<sup>48</sup>

Fredericksburg is deserted and is threatened by our guns as well as by those of the Yankees. The country for miles around is filled with refugees. Every house is crowded and hundreds are living in Churches, in Barns and in Tents. I passed one camp, in which there must have been forty or fifty families.

It made me feel sad to see delicate women, beautiful girls and tender young children thus banished from their comfortable homes, living as it were in the woods, at this trying season of the year. How thankful the people of Rockbridge should be, that the County has never been visited by the desolating tread of an army.

Although the people of Fredericksburg have been driven from their homes and are in daily expectation of seeing their houses reduced to ashes, still they utter no word of complaint.

The weather was intensely cold with some snow. The Rappahannock River froze over one night. The soldiers were living in tents and wore only thin uniforms. As long as they had a supply of wood and a good fire, suffering was kept to a minimum. When wood supplies were low or when the troops were on picket duty and could have no fire, soldiers nearly died.

Greenlee did not believe a major battle would be fought at Fredericksburg. He expected an artillery duel between the 140 Yankee guns bristling on Stafford Heights across the river and the Confederate guns on Marye's Heights and Prospect Hill with the doomed city of Fredericksburg in the middle. He did not think the Yankees would be foolish enough to try to cross the river. The general impression was that, if major fighting occurred, it would be located on the South side of the James.<sup>49</sup> The new Union Commander, Ambrose Burnside had different thoughts.

On Thursday before the battle, the big guns on Stafford

Heights began to belch forth.<sup>50</sup> Cheer after cheer arose from the Confederate camps to greet the supposed opening of a great artillery duel. Davidson and a Lt. Mayre, a native of Fredericksburg, started riding toward the town when the enemy fire became so intense that they had to get off their horses and seek shelter in a gully. When the fire let up they started back toward camp. Some pickets informed them that the enemy was installing pontoon bridges across the river and a battle was imminent. An aide of A. P. Hill rode up and verified this report. The aide then asked Greenlee to ride back to Hill's headquarters to receive instructions. Here, Davidson received the immediate command over twenty-one guns which consisted of those belonging to his own battery and those of Rane, Caskie, and Braxton.<sup>51</sup> They were placed at the extreme left of Jackson Corps, just at the point where his line joined with Longstreet's Corps. In reality, this was the weakest point on the whole defensive line. The guns were placed in a little plain three or four hundred yards in front of the wooded area where infantry support was stationed.

The morning of the 12th was foggy and everything was wrapped in obscurity. Greenlee could hear the Yankees at work. Then the fog began to lift, revealing the Yankee forces. By 10 A. M. the fog had completely disappeared and the view was magnificent. Greenlee described it: "From Fredericksburg extending down the river for five or six miles is a level bottom about two miles wide which slopes gently from the River to the wooded hills occupied by our infantry. This bottom, as far as the eye could reach, was black with blue jackets."<sup>52</sup> The Yankees spent the entire day in forming and maneuvering their infantry. At dusk, Davidson along with Bow Brockenbrough, who was taking up a position on the right, had a good supper consisting of fried chicken, biscuits, butter, sweet potatoes,



and coffee. A little later Greenlee turned into his sleeping quarters knowing that the morning would bring a decisive battle.

The next morning Yankee columns came swarming toward the Confederates. The Confederate skirmishers in front of Davidson's batteries became panic stricken and left the battery exposed. General W. D. Pender and his aide leaped on their horses and partially rallied the skirmishers. His aide was immediately killed and the General was seriously wounded and fell from his horse. All support vanished leaving Davidson and his men in an open field to fight the advancing columns. Soon the blue column was within a stone's throw from Davidson's guns:<sup>53</sup>

By this time my guns were double shotted with canister and we let them have it low. The head of the column went down like wheat before the reaper. Another and another volley in quick succession completed the work. The Yankees broke, took to their heels and you never saw such a stampede in your life. Thanks to God we had repulsed the enemy and saved the Battery.

Greenlee looked around to see what damage had been inflicted on his own neighboring companies. One of Captain Brown's men, who had been giving out ammunition "was severed in twain and burned to a crisp. His clothing was stripped from his body and blown into the top of a tall pine." Greenlee saw Lt. Grayson fall mortally wounded. An ammunition chest was ignited by a Yankee shot and ten pound shells were thrown in all directions inside the battery position. A few minutes after Grayson was hit, Lt. Brander was glazed by a ricocheting bullet. The shock was so great that Brander was dazed at first, then took off in a full run, leaving Davidson as the only commissioned officer at the battery.

A few moments after the initial Yankee repulse, Greenlee saw a column at least three quarters of a mile long and five

lines deep begin moving "with military precision and banners flying" to attack the Confederate infantry in the wooded heights. To protect the advance, the Yankees opened fire with sixty guns. Twenty four were directed <sup>on</sup> the Davidson Batteries and thirty-six were pointed toward the positions to its right. The column would reach the timber line and fall back, fire a few volleys and advance again. The lines would falter, wave, and advance in a cycle. Finally, the head of the column entered the woods where a hole in the Confederate lines was found. Davidson and his battery was almost surrounded; yet he dared not retreat because Jackson had ordered that position to be held at any price. Confederate reserves including Thomas's and Gregg's Brigades fell on the enemy in the wood with fierce demonic yells. Thousands of Yankees burst forth from the woods in mortal terror. A minor rush was made at Davidson's position but a double-shotted canister drove the Yankees away with ease.<sup>54</sup> Davidson and his batteries were withdrawn at night fall.<sup>55</sup>

Several high army officers recognized Davidson for his bravery in this battle. General Pender stated in his report that Davidson acted throughout the battle "with the greatest judgment, coolness and bravery."<sup>56</sup>

The Yankees pulled back in retreat across the Rappahannock, and both sides went into winter confinement. The Letcher Battery was located near Milford. Camp life for the Milford troops was very unpleasant. Mud bogged everything down. If it wasn't mud, it was eight to ten inches of snow. Cold bitter wind blew almost continuously during January and February. Army tents served as the company's winter quarters.

Several distasteful controversies arose during this hard winter. The Secretary of War had decided to reorganize the

the artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia into battalions of five companies each, under the command of "Old Granny" (W.N.) Pendleton. Each battalion was to have two field officers—a Lt. Colonel and a Major. The Letcher Battery had been assigned to Walker's Battalion along with batteries of Braxton, Crenshaw, McIntock, and Pegram. Pendleton, for some strange reason, promoted a junior officer over the head of Davidson which violated all rules of seniority. Davidson was deeply hurt by this treatment. He told Governor Letcher that he was not overly ambitious for military preferment, but he would like his just reward. Greenlee felt he had received some reward in knowledge that A. P. Hill and other generals had testified in his behalf as to his bravery and skill in action.<sup>58</sup>

The second controversy concerned the behavior of General Magruder at Malvern Hill. R. H. Chilton was being discriminated against by Magruder's friends, when the former's nomination for military advancement came before the Confederate Congress. Chilton had supposedly injured Magruder's reputation for ulterior motives. Chilton asked Davidson for help in revealing the true condition of Magruder and his ability to command. Davidson responded by giving a detailed report of his own experiences with Magruder. He felt that Magruder had been incompetent, especially in his decision to send the Letcher Battery into such a ridiculous position. Davidson offered to testify publicly against Magruder, if it was necessary. He admitted that he had made no secret of his views as to Magruder's conduct at Malvern Hill.<sup>59</sup>

Back in Lexington, Mr. Davidson had found his work much harder in his law office without Greenlee's help. He wrote in March of 1863 that his clients were continually inquiring about their favorite young lawyer. His father added this comment: "You can scarcely imagine how I have missed you at home and in

the office."<sup>60</sup> Greenlee was destined never to see either his father or the law office again. Only two months remained until that battle between "Fighting Joe" Hooker's Yankees and the Lee-Jackson team was fought. This battle was to be the climax of the War for Southern Independence.

The Yankees had begun to mass troops at Falmouth across ~~across~~ the Rappahannock from Fredericksburg, ultimately reaching the number of 130,000. Lee had sent Longstreet on a foraging expedition with several of his brigades, leaving only 60,000 poorly equipped, hungry troops in the Army of Northern Virginia. Hooker had the brilliant idea of leading one-third of his men West up the Rappahannock, where he planned to cross, and give Lee a surprise attack on his left. Another third of Hooker's Army which remained at Falmouth would then cross the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg and attack Lee on his right. The remaining third of the Union Army would be held in reserve. Each section of this superb Federal Army should have been able to have defeated Lee's whole army alone. Lee learned of Hooker's plans and quickly sent Jackson and his division west, below the Rappahannock to Chancellorsville, leaving General Jubal Early to play a stop-gap defensive role at Fredericksburg. Lee again broke a rule of warfare by splitting his army before the enemy and allowing Jackson to make his daring march around the right of Hooker's Army and attacked Howard's troops on the flank. This surprise action, in turn, threw Hooker's whole army into wild confusion. Jackson kept pushing the enemy, while he had them moving, by the use of a night expedition. As "Stonewall" was returning from that expedition he was mortally wounded by his own men. A few days later pneumonia brought death.

On Saturday, May 2, the Letcher Battery was ordered to Wilderness Church. They arrived there at 4 o'clock P. M. and were immediately sent to the front. The next morning they were

ordered to take position to the right of the Plank Road. Being ordered still further to the right, they came under murderous enemy fire. Second Lt. R. C. Macmurdo was wounded in the left hand. By order of Maj. Pegram the battery advanced about two hundred yards, still holding the center of the Walker Battalion. There, they fired all three hundred and nineteen rounds of ammunition. With all the ammunition supply exhausted, they were ordered to the rear behind an adjoining hill, while an infantry charge was made. Greenlee and several other men were near the top of the hill watching for the infantry charge. A Yankee bullet found its target in Davidson's body.<sup>61</sup>

Greenlee's men carried him from the field and made him as comfortable as possible. As the captain was being taken away he turned to his First Lt. Thomas Brander, who was now in command of the battery, and asked him "to thank the men for their gallant behavior, for it made him die happy."<sup>62</sup> John Morris, Jr., an Ordinance Officer of the Battalion, was beside Davidson during the last moments of his life. Morris wrote Greenlee's mother:<sup>63</sup>

...he dreaded his approaching end principally on your account and exclaimed "Oh! My mother! What a terrible blow this will be to her": he requested me to write to you to say that he fell bravely fighting for our cause and in the hour of history.

In conclusion let me assure you that whilst we would not intrude our feelings on the sacredness of a mother's grief, you have the heart felt sympathy of all who knew him here and we deeply mourn the loss of one from among us who possessed so many qualities of heart and mind to render him a most valued friend in any position.

Maj. James B. Dorman sent Allie and Willie home from Dublin so that they could attend the funeral and be with their parents for a few days.<sup>64</sup> Charlie was unable to leave his position at Gordonsville; instead he wrote a letter of sympathy. He said that even though their "eldest and most promising" son had been snatched away, he had died "nobly, fighting in a just cause." They had lost only two sons, while many families had their "children taken from them by sickness and in battle, having them maimed for life or sinking into an untimely grave from a shattered constitution." Charlie ended his letter with this paragraph:<sup>65</sup>

And now that he is gone, let him be as an example to your remaining sons, as to what they ought to be, as a shining mark for them to imitate; to others, let his name be referred to with pleasure, and with the proud feeling of a father who knows that few parents had such a son to lose.

Greenlee's body was brought to Lexington by way of Richmond where a large group of citizens paid their last respects.<sup>66</sup> His burial in the Lexington Cemetery was to some extent overshadowed by those of two other well-known Lexingtonians--Gen. Jackson and Brig. Gen. E. F. Paxton. All three men had given their lives for a common cause. Each received their deserved praise and honor. The Gazette described Greenlee's death and burial very simply, but with a sense of beauty:<sup>67</sup>

But as the battery is retiring, a bullet pierces his body with a mortal wound. Yet living, but in dreadful agony, he is carried from the field and friends take charge of him. But human skill avails nothing now--a few hours of suffering and all is over. The body is brought back to his old home and buried where he was born. Unaffected sorrow fills the hearts of all the community.

Later, it was even speculated that Greenlee would have been promoted to the rank of General before the termination of the War had he lived.<sup>68</sup> Again, the Gazette adequately expressed the feelings of Greenlee's many friends and acquaintances:<sup>69</sup>

In our temple of Liberty will be placed a tablet that records his virtues and deploras his early loss to his friends who had loved him, and the country which he had served with such fidelity and success.

## Chapter IV

### The Final Curtain of War

The early summer of 1863 was a period of relative prosperity in Rockbridge. Business activity was improving as personal property and real estate advanced in price and selling increased. Farm produce brought five times as much as it did in 1861. Slave trading was brisk, largely because of the need for workers. Inflation was the primary cause for much of the price increase; but confidence in the government and the Southern armies seemed to be the prime factor in the prosperity. The Confederate government had rented the fairgrounds and helped Rockbridge citizens establish a hospital. Previously local patients had to be taken to Staunton or Lynchburg for treatment. Refugees flowed into the county from the wartorn areas of the state. The masses of people were busy gathering provisions for the army. To help, there was an abundant wheat crop in 1863.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, danger signs were beginning to appear. Confederate currency was being rejected by some creditors as payment for debts. The county issued paper money. Inflation, while good to some degree, was becoming uncontrolled. Uncertainty and anxiety was bad for business. Although war had not yet touched the boundaries of Rockbridge, some of its slaves had been impressed by the Confederacy to work on military projects such as building earth works on battle fields. Many Rockbridge sons were being returned to their homes in a coffin. General Jackson's body arrived on Thursday afternoon, May 17. Governor Letcher, Stonewall's personal staff, the V. M. I. cadet corps, and thousands of friends attended his funeral. Captain Davidson and Major General E. F. Paxton had preceded Jackson in burial in the Lexington cemetery. A general cry arose from the people:



"Alas! Alas! When is the end to be." The Letcher Battery presented two brass six-pounder smooth bore guns to V. M. I. in memory of those who had fallen in the service of the company.<sup>2</sup> Even though signs of doom were appearing on the horizons, the strong fighting spirit of the Scotch-Irish was not disturbed.

Charlie had spent the winter of 1862-1863 at Gordonsville, having given up field duty to become a provost officer. While in this position, his extraordinary tendency toward business was revealed through his letters. The first proposed business enterprize about which he wrote came in April, 1863. While on a trip to Richmond in charge of some prisoners, Charlie ran across J. A. Turner, a former captain of his company. Turner wanted Davidson to go into foreign trade and blockade running. This venture would be properly chartered through regular channels. They would be joined by Dr. George Ross, the brother of Maj. J. D. H. Ross of Rockbridge. The company would send agents to England or Nassau to purchase or charter the necessary ships which would carry cotton to England and bring back supplies. The disturbing factor was that it would cost one thousand dollars for Charlie to join. This money would have to be borrowed from his father, who was very cool toward the whole idea. More or less on his father's advice, Charlie gave up the scheme.<sup>3</sup>

Charlie had other ideas on how to make money. He bought a large number of horses near the first of September, 1863, and sent them home for the autumn months. Then he sold them in December for an enormous profit. His father was not too happy with feeding horses either.<sup>4</sup>

In January, 1864, Charlie wrote that he had made a thousand dollars through apple speculation. He had sold an apple crop belonging to a man in Albermarle County. He proposed to use three-fourths of his money to buy necessities for his family at

home. His mother was to send him a list of things that were needed.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, Allie and Willie had been stationed in Dublin, Allie had been adjutant of the Camp of Instruction which Major Dorman was commanding. Willie had entered the camp of the Letcher Battery near Richmond in July, 1862, but had taken sick with fever and was sent home.<sup>6</sup> In the autumn of 1862, he joined his brother at Dublin. The two boys found a second home with the Alexander family in that town. Henry Alexander was like a brother to the two Davidsons. The two Alexander girls, Henrietta and Sarah, were two lovely young ladies. Willie's father apparently approved of this family for he wrote to Willie, "Such society as you found at Mr. Alexander's will be improving to you."<sup>7</sup> Allie became more and more involved emotionally with Henrietta as later events were to prove.

Military life in Dublin was not bad at all. Many enjoyable evenings were spent at the Alexander's and with other families. Willie wished his whole family could spend Christmas with all the folks in Dublin. He described an amusing incident which happened while on a hunting trip with an older man whom he called Doctor:<sup>8</sup>

Whilst the doctor was listening to the dogs he heard a slight noise, on turning around he saw a deer looking at him. He jerked up his gun and fired but did not kill it. He had hardly got his gun loaded when the dogs ran the deer by his stand. He fired both barrels going off and killed the deer and liked to broke his nose by the gun kicking so.

About the middle of April, 1863, Major Dorman placed Henry Alexander and Willie in charge of transporting twenty-nine men and six guards to Vickburg, Mississippi. They were supposed to leave Dublin on Saturday the 18, but the train was so crowded that they had to return to camp. Upon returning

to camp it was learned that one of the men had been planning a mutiny. A guard was to be seized and held as a hostage when they carried out plans to escape to their homes in Lee County on arriving in Bristol. The plot was nipped in the bud. The leader was handcuffed and put in the guard house.

? The next morning, Sunday, 19, they actually began their journey:<sup>9</sup>

...we arrived at Bristol that night, from Bristol we took<sup>is it</sup> the cars to Knoxville, Tenn., from Knoxville to Dalton Geo, from Dalton to Atalanta Ala, from Atalanta to West Point, from West Point to Montgomery Ala, at which we arrived Tuesday night about 9. O. Clock, we staid [sic] there that night and all of the next day to procure rations for the men, on Wednesday evening we took [sic] the Steamboat down the Alabama rive about 100 miles to Selma, from Selma we took [sic] the cars [to] Demapolis, at which place we had to lay over one day for we did not make conexion [sic] with the Steamboat which runs between Demapolis and McDowels station..., down the Tombigbee river, from McDowel Station we took the cars to Meridian Miss.

When they arrived at Meridian, news had come that Yankees had captured some trains and burned a number of bridges between Meridian and Jackson. The Commanding Officer at Meridian advised Alexander and Davidson to move their men out of town for at least two miles for they were expecting a raid any moment. The next morning the men were turned over to the commanding major and Davidson and Alexander returned home to Dublin. They arrived back on Thursday, May 30. They had traveled approximately sixteen hundred miles, yet only came within<sup>10</sup> a hundred miles of Vicksburg.

Toward the last of June, 1863, Lt. John Cass was ordered to organize an infantry company at Dublin. Allie had previously been offered this commission to form a company, but had declined in favor of Cass because he had no desire to leave Dublin. At Dublin Willie was in line to become Second Lieutenant. The company was to be attached to Lt. Col. Edgar's Battalion in General Echol's Brigade. Allie advised his father to allow Willie to accept this commission. Allie thought that the company would probably remain as a Department Guard at the Camp of Instruction. Later, Major Dorman, at the request of Major General Jones, assigned nearly all conscript soldiers to Edgar's Battalion. Dorman no longer had any need for Willie.<sup>11</sup>

Mr. Davidson gave his consent. At that time, he divided Greenlee's army gear among the boys, with much of it being given to Willie since he was just going into active field service. Willie received Greenlee's sword, oil cloth blanket, a coat with an oil cloth cape, one of Greenlee's pistols with powder flash, some cartridges and bullet molds, and numerous other things. Mr. Davidson gave Allie Greenlee's prized navy pistol, which caused Allie to write his father: "I will take good care of the pistol and you may rest assured I will never lend it. I prize it highly, not on account of any money value that might be attached to it, but because of its having belonged to Brother Greenlee."<sup>12</sup>

By the summer of 1863, Allie and Henrietta had fallen deeply in love. Allie desperately wanted his parents to allow his siter, Clara, to come and visit with the Alexander sisters. He felt that, if Clara was allowed to come, his courtship and plans for marriage were sanctioned by his own family. Henrietta had been previously married to a Dr. Withers who had died.<sup>13</sup> Some doubt had been cast on the wisdom of a marriage between Allie and a widowed girl. The younger Davidson thought that "no reason except prejudice" could turn his parents

against his marriage.<sup>14</sup> His father indicated his approval by sending Clara.

July was a month of disaster for the Confederates. The fall of Vicksburg and the defeat at Gettysburg was like a double-shotted canister against the cause for Southern Independence. The government began calling frantically for more troops and more companies. Allie remained as Adjutant of the camp and post at Dublin. Willie remained stationed there during the winter of 1863-1864. He made several trips to Richmond during that time, usually taking prisoners. Sometimes these trips were quite enjoyable. Once he wrote that he had just attended the theater with some ladies from the Governor's Mansion.<sup>15</sup>

Back in Rockbridge, hard times and fear were beginning to grip the hearts of the populace. The poor people of the County were undergoing intense suffering. In several cases, Mr. Davidson had helped widows and soldiers' families get relief and back pay, so that those people could, at least, exist through the winter of 1863-1864. Many families, especially, refugees, had neither food nor fire wood. One such case involved a Mrs. Jane Lucas, the widow of James Lucas who had been killed in one of the battles in the Valley Campaign of 1862. She and her eight children were left destitute without money, food, or fire wood, and she was being pressed hard by her husband's creditors. Mr. Davidson defended her successfully in the law suit brought by the creditors, and he also procured some of her late husband's back pay from the Confederate Government.<sup>16</sup> Threatening raids kept anxiety at a high pitch. The home guard was formed, and Mr. Davidson was in charge of its commissary department. The Lexington Gazette paid tribute to him for his work: "Although it was a new business to him (Davidson), his energy even in advanced life, was inflexible, and he turned himself readily to his new business, and made

himself a most efficient commissary."<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Davidson told General Francis Smith of V. M. I. of his dire need for two hundred and fifty haversacks. Smith sent a notice to the ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The notice arrived while services were in progress. "After preaching, the ladies flocked to the stores where the materials could be had, and at 3o'clock in the evening every haversack was ready."<sup>18</sup>

On Monday, November 9, 1863, Gen. Echols was defeated at Lewisburg, and fighting had broken out just west of Covington. The Cadets and the Home Guard was sent to assist. However, Gen. I. D. Imboden drove the Yankees away with a slight skirmish, leaving nothing for the Home Guard to do. One December 6, the Cadets and Home Guard was summoned again. The enemy was supposed to be pressing in on Lexington from four directions. Little fighting actually materialized. Imboden's Cavalry and artillery passed through town on December 18. His forces were in a bad physical condition, with both men and horses covered with mud and looking starved. Later, that same day Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry of approximately twenty-seven hundred men passed through town. They were in better physical shape. Food was given to both army units by the local people and the units had fine fighting spirit. All of them moved on to Collierstown for the night. Yankee Cavalry, General William Averell, was advancing from Salem. Imboden ordered the cadets to march to Buchanan, but in vain, for Averell had escaped.<sup>19</sup>

Rumors of enemy raids continued to persist, so that little more than ordinary excitement was stirred up when the news arrived that General David Hunter was in possession of both

Staunton and Waynesboro and was on his way to Lynchburg. His proposed route ran through Lexington.

Another Yankee force was pressing in by way of Covington, Clifton Forge, and were stationed at Jordan's Furnace at Longdale just twenty-five miles from Lexington. Not an active Confederate soldier was stationed between them and Lexington. Goshen had been raided by General Averell whose forces had town up the Virginia Central Railroad.<sup>20</sup>

Lexington residents began packing their silver and other valuables. The V. M. I. library was moved. Hundreds of wagons and stages filled with Negroes from Staunton and vicinity passed through the town. These threats of an impending raid were real. General John McCasland with his tiny force of defenders had pulled back into Lexington on the evening of June, 10. The next morning, around 10 o'clock, McCasland burned the North River bridge and left Lexington about 3 p.m. At 4 o'clock, the head of the Yankee Column came into sight.<sup>21</sup>

The Yankees were to stay three days in the town. According to Hunter's official report they captured "a few prisoners, 5 pieces of cannon, numerous caissons and gun carriages, some small arms, and a quantity of ammunition." They also destroyed "6 barges laden with commissary stores, artillery ammunition, and 6 pieces of artillery." Damage was done to the James River Canal.<sup>22</sup> On the 12th, Hunter ordered Virginia Military Institute, Washington College, and Governor John Letcher's home burned. Letcher's home was burned, supposedly, because a copy of a proclamation was found, signed by the Governor, calling on the Citizens of Lexington and the county to resist Hunter's forces. Washington College was spared the torch because of some strong sentiment among the Yankee troops against burning a college

supported by and named after the Father of their Country. Gen. J. M. Schoonmaker was relieved of his command for not burning V. M. I. and Washington College immediately after entering Lexington. Schoonmaker was later to be restored to his position.<sup>23</sup> On June 13, Hunter sent Averell to Buchanan "To drive McCausland out and secure the James River Bridge if possible."<sup>24</sup> Two hundred picked Cavalrymen were sent ahead to Lynchburg while Hunter and his remaining forces started in that direction.

Hunter left tremendous damage and hardship in his wake. All food which the Yankees could find was taken. Livestock had been ruthlessly slaughtered. Homes had been torn asunder by the Yankee plundering and searching. V. M. I. had been completely destroyed except for Superintendent Smith's home. Washington College had been thoroughly pillaged and its library destroyed. Some citizens had been roughly handled, even a few in the county were killed. Many slaves left their masters. The Davidsons lost only Tip, one of their three slaves.<sup>25</sup> Yet the fighting spirit of the Scotch-Irish was not broken. Their teeth were clinched and their hearts filled with revenge. As long as "Marse Robert" was in command, Rockbridge citizens would be behind him fighting.

In February of that turbulent year, 1864, Allie and Henrietta were married. Allie wanted to bring his young wife to Lexington in the early summer of 1864, but war conditions would not permit it. Allie wrote his mother that he would not be satisfied until he heard her say "from her own knowledge" that he had not made a mistake in marriage. After over three months of married life, Allie observed that they had "never yet had the slightest difference or falling out, or harsh word." He added: "I must say I am more in love with her now than I ever was."<sup>26</sup>



War conditions grew worse and worse. In April, 1864 Charlie moved headquarters from Gordonsville to Orange Court House. He had become "tired and disgusted with being on Provost duty." He and most of the officers with him would have preferred being with their old Brigade. They felt that by being in active field duty, they would be doing some visible service for the Confederacy. During the first week of May heavy fighting occurred around Orange Court House with Johnston's and Rode's Units defending the area. The Confederates retreated toward Richmond. On May 12, Charlie was located at Beaver Dam. He wrote his mother on June 1 that the army was in excellent shape and were receiving plenty of food at that time. Each soldier was getting a half pound portion of good bacon.<sup>27</sup> Toward the last of June, Charlie was placed in command of the post at "1/2 way station" on the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad. His chief hope for the Confederacy at that time was General Early's expedition against Washington:<sup>28</sup>

I am in hopes that Genl. Early will be able to make a stand in Maryland & thereby be able to draw Grant's Army from its present position, to the defense of Washington; it is the implication that Genl. Lee will gradually reinforce him; besides this a secret expedition sailed from Wilmington a day or two ago, whose destination is supposed to be Point Lookout, where our prisoners are held; if it could only succeed & those men join Early, it would create a number of Confederate troops in Yankeedom.

Charlie remained at "1/2 way Station" throughout the summer of 1864. On August 30, he wrote that he was "well-fixed and satisfied." No further word from him can be found until February 1865.

Willie's company was relieved of its duty as Department

Guard at Dublin on the first of May. It was ordered to join Edgar's Battalion which was to march for Staunton on May 3. Officers were allowed to take only twenty five pounds of baggage. Willie left his trunk with the Alexanders. This younger Davidson did not want to leave Dublin. Military life had been comparatively easy and enjoyable for him. He had been having "eggs twice a day and buttermilk three times a day" which were furnished by the cook who lived only a mile from camp.<sup>29</sup> Willie was destined to have a number of very narrow escapes and breath-taking adventures before he was paroled at Appomattox Court House.

Echol's division, which contained Edgar's Battalion, became a part of Breckinridge Corps, which in turn, was under General Jubal Early's general command. This small army of 14,000 soldiers were the Confederate force which made the spectacular raid in Maryland and around Washington from June 27 to August 7, 1864. A member of the Breckinridge Corps related to Allie in a letter that one day during the latter part of June, Edgar's entire Battalion was captured with the exception of Willie and nine other men. Willie was the only commissioned officer to escape.<sup>30</sup> The young Lieutenant then became a part of Col. George S. Patton's Brigade and traveled with the Colonel during most of the Maryland-Washington expedition. Fortunately, Willie rode most of the time. At first, he had to ride because of his appointment as acting Brigade Inspector. Since this job required a horse, he confiscated a splendid one from a Yankee in Frederick, Maryland. On July 9, Patton's Brigade helped to defeat the Yankees under Lew Wallace near Frederick in the Battle of Minocacy. Wallace was forced to fall back to Baltimore. Willie came within eight miles of Washington but "did not get

a chance to see it."<sup>31</sup>

After the Yankee reinforcement arrived at Washington, Early decided it unwise to assault the city. Thus he pulled his forces back toward Berryville and Strasburg. At Strasburg, Willie was relieved of his position as Brigade Inspector. His predecessor was ordered back to that position. Willie did not want to return to his old company, so he secured the appointment of Aide-de-Camp of Col. Patton., In this capacity, Willie and the Patton Brigade met the enemy at Kernstown on July 23-24. Willie wrote his mother:<sup>32</sup>

I was with the Col. through the fight and made some very narrow escapes, but got through in safety. We fought the Yankees from two miles the other side of Kernstown to Winchester a distance of six miles.

Willie remained with the Breckenridge Division of Early's army throughout the remainder of 1864. Early's troops made numerous raids on towns and supply centers in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. After the first of August, little glory was to come to those troops.. Gen. Grant sent Gen. Phil Sheridan to destroy Early's forces completely and mop up the Shenandoah Valley. This was accomplished in several devastating victories by the Yankees in the fall of 1864. The pitiful remnants of Early's Army were totally shattered at Waynesboro on March 2, 1865. Within five weeks, Willie was to be paroled at Appomattox.

War had come to Dublin just a week after Willie's company had marched off "to the battles," The engagement took place approximately four miles from the Camp of Instruction between six thousand Yankees and twenty-five hundred Confederates. On May 9, the Federals flanked the Rebels and drove them completely off the field. Major Dorman acted as aide-de-camp to the Commanding General, Albert Gallatin Jenkins, who was wounded and

captured that day and died shortly thereafter. Allie described the situation:<sup>33</sup>

As soon as the fight commenced the records of the camp were packed up & started off and when our forces were forced to retreat, Maj. Dorman & Myself joined the wagon & ran out into the country some thirty-miles with Mr. Alexanders wagons & negroes. He had been in the fight and as soon as the retreat commenced he [went] home & collected what property & negroes he could & started off into Floyd Co. Our forces succeeded in getting over New River out of reach of the Yankees.

At Dublin the Yankees burned the depot, hotel, a large government building and the huts where the soldiers lived. They destroyed the magazine but only damaged ammunition was in it. They got fifteen thousands pounds of bacon at the depot. The main headquarters building was left standing.

The people throughout the area of Pulaski and Montgomery Counties suffered. The Christiansburg Depot was destroyed. Over twelve hundred negroes were supposedly taken by the Yankees from Montgomery County alone. Mr. Alexander lost only five or six Negroes himself. The remaining ones had an opportunity to leave if they so desired. But they preferred to remain with their master. Since the town of Newbern was not disturbed, Maj. Dorman moved the Camp there.<sup>34</sup>

By June 1, all regular troops had been sent to support General Lee. Just the reserves were left to defend the entire Southwestern Virginia. Allie felt that only the absence of the enemy saved that section from being occupied by the Yankees. Amazingly all communication was open along the route of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad.<sup>35</sup>

During the summer of 1864 Southwestern Virginia began to be pestered by about two hundred deserters, stray Yankee soldiers,

and men from the Kanawha Valley. They had taken possession of the town of Newport in Giles County. They threatened to overrun that whole county and surrounding area. Their livelihood was gained by confiscating necessities from the people. The reserves left Newbern on August 7 to rid Giles County of the culprits.<sup>36</sup>

Allie was busy in Maj. Dorman's office detailing men for non-military work, especially farming. An excellent crop of wheat had to be harvested. Over thirty five hundred applications had to be examined and forwarded. Allie described his job:<sup>37</sup>

They applications are coming in at the rate of about 150 to 200 a day & all have to be examined, endorsed, registered, mailed. Major Dorman and myself examine them, & note on them the endorsement, & one clerk writes the endorsement on the paper for Major Dorman to sign & registers the paper, & another clerk puts them up ready for mailing, I have only two clerks now, & when I get a press of business, I call in another.

It was during this time that Allie decided to make the ministry his life's work. He became very much interested in the Presbyterian Church at Dublin and later at Pearisburg. He wrote:<sup>38</sup>

Do not think that I have given up my religion, dear Ma, I know I am but a poor Christian, but I try to do right in all things, & to be an acceptable servant of God, & I hope with God's aid eventually to make Henrietta so too.

On the first of October the camp at Newbern was discontinued and the Department was closed. Allie was waiting a new assignment. He wanted to be appointed as Enrolling Officer of Pulaski County or some other county in Southwestern Virginia. He was afraid that, unless he received such an appointment, he would be sent back

in field service as a private. Henrietta was very distressed over the idea of her husband leaving her.<sup>39</sup> He received the appointment of enrolling officer of Giles County and was stationed at Pearisburg in November. In his last known letter, he was hoping to bring Henrietta to Pearisburg and "go to keeping house." Again, he commented: "O, how I <sup>hope I</sup> may never again have to enter the active service, as she (Henrietta) seems to dread it so."<sup>40</sup> The young pregnant wife certainly had reason to be anxious for her husband. Their marriage was destined to be a short one.

There are no Davidson letters to describe the miserable, chaotic conditions of the winter of 1864-1865. Lines of communications were destroyed. General Sheridan was in the process of stripping the Shenandoah Valley of any potential aid to the Confederacy. General Grant had forced Lee to retreat behind his fortification around Petersburg. Yankee raid after raid struck Southwestern Virginia. The Spirit of Southern Independence was in the grips of death. Grant's armies had an invincible strangle hold on Lee and his Confederates. On February 26, 1865, Charlie wrote from Petersburg that the people had been ordered to remove all tobacco from the city or have it confiscated. This proclamation led to wide spread rumors that the city would soon be evacuated. Many women and children were leaving. Charlie told of Tom Brander's marriage several weeks before and commented: "But I do not think it would pay to marry an angel at this time." Even though conditions looked extremely dark, Charlie's Scotch-Irish determination and faith was firm, but had an empty tone:<sup>41</sup>

Tell Ma, Mary and Clara to keep their spirits up & not think like a great many of our ladies that we are shipped.

Genl. L. Lee has still an Army & if the people will only remain faithful he will weather the storm & bring the Confederacy out all right.

However, General Lee was not able to "weather the storm."  
On April 10, when the news of his surrender reached Lexington  
Mrs. Margaret Junkin Preston sounded the tone of the times  
in her diary:<sup>42</sup>

We are struck dumb with astonishment!  
Why then all these four years of suffering- -  
of separations--of horror--of blood--of  
havoc--of awful bereavement! Why these  
ruined homes--these broken family circles--  
these scenes of terror that must scatter  
the brains of those who witnessed them  
till their dying day? Why is our dear  
Willy in his uncoffined grave? Why poor  
Frank to go through life with one arm?  
Is it wholly and forever in vain? God  
only knows!

The final curtain had not been rung down on this war  
tragedy. The finale was yet to be performed. Allie was busy  
fighting a Yankee unit in the mountains of Giles County when  
Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House on April 9.  
Before the news reached the area of Western Virginia Allie had  
received his mortal wound. He was to linger for several weeks  
until he died May 6.<sup>43</sup> His daughter, Alberta, had been born  
on April 24, less than two weeks before his death. The Presbyterian  
Church lost a future minister. Mrs. Davidson had given up  
another son while a nation died. Jefferson Davis was captured  
May 10 at Irwinsville, Georgia.

## Chapter V

### Recovery and the End of a Family

"After war comes reconstruction...as after death the judgment."<sup>1</sup> War time destruction had ceased; now the South had to become adjusted again to peace. Law and order had to be restored in the South as well as in the nation on the whole. Waves of vandalism swept through the Valley of Virginia during this period. Negroes were given their freedom. Many of them were not elated at all, but depressed over their new status. Men came back from the battlefields with scars of war which were never to be erased from their minds and bodies. Seven to eight hundred young men began walking the streets of Lexington. Nearly all were penniless. Misery, suffering and need surrounded everyone. The instinct for self-preservation and to provide for wives and children caused men to begin digging in the fields and hewing logs into lumber. Mrs. Margaret Preston summed up the result: "Honest work begets hope and courage and to these were added a glow of pride in the effort we had made for independence."<sup>2</sup>

The Valley of Virginia had two distinct advantages over the other sections of the state. First, the Negro problem was not acute. Most of its population were hard working, independent, white farmers and business men who had a heritage of thrift and aggressiveness. The second advantage was the fertility of the soil. Continuous crops of tobacco had depleted the soil of much of Virginia. But the rich fields in the Valley with their limestone base still brought forth excellent crops of wheat, corn, hay, and other small grains without extensive use of fertilizer and lime.<sup>3</sup>

Willie and Charlie Davidson returned home to live with



their aging parents. The Board of Trustees of Washington College, of which J. D. Davidson was a member, elected General Robert E. Lee president of the College on August 4, 1865. Lee made his first appearance on the streets of Lexington on September 18, having travelled over a hundred miles from Cumberland County on horseback. A simple inauguration ceremony was held for him on October 2.<sup>4</sup> Both Washington College and V. M. I. reopened classes in the fall of 1865. Willie enrolled at V. M. I.

Charles, on the other hand, was admitted to the local Bar Association on April 13, 1866. His advertisement read: "Chas. A. Davidson, Attorney at Law, Lexington, Virginia, practice exclusively in the Courts of Rockbridge County."<sup>5</sup> Charles represented the spirit of recovery for Rockbridge. He was a courageous and generous young lawyer. In "all relations of life and at all times he was ready to assist the weak and to help the struggling."<sup>6</sup> He relieved his father of many of his responsibilities. In other words, Charles was carrying the family tradition of leadership in Rockbridge County.

War tragedy had not broken the spirit of the elder Davidson or his household. Social life was revived in Lexington with the Davidson home as one of its principal centers. A letter written by the W. P. Houston described the activities of New Year's Day, 1869. "We first went to Jim Davidson's, where they had an elegant reception prepared, 3 or 4 tables groaning under egg-nog, punch, assorted wines, cakes, coffee and nuts, with the beautiful Miss Clara at one table, a charming widow at another." Mr. Houston and his wife returned late that night to the Davidson's where the wine and egg-nog were still circulating. The house was crowded. By two o'clock in the morning the couple had left the party and returned home, to bed.<sup>7</sup>

Willie had to withdraw from V. M. I. before completing his studies. His physical constitution had been wrecked by the

effects of war and disease. His health grew steadily worse, and he died of typhoid fever on October 25, 1869, a mere lad of twenty-four. Like his brother Greenlee, he had been tall, lithe, and strikingly handsome. His outstanding personality caused him to have a large number of close friends. Mari Doores composed a poem in his memory of which two stanzas read:

A holy peace, there cometh now to thee,  
Oh brave, true heart:  
From all that tires Frin's sic souls forever free,  
God gives a better part.

Our cries to call him back to cheer our way,  
Whose race is not yet run,  
We cannot lift our weeping eyes to meet the ray  
Of glory he has won.

Charles, now the only remaining son, became very active in civic affairs, working constantly for the progress and prosperity of the community. A member of the town council, a bank director, and a prominent member of the Executive Committee of the Society of Alumni at V. M. I., Charles was also an "honored member of the Masonic fraternity." The young attorney was largely responsible for the physical comforts which the Lodge enjoyed. His fellow brothers elected him to the office of "Worshipful Master" and, at his death, ordered his picture hung with those of the past masters. Charles also became president of the Franklin Society, a literary association founded in 1800. His grandfather, the Rev. A. B. Davidson, had been one of its charter members. Young Davidson played a part in having that same charter renewed in 1870. These positions of leadership and responsibility illustrate again the embodiment of the Spirit of Rockbridge in the Davidson family.<sup>9</sup>

Charles Davidson's body, like that of his brother Willie had been weakened by disease, malnutrition and service in the army. A disease, supposedly tuberculosis, caused his health to break down completely. On the advice of friends he went to

the sanitarium at Clifton Springs, New York, where he might receive some relief. Around February 20, 1879, he became worse, and the superintendent sent a telegram for Charlie's sister, Clara, to come to New York immediately. Enroute there, she learned at Gabes of his death. He had died on February 25, and his body was sent by express to Baltimore. His father and Dr. J. P. Barclay went to Baltimore and escorted the body back to Goshen where they were met by a delegation from the Masonic fraternity. The funeral was conducted in the Presbyterian Church by the Rev. Dr. Mullally. The Church was filled with "a large and sympathizing audience." By the orders of Major General F. H. Smith, Superintendent of V. M. I., all academic studies on the afternoon of February 27 were suspended. He further ordered "that the Battalion of Cadets be paraded at 3 ½ P. M. in side arms and in overcoats, and be marched to the Presbyterian Church under their proper officers, and there unite with other associations in paying the last tribute of respect to the memory of a loved friend and honored citizen."<sup>10</sup> In this manner the sixth and last son of James and Hannah Davidson was laid to rest in Lexington cemetery.

As time passed conditions improved in Rockbridge. Railroads and railroad interests came to the county. On February 23, 1866, a charter was issued the Valley Railroad to build a line from Harrisonburg to Salem. Gen. Robert E. Lee, who ordinarily was reluctant to connect himself with business, joined a delegation from the area who travelled to Baltimore for the purpose of asking the Baltimore City Council to subscribe to Valley Railroad Stock. On August 30, 1870, Gen. Lee was elected president of the Railroad, the second man to hold that position. Less than six weeks later Gen. Lee died. Support came from Baltimore and the Valley Railroad became a subsidiary line of the Baltimore

and Ohio system. The railroad tracks reached Lexington in 1883; however, they were destined to go no further. Financial problems prevented continued construction. The line from Staunton to Lexington was completely abandoned in 1942.<sup>11</sup>

A more fortunate line was the Shenandoah Valley Railroad which ran down the east side of the Valley from Hagerstown to Roanoke. It was sold by court decree in October 1890 and was bought by the well-managed Norfolk and Western Railroad System. A spur between Buena Vista and Lexington was built to accommodate the central sections of the county. The western portions of the county used the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad which ran through Goshen.

Public schools were in their infant stages of development. In 1869 the Virginia State Legislature elected the Rev. William H. Ruffner of Lexington as the first state superintendent of public instruction. Ruffner, who has been called "the Horace Mann of Virginia," was a "remarkable example of knowledge, wisdom, clear vision, and statesmanship." He fought a difficult, exasperating battle against all types of prejudice. There was acute lack of funds, trained teachers and facilities of any kind. Yet, he "marshalled all the forces in the state and focused them upon the problem of educating the whole people."<sup>12</sup>

Beginning in the early 1870's Rockbridge's "watering places" such as the Rockbridge Alum Springs, Wilson Springs and Rockbridge Baths were again attracting thousands of people every year. Soon their numbers exceeded those of ~~Ante~~ Bellum days. The Natural Bridge was further developed as a resort area. Usually these places opened around the first of June and closed the last of September. An advertisement of the Rockbridge Alum Springs read: "Here in the very heart of the mountains it seems that the sky is bluer; that the sun shines brighter; that there is

more of life and health and strength in the very atmosphere itself."<sup>13</sup> This statement can be generalized to reflect the county's recovery from war.

Industry began to appear. On the streams throughout Rockbridge numerous new grist mills and saw mills were built. Large timber resources attracted paper, extract, and fiber interests to the county. Iron furnaces, such as those established at Buena Vista, Goshen, and Longdale in Allegany County, were important to the economy and progress of the area.

Tin mines were being developed near Cornwall at the head of Irish Creek. A number of other business and industrial organizations expressed interest in locating plants in Rockbridge.<sup>14</sup>

James D. Davidson had continually kept a keen eye on the business affairs of the county. Even after the death of all of his sons, his civic interests did not fade. He continued to express in prose or verse much of the spirit of the times. Many of his writings were published by the newspapers, especially the Lexington Gazette. Mr. Davidson was asked by Mayor C. M. Dold to prepare and present an "Address of Welcome" before a meeting between a group of northern capitalists and Rockbridge business leaders. This meeting was held at Lexington on November 13, 1880. Davidson prepared a short poem in which he expressed a warm feeling of hospitality and friendship toward Northern people who, in turn, demonstrated their willingness to help the South. No sign of bitterness can be found in the poem, even though its writer had lost practically everything, including his five sons, because of the war. The new attitude of Rockbridge citizens can be seen in these two stanzas of the poem:<sup>15</sup>

Come, then, amongst us, with your thrift,  
And with your go-a-head,  
And wake our Sleeping Beauty up,  
And raise her from the dead.

The past is gone--forgotten be,  
Before us is a future grand,  
When solid South and solid North,  
Are one united land.

This expression of goodwill between sections of the United States was characteristic of Mr. Davidson. He had come to the close of a long life, notably filled with disappointments, sorrow and tragedy. Yet, not a murmur of remorse or animosity appear in any of his papers. After being educated at Washington College he had served as an old-field schoolmaster for several years.<sup>16</sup> Then he began practicing law in 1831. The first several years were difficult for him. He wrote:<sup>17</sup>

It's mighty hard--indeed it is,  
In my lone room to sit,  
From day to day--from week to week,  
And not one client get--  
I'll surely starve--indeed I must;  
I've lost my wonted glee;  
My prospects all, are fading fast,  
I cannot get a fee.

At the end of Davidson's career, William A. Anderson, a rising Lexington attorney, said: "The orders and decrees which he, Davidson, has written cover more pages of the order book of our Court than have been written by any other half dozen solicitors who have practiced in the Courts of Rockbridge." Anderson called Davidson "a great chancery lawyer" who had received "high commendation both from the Bar and the Bench of this State, and beyond the limits of Virginia."<sup>18</sup>

Davidson was known for his efforts to settle cases amicably out of court. Many angry court battles between neighbors were prevented by Davidson's "kind courteous, and considerate" mediation. He had a genuine love for "his county, his town,

his State, and his country." He worked to promote the public welfare.<sup>19</sup>

Between 1880 and 1882, the old gentleman's health began to fail. Anderson aptly described the situation:<sup>20</sup>

He bore bravely the grievous afflictions which he was called upon to bear in the latter years of his life, but the weight of years and the encroachment of disease at last broke down a constitution that seemed to be made of iron, and when death came at last to relieve him from pain and sorrow, he met it calmly, peacefully and serenely.

James D. Davidson passed away on October 14, 1882, in his seventy-third year. His funeral was conducted in the Presbyterian Church by the Rev. J. L. Kirkpatrick, D. D. and the Rev. Mr. Irwin. His pall-bearers represented the leading civic and official groups of Lexington.<sup>21</sup>

A large public meeting was held on October 16 at the Court House to honor a distinguished and loved citizen. Col. Edmund Pendleton was made Chairman and William P. Houston served as secretary. A committee on resolutions was appointed by the Chairman and J. McTutwiler read the committee's report. It was seconded by William A. Anderson and passed unanimously. The preamble to the four Resolutions indicated the character of the group present. Representatives were there from the Bar of Rockbridge County, Washington and Lee University, Virginia Military Institute, the Franklin Society and Library Company and numerous other organizations.

The First Resolution praised Davidson for his personal qualities of kindness, honesty, hospitality and gentleness. The Second Resolution dealt with Davidson's devotion to his country and his civic duties including his work "in behalf of the educational institutions of Lexington." The Third Resolution

pointed out his distinguished law career and his fruitful professional endeavors. The Fourth Resolution was a request that the Circuit and County Courts of Rockbridge place the Resolutions in their minutes and a copy be sent to the family of the deceased.<sup>22</sup>

In the late eighties speculative expansion came to Rockbridge and other parts of Virginia and the South. The new community of Buena Vista became the real center of activity, but there were "booms" also at Goshen, Glasgow, and Lexington.<sup>23</sup>

At the peak of the "boom" on July 7, 1889, Mrs. Hannah Davidson died after several weeks of illness. Mrs. Davidson had suffered during periods of great hardship, anxiety and despair, yet she died when Rockbridge was enjoying unusual prosperity. The mother of six sons, "she saw them and her husband buried." Her funeral was held at the Lexington Presbyterian Church "in the presence of a large congregation." Dr. T. L. Preston preached the funeral with Dr. R. J. McBryde assisting. Her obituary read: "Her uniform cheerfulness, her kindness of heart and of manner, her patience, courage, fidelity to duty and other kindred virtues were recognized and appreciated by all who knew her."<sup>24</sup>

Mrs. Davidson was survived by two daughters, Mary and Clara, the wife of Dr. A. D. Estill, and one great-grandson, James Albert Maclick. Allie's daughter, Alberta (Berta) who had been born at Dublin two weeks before her father's death in 1865, married J. M. Maclick who was in the grocery business in Pulaski. Berta died at the birth of their first child, James Albert (Bert).<sup>25</sup>

Bert entered Washington and Lee University in the fall of 1906. He was a "big, powerful" boy who was a member of the Albert Sidney Crew. His major was engineering. Tragedy struck



again when Bert died of typhoid fever in 1910 while a student  
in Lexington.<sup>26</sup>

NOTES

Chapter I: A Family of Rockbridge before the War

- <sup>1</sup>Oren F. Morton, A History of Rockbridge County, Virginia, Staunton-1920, p. 151.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup>John S. Wise, The End of an Era, Cambridge, 1899, p. 239.
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 242.
- <sup>5</sup>Morton, op. cit. p. 196.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 151.
- <sup>7</sup>Greenlee Davidson's Diary which he kept from November 22, 1854 to January 19, 1855 while a student at Washington College. This diary can be found among the "Davidson Papers." These papers are manuscripts, personal letters, collected articles, family data, and many miscellaneous items concerning the Davidson family. The collection of these papers was chiefly the work of Greenlee Letcher, the son of Gov. John Letcher. After the death of Letcher, these papers were given to the Rockbridge Historical Society, Lexington, Virginia. This society through Dr. Charles W. Turner has kindly given this writer access to them. Henceforth, any reference to this collection will be made to the Davidson Papers.
- <sup>8</sup>Mary Davidson to Greenlee Davidson, Feb. 21, 1858, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>9</sup>Col. J. C. Shields, "Sketch of the Family of J. D. Davidson," Davidson Papers.
- <sup>10</sup>Minutes adopted by the Faculty of Washington and Lee University, Commemoration of the death of J. D. Davidson, Oct. 25, 1882, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>11</sup>History of Virginia, Virginia Biography, The American Historical Society, New York, 1924, Vol. V., p. 245-246.
- <sup>12</sup>Shields, op. cit., Davidson Papers.

- <sup>13</sup>Davidson Papers.
- <sup>14</sup>J. D. Davidson to William, June 17, 1856, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>15</sup>Greenlee Davidson to Father, May 6, 1851, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>16</sup>Shields, op. cit., Davidson Papers.
- <sup>17</sup>Lexington Gazette, May 14, 1863.
- <sup>18</sup>Greenlee Davidson to Father, December 10, 1855, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>19</sup>Greenlee Davidson to Father, August 26, 1856, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>20</sup>Greenlee Davidson to Father, September 20, 1865, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>21</sup>Greenlee to Mother, September 24, 1856, Davidson Papers, unfortunately, no further letters from Greenlee describing this trip have been preserved.
- <sup>22</sup>Lexington Gazette, March 14, 1861.
- <sup>23</sup>Allie to Mother, January 1, 1861.
- <sup>24</sup>Charles Davidson to his father, November 9, 1860, Davidson Papers. A discussion of political conditions in Rockbridge will follow in the next chapter.
- <sup>25</sup>A close friend of Mr. Davidson at the University, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>26</sup>Albert Davidson to Father, April 1, 1861, Davidson Papers.

## Chapter II: War Affects a Family

- <sup>1</sup>J. D. Davidson, A Curiosity in Chancery, and Rhyme and Prose, Lexington Gazette Printing House, Lexington, Virginia, 1877. A book consisting of various articles and poems written by James D. Davidson.
- <sup>2</sup>Greenlee's Diary, Davidson Papers, December 1, 1854.
- <sup>3</sup>Valley Star, June 4, 1857.

- <sup>4</sup>Lexington Gazette, January 26, 1860.
- <sup>5</sup>W. G. Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Richmond, Vol. LXI, No. 3, p. 260-282.
- <sup>6</sup>Ollinger J. Crenshaw, "Rockbridge County and the Secession Convention of 1861," paper read before the Rockbridge Historical Society on October 28, 1946. For an abstract see Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society, Vol. III, p. 7-14. A part of the Davidson Papers are located in the McCormick Historical Library in Chicago. Dr. Crenshaw used and quoted from those manuscripts. His paper is my primary insight into the Davidson Papers which deal with the election of 1860; the Secession Convention, January-April, 1861; and the actual withdrawal of Virginia from the Union.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid, p. 10.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid, p. 9, Gazette, Jan. 26, 1860.
- <sup>9</sup>Lexington Gazette, Dec. 20, 1860; Jan. 26, 1861.
- <sup>10</sup>Mary Davidson to Mother, Jan. 20, 1861.
- <sup>11</sup>O. F. Morton, A History of Rockbridge, Virginia, p. 122; Gazette, April 4, 1861.
- <sup>12</sup>Crenshaw: op. cit., p. 11; Davidson: op. cit., p. 20-21.
- <sup>13</sup>Crenshaw: op. cit., p. 11-12.
- <sup>14</sup>H. M. White, W. S. White, D D and His Times, Richmond, 1891, p. 167-168, 171.
- <sup>15</sup>Several accounts have been given concerning the details of the marching of the Cadets. References are: Lynchburg News, December 5, 1893, an article saved by the Withrow sisters of Lexington and is found in one of their scrapbooks containing post-war newspaper clippings; Morton, op. cit.; H. G. Shields, Rockbridge County, Virginia and the Civil War, an Honors Thesis, unpublished; Cauper, William: One Hundred Years at V. M. I., Richmond, 1939, Vol. II, p. 77-86; and W. M. Wellman; They took Their Stand, New York, 1959, p. 92-94.

- <sup>16</sup> Lynchburg News, December 5, 1893, op. cit.
- <sup>17</sup> Several versions of this speech have been given to posterity. This particular quotation is from Couper, op. cit., p. 86, who, in turn, quoted from The War, by James H. Wood in the Class of '64 at V. M. I.
- <sup>18</sup> Quotations from Morton, op. cit., p. 122. Other references are Couper, op. cit., p. 88, Crenshaw, op. cit., p. 12.
- <sup>19</sup> Crenshaw, op. cit., p. 13.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Gazette, May 30, 1861.
- <sup>22</sup> P. H. Buck, The Road to Reunion, 1865-1900, Boston, 1937, p. 60, taken from T. C. Johnson: History of the Southern Presbyterian Church, New York, 1894, p. 427.
- <sup>23</sup> H. G. Shields, op. cit., p. 13-15.
- <sup>24</sup> Quoted by the Lexington Gazette, April 25, 1861.
- <sup>25</sup> Allie to Mother, April 20, 1861; April 25, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>26</sup> Gazette, May 16, 1861; Col. J. C. Shields, op. cit., Davidson Papers.
- <sup>27</sup> J. D. Davidson to Hannah, May 19, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>28</sup> Gazette, April 25, 1861.
- <sup>29</sup> J. D. Davidson to Mary, May 16, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>30</sup> Gazette, June 13, 1861.
- <sup>31</sup> Greenlee to Father, July 8, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>32</sup> Allie to Father, July 6, 1861, July 19, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>33</sup> Allie to Father, July 19, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> W. Skeen to J. C. Davidson, July 4, 1861, Davidson Papers.

- <sup>36</sup>Allie to Father, August 28, 1861; September 8, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>37</sup>Allie to Father, September 8, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>38</sup>Charlie to Father, November 28, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>39</sup>W. M. Paxton: The Paxtons, Platte City, Mo., 1903, 182-184.
- <sup>40</sup>Pass given James D. Davidson by Major M. S. Harmen, Staunton Headquarters, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>41</sup>Gazette, September 19, 1861.
- <sup>42</sup>Gazette, August 15, 1861.
- <sup>43</sup>J. D. Davidson to Greenlee, July 30, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>44</sup>Greenlee to Father, February 10, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>45</sup>J. D. Davidson to Greenlee, February 12, 1862.

### Chapter III: War and Family Tragedy

- <sup>1</sup>Commission signed by Governor John Letcher, February 15, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>2</sup>Gazette, June 23, 1887, from a paper read by T. T. Munford, "Withrow Scrapbooks," Greenlee Davidson to Father, Feb. 10, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>3</sup>List of officers found in an article; supposedly written by Greenlee Letcher, the son of Governor John Letcher, in preparation for his "paper on Captain Greenlee Davidson to be read before the Fortnightly Club of Lexington, Va.," January 22, 1915. Greenlee Letcher has collected, organized, and prepared a paper about letters and articles concerning Greenlee Davidson, the man whose name he bore. These papers are all a part of the Davidson Papers; Gazette, November 11, 1863.
- <sup>4</sup>Greenlee Davidson to Father, Feb. 10, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>5</sup>James D. Davidson to Greenlee, Feb. 12, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>6</sup>Greenlee to Father, April 27, 1862, Davidson Papers.

- <sup>7</sup> James D. Davidson to Greenlee, February 14, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>8</sup> Allie to Mother, April 14, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>9</sup> J. D. Davidson, Rhyme and Prose, p. 29.
- <sup>10</sup> Greenlee to Father, April 20, 1862; Greenlee to Mother, April 24, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>11</sup> James B. Dorman to Hannah Davidson, April 29, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>12</sup> Charlie to his family, December 3, 1861, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>13</sup> Charlie to Mother, March 26, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>14</sup> Charlie to his family, May 26, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>15</sup> Charlie to his family, (no date), mailed from Camp McGunea's Station; Charlie to Father, May 30, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>16</sup> J. D. Davidson to Hannah, May 14, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>17</sup> Allie to Mother, May 31, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>18</sup> Charlie to Father, May 30, 1862, June 15, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>19</sup> Report of John Tyler, 1st Lieut. Letcher Artillery, in absence of Capt. Greenlee Davidson to General A. P. Hill, Davidson Papers, Greenlee Davidson was on temporary sick leave. Gazette, Nov. 11, 1863.
- <sup>20</sup> James D. Davidson to Hannah; July 1, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>21</sup> Tyler's Report to A. P. Hill, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>22</sup> The account of the Battle of Malvern Hill is taken chiefly from Capt. Greenlee Davidson's Report to Col. Thomas, 3rd Brigade, Gen. A. P. Hill's Division, Davidson Papers, supplemented by Tyler's Report to A. P. Hill; M. M. Boatner, III The Civil War Dictionary, New York, 1959, p. 504-507.
- <sup>23</sup> Greenlee Davidson's Report to Col. Ghomas.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid; Tyler's Report to A. P. Hill.

- <sup>25</sup> Copies in Gazette, August 7, 1862.
- <sup>26</sup> War of the Rebellion, under direction of Redfield Procter, Washington, 1891, Series 1, Vol. II, part 2, p. 881.
- <sup>27</sup> James B. Dorman to James D. Davidson, April 30, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>28</sup> Mother to Willie, July 5, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>29</sup> Charlie to his family, Aug. 18, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>30</sup> War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 12, part 2, p. 673.
- <sup>31</sup> Greenlee to Father, Aug. 28, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 12, part 2, p. 673.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Greenlee to Father, Sept. 8, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>36</sup> Greenlee to Mother, Sept. 14, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Greenlee to his family, Sept. 17, 1862, Davidson Papers
- <sup>41</sup> Greenlee to Mother, Sept. 19, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>43</sup> Paper submitted by Greenlee Davidson, Wm. G. Crenshaw, W. J. Pegram, E. B. Brunson, Edward A. Marye, Thomas H. Hill, J. D. Potts to Maj. Gen. A. P. Hill, commanding general of the Light Division, Oct. 14, 1862, Davidson Papers; A letter from A. P. Hill, Oct. 14, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>44</sup> James D. Davidson to Willie, Dec. 2, 1862, Davidson Papers.



- <sup>45</sup> A Sibley tent is described: "Conical, light, easily pitched, erected on a tripod holding a single pole, and will comfortably accommodate twelve soldiers with their accouterments." H. L. Scott quoted in Boatner: The Civil War Dictionary, p. 760.
- <sup>46</sup> Greenlee to Mother, Nov. 21, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>48</sup> Greenlee to Father, Dec. 19, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>50</sup> This descriptive account of the Battle of Fredericksburg is contained in a letter written by Greenlee Davidson, undated, Davidson Papers. Sources of support are Lenoir Chamber: Stonewall Jackson, New York, 1959, p. 281, Douglas Southall Freeman: Lee's Lieutenants, New York, 1943, Vol. II, p. 358; War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 21, p. 633, 636, 650.
- <sup>51</sup> War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 21, p. 636.
- <sup>52</sup> Greenlee's letter, undated, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup> Greenlee explained that a canister shot is about the size of a walnut. A double canister load for a Napoleon is almost a water bucket full of shot at each discharge. The range over which a load would cover is approximately one acre.
- <sup>55</sup> Greenlee's letter, undated, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>56</sup> War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 21, p. 662.
- <sup>57</sup> Greenlee Davidson to Governor John Letcher, Feb. 22, 1863, Davidson Papers. Later sent to James D. Davidson by Letcher, February 26, 1863.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> R. H. Chilton to Greenlee Davidson, April, 1863, and Davidson's reply, April 23, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>60</sup> James D. Davidson to Greenlee, March 6, 1863, Davidson Papers.

- <sup>61</sup> Account taken from 1st. Lt. T. A. Brander's Report to Col. R. L. Walker, May 10, 1863, Davidson Papers. Supplemented by a letter from T. A. Brander to Governor John Letcher, May 16, 1863, Davidson Papers; War of the Rebellion, Series 1, Vol. 25, part 1, p. 938; a letter from R. L. Walker to Governor John Letcher, May 10, 1863, Davidson Papers; Gazette, May 14, 1863.
- <sup>62</sup> T. A. Brander to Gov. Letcher, May 16, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>63</sup> John Morris to Mrs. Hannah Davidson, May 12, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>64</sup> James B. Dorman to Hannah Davidson, May 6, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>65</sup> Charlie to Father, May 10, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>67</sup> Gazette, May 14, 1863.
- <sup>68</sup> Gazette, Nov. 11, 1863.
- <sup>69</sup> Gazette, May 14, 1863, op. cit.

#### Chapter IV: The Final Curtain of the War

- <sup>1</sup> H. G. Shields, Rockbridge County and the Civil War, p. 22-24, 44-48.
- <sup>2</sup> Gazette, Nov. 11, 1863.
- <sup>3</sup> Charlie to Father, April 23, 1863; May 10, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>4</sup> Charlie to Father, Sept. 2, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>5</sup> Charlie to Mother, Jan. 24, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>6</sup> Willie to Mother, July 24, 1862; Greenlee to Father, Aug 28, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>7</sup> James D. Davidson to Willie, December 2, 1862, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>8</sup> Willie to Mother, Dec. 22, 1862, Davidson Papers.

- <sup>9</sup>Willie to Mother, May 2, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup>Willie to Father, June 29, 1863; Allie to Father, June 29, 1863; July 18, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>12</sup>Allie to Father, July 4, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>13</sup>Manson B. Tate to Clinton L. Anderson, April 16, 1961. Tate received information from a personal interview with K. B. Alexander, a nephew of Henrietta Alexander; W. M. Paxton, The Paxtons, p. 183.
- <sup>14</sup>Allie to Father, July 18, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>15</sup>Willie to Mother, Oct. 13, 1863, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>16</sup>J. D. Davidson, Rhyme and Prose, p. 3, 6.
- <sup>17</sup>Gazette, Nov. 18, 1863.
- <sup>18</sup>Gazette, Nov. 18, 1863; E. P. Allan, Life and Letters, p. 169.
- <sup>19</sup>Allan, Life and Letters, p. 170-173; W. Couper, One Hundred Years at V. M. I., Vol. II, p. 207-246.
- <sup>20</sup>Allan, op. cit., p. 183; War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 27, part 1, p. 96.
- <sup>21</sup>Allan, op. cit., p. 182-188; Couper, op. cit., Vol. III p. 23-27; H. G. Shields, op. cit. p. 53-55.
- <sup>22</sup>War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 27, part 1, p. 96-97.
- <sup>23</sup>Couper, op. cit., Vol. III p. 31-33.
- <sup>24</sup>War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 27, part 1, p. 96-97.
- <sup>25</sup>Allie to Mother, July 17, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>26</sup>Allie to Mother, June 1, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>27</sup>Charlie to Mother, June 1, 1864, Davidson Papers. (author's note: This statement may or may not be indicative of the true nature of conditions).

- <sup>28</sup> Charlie to Father, July 9, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>29</sup> Willie to Mother, May 2, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>30</sup> Allie to Mother, June 1, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>31</sup> Willie to Mother, August 1, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>32</sup> Willie to Mother, August 1, 1864; Allie to Mother; August 7, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>33</sup> Allie to Mother, May 17, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Allie to Mother, June 1, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>36</sup> Allie to Mother, Aug. 7, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup> Allie to Mother, November 27, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>39</sup> Allie to Mother, October 12, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>40</sup> Allie to Mother, November 27, 1864, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>41</sup> Charlie to Father, February 26, 1865, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>42</sup> Allan, Life and Letters, p. 207.
- <sup>43</sup> History of Virginia, Virginia Biography, Vol. V., p. 245; J. C. Shields, "Sketch of the Family of J. D. Davidson," Davidson Papers, Paxton, op. cit., p. 183-184.
- <sup>44</sup> M. B. Tate to Clinton L. Anderson, April 16, 1961.

#### Chapter V: Recovery and the End of a Family

- <sup>1</sup> E. P. Allan, The Life and Letters of Margaret Junkin Preston, p. 208.

- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 209.
- <sup>3</sup> William Couper, History of the Shenandoah Valley, Vol. II, p. 963.
- <sup>4</sup> William Couper, History of the Shenandoah Valley, Vol. II, p. 963.
- <sup>5</sup> Charles Davidson's personal stationary.
- <sup>6</sup> "Funeral Obsequies of Col. Charles Davidson "taken from the Gazette, March 7, 1879, a copy in the Davidson Papers. Written by J. McC. Tutwiler, secretary of the Mountain City Lodge.
- <sup>7</sup> Henry Boley, Lexington in Old Virginia, p. 127.
- <sup>8</sup> Davidson Papers.
- <sup>9</sup> Lexington Gazette, March 7, 1879; "Annual Records of the Franklin Society and Library Company, Lexington," 1869-1885. Reports of 1872-1873 signed by Charles A. Davidson, President; C. W. Turner, "The Franklin Society, 1800-1891," from the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, October 1958, Vol. 66, No. 4, p. 433.
- <sup>10</sup> "General Order No. 9, "Virginia Military Institute, February 27, 1879, Davidson Papers; Lexington Gazette, March 7, 1879.
- <sup>11</sup> J. R. Kean, "The Development of the 'Valley Line' of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad," from the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 60, No. 4, p. 545-550;
- <sup>12</sup> A. W. Moger, "Railroad Practices and Policies in Virginia After the Civil War," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 59, No. 4, p. 449-451.
- <sup>12</sup> C. J. Heatwole, A History of Education in Virginia, p. 218-219, 241-242.
- <sup>13</sup> "Rockbridge Alum Springs in the Mountains of Virginia," Winston-Salem, N. C. (undated advertisement brochure) p. 5.
- <sup>14</sup> A. W. Moger, The Rebuilding of the Old Dominion, p. 38-41; E. P. Thompkins, Rockbridge County, Virginia, p. 56-58, 149.

- <sup>15</sup> J. D. Davidson, "Address of Welcome," November 13, 1880, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>16</sup> J. D. Davidson, Rhyme and Prose, p. 25.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>18</sup> Remarks of Wm. A. Anderson at a public meeting, October 16, 1882. The Resolutions honored the recently deceased James D. Davidson. A Copy among the Davidson Papers.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.; Col. J. C. Shields, "Sketch of the Family of J. D. Davidson," Davidson Papers.
- <sup>20</sup> Remarks of Wm. A. Anderson, Davidson Papers.
- <sup>21</sup> Lexington Gazette, October 19, 1882; copy among Davidson Papers. Pall-bearers were: Lexington Bar-Ex. Gov. J. Letcher, J. G. Steele, Col. Edmund Pendleton, Wm. A. Anderson. Trustees, Washington and Lee University-F. T. Anderson, Wm. McLaughlin. Faculty, Washington and Lee University-Gen. G. W. C. Lee, , Jas. J. White. Faculty, Virginia Military Institute-Gen. F. H. Smith, Gen. T. H. Williamson. Board of Supervisors-J. Samuel Gibson, A. T. Barclay. Council of Town of Lexington-C. M. Dold, S. H. Letcher, W. P. Houston. Citizens of Lexington and County-J. T. L. Preston, Wm. White, Capt. J. C. Boude, J. N. Lea, Col. J. H. Paxton.
- <sup>22</sup> Lexington Gazette, October 19, 1882.
- <sup>23</sup> Moger, The Rebuilding of the Old Dominion, p. 38-42; Thompkins, op. cit. p. 147-157.
- <sup>24</sup> Rockbridge County News, July 11, 1889, copy in Davidson Papers.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.; W. M. Paxton, The Paxtons, p. 183-184; Manson B. Tate to Clinton L. Anderson, April 16, 1961, Mary Davidson was never married; Dr. and Mrs. A. D. Estill had no children.
- <sup>26</sup> Catalogue of Washington and Lee University, 1907; Washington and Lee Alumni Files; Manson B. Tate to Clinton L. Anderson, April 16, 1961; Br. Robert W. Dickey, a classmate of James Albert Moelick (conversation with C. L. Anderson April 30, 1961)

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# Family Tree

James Greenlee Mary McDowell Elijah McClanahan Ann Ewing

Records Burned)

John Greenlee Hannah McClanahan

William Paxton Jane Briggsby

Davidson Susan Dorman

James Greenlee Polly Paxton

James D. Davidson  
b. Nov. 7, 1808; d. Oct. 14, 1882

Hannah McClanahan Greenlee  
b. Dec. 14, 1812; d. July 7, 1889

Infant Son d.

~~James Greenlee Davidson (Never Married)  
b. June 21, 1834; d. May 3, 1863~~

~~Frederick Davidson (Never Married)  
b. March 18, 1836; d. July 21, 1861~~

~~Mary Davidson (Never Married)  
b. Feb. 1; d. Jan. 17, 1854~~

~~Charles Andrew Davidson (Never Married)  
b. ; d. Feb. 25, 1879~~

Albert Davidson m. Henrietta Alexander  
b. Dec. 25, 1841; d. May 6, 1865

William Weaver Davidson (Never Married) Alberta Davidson m. John M. Moelich  
b. ; d. Oct. 25, 1869

Clara Davidson m. Andrew Dorman Estill James Albert Moelich  
b. July 29, 1851; d. ; d. 1910  
(No Children)