

Excerpt from Speech by Captain William Zack Leitner on two members of his company at Fredericksburg.

gathered from the populations of well nigh every every (sic) nation in the world. Contrast the private soldiers of the Confederacy of other nationalities, and how does he stand? equal in point of courage to the bravery and trans___?___, superior in all the higher attributes of a noble manhood. And here you will pardon the relation of two individuals of the late war which came under our immediate observation and which we regard particularly illustrative of the type.

A young man who joined my company at Richmond Virginia in April 1861, had been severely wounded at Sharpsburg, and returned to us without arms (meaning without weapons), just as we were ordered into action at the first battle of Fredericksburg, remarking as he came up "that he had heard that a battle was imminent and had hastened back to join us". Knowing him to be a gallant soldier and desirous of having him with us in the approaching battle, I ordered him to take the gun and accoutrements of another who had just recovered from an attack of illness and who I thought hardly able to endure the following patriotic reply: "No Captain we need all of our men: I will go along with you and take the gun and accoutrements of the first man that fall." Soon we were engaged, and this noble boy bore himself gallantly forward, ___med in the thickest of the fight. The missiles of death soon struck down by his side a poor Confederate and thus furnished David R. Ryan with gun and accoutrements, which he used that day with marked coolness and precision. This noble, this gallant young son of the "old city by the Sea" fell at last by the side of his Captain on the bloody field of Gettysburg, with the words vibrating from his quivering but dying lips, "Captain if you survive, write to my mother when I am gone and tell her that I fell at the post of duty".

The next incident is in connection with a most daring deed of mercy by Rowland R. Kirkland of my company, one of the noblest among the many noble sons of Kershaw. As you will remember, the first battle of Fredericksburg was fought on the 13th of September (sic). Kershaw's Brigade of which my company (together with gallant old company D of this town) formed a part, occupied that portion of the famous Stonewall which skirted the foot of Marye's Hill. There especially the slaughter of the Federals was fearful. Hundreds were slain, thousands wounded. The next day the two opposing armies occupied their respective positions of the day before, keeping up a desultory firing only as the head of a Federal or Confederate should chance to make its appearance. The cries for water by the wounded Federals who were lying midway between the two armies were heart rendering in the extreme. The brave but merciful spirit of the Lion hearted Kirkland, moved with a compassion as tender and sympathetic as that of a mother for her _____ babe, could endure their cries no longer, and lashing around himself several canteens of water, he leaped the famous wall, which but the day before had been wreathed in the smoke and fire of battle, and amid a pitiless storm of shot, dashed onward to where lay the wounded and famishing Union soldiers. Never did the Federals cease firing until they observed by his _____ of mercy, that his errand was one of good will. Where I ask, can be found loftier courage, greater magnanimity a truer nobility of nature. True, Sir Philip Sidney at the battle of _____, suffering from a most painful

Excerpt from a speech by Captain William Zack Leitner of Company E, 2nd South Carolina. Date of speech is unknown. Copy of speech provided by Mac Leitner, P.O. Drawer 12190, Rock Hill, South Carolina 29731-2190. Attached are obituaries of Captain Leitner and David Ryan.

the subject of this notice, Sergeant DAVID R. RYAN, fell mortally wounded in the battle of Gettysburg, on the 2d of July, 1863. During the siege of Fort Sumter, in 1861, Sergeant RYAN was a private in the ranks of some company then on the island. Immediately after the capitulation of Sumter, a call was made by the Governor of South Carolina for troops. The company of which young RYAN was then a member having refused to go to Virginia, he requested and obtained a discharge therefrom and united himself with the Camden Volunteers, commanded by Capt. W.Z. LEITNER, of which company he remained a member until the day of his death. Language can give no adequate idea of the very high estimate placed on his character and services by his officers and comrades-in-arms. As a gentleman and soldier, however, his character is worthy not only of imitation, but of the higher admiration. Throughout the glorious campaigns in Virginia, which his adopted company bore so glorious and conspicuous a part, this noble young patriot was ever present to share its toils and triumphs.

Enthusiastic, brave and defiant in the discharge of duty, he fought the invader with indomitable courage in every field, first at Manassas, then at Williamsburg, in the series of battles around Richmond, at Harpers Ferry, Sharpsburg, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Salem Church and Gettysburg. Here it will not be improper to relate an incident or two illustrative of the character of young RYAN as a soldier and patriot. Having been severely wounded at the battle of Sharpsburg, he could not be present with his company until the day on which the battle of Fredericksburg was fought. Hearing in Richmond, on his return to his company, that a battle was imminent, he hurried on and reached the scene of conflict without guns or accoutrements, but a few minutes before his company was ordered into action. His Captain suggested to him the propriety of taking the equipments of a rather feeble member of the company, to which the young Sergeant responded, "No, Captain, we need all the men we have, let him keep his gun and accoutrements; I will go along, and the first man that falls I will take his equipments." The tide of battle soon furnished the young Sergeant with gun and accoutrements, and right nobly did he use them on that memorable field.

At the battle of Chancellorsville he was again severely wounded in the head, and though bleeding and faint, he repeatedly declined leaving the field until preemptorily ordered by his Captain to do so, and then left with an obstinacy never before manifested by him.

Whilst Sergeant RYAN was breathing his last in defence of his country on the mountain slopes of Gettysburg, his noble brother, Captain RYAN, was dying in the same glorious cause on the burning sands of Morris Island. Alas! my noble young Sergeant, companion, friend, thou art gone, and though thou speepest on a foreign soil where the Laurel and Cypress planted, preserved and nurtured by the hands of tender affection, may never wave over thy last resting place, yet thy memory will bloom in perpetual fragrance, where brave men are admired and the love of liberty appreciate.

BY HIS CAPTAIN

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