

*Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: U.S. Civil War Horse Perspective 1861-1865 (Revisited) delivers a coming-of-age story where the protagonist (a courageous Confederate black stallion) embarks on an epic journey of self-discovery. Experiencing harsh realities of life will take Lucky from innocence to experience; a veteran of war.*

**Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory:  
U.S. Civil War Horse Perspective: 1861-1865 Revisited**

by Clint Goodwin

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# MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE GLORY

U.S. Civil War Horse Perspective: 1861-1865

*REVISITED*



**CLINT GOODWIN**

*Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*  
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# Lucky's New Owner

## *Lucky*

While carrying my master on a deer hunt in the early morning, a bullet struck Sir Tom's back, almost knocking him out of the saddle. I was familiar with the sound of guns, which is why the sound did not startle me. But that particular rifle shot was different. It echoed from a distance.

I caught a glimpse of blackish-grey smoke bellowing from the tree line. But then it could have been the morning mist. Within seconds, Sir Tom dropped the reins and relaxed his leg grip on my sides. I was scared. I did not want him to fall off, so I carefully crossed the field then trotted up to the main house. Standing on the porch were Mrs. Drayton and two house servants. They rushed down the steps and towards me. One maid secured my reins. The other cried out. "Mr. Joe. Come quick!"

Now standing by Mrs. Drayton, Mr. Joe carefully slid my master down from the saddle. More field hands arrived at the scene. Sob began to consume the silence. I felt very uneasy with the commotion. What had happened to my master? Mrs. Drayton stood briefly in front of me. "It is all right boy. You did us fine bringing back our beloved Tom."

I watched Mr. Joe carry Sir Tom to the padded porch swing and gently lay him down to expose a bloodied back. Mrs. Drayton put a pillow under his head. She kept whispering. "It was going to be okay. It is going to be okay." She directed Mr. Joe to ride over to the Melton house and get the doctor.

Mr. Joe jumped on my back and delivered a strong kick to my sides; I ran as fast as the wind could take us. I traveled four miles through swamp and road. We returned to the Magnolia Plantation two hours later; with the doctor not far behind.

Mrs. Drayton knelt by Sir Tom and patted his forehead with a cold wet towel. Poor little Allison was not allowed to be in the presence of her injured father. One of the servants ushered her back into the house. She did not obey completely.

I noticed Allison peeking out the front window; looking so sadly at her father. Her gaze quickly turned away to see the doctor's carriage pull

up by the front porch. The doctor stepped out and ran up the steps to Sir Tom. He carried a black bag with him. Kneeling by Sir Tom, the doctor opened his black bag to rummage for bottles of medicine. He opened one up. The fumes smelled awful. He poured some of its contents into Sir Tom's mouth. The medicine seemed to make Sir Tom feel better.

The doctor rolled Sir Tom back onto his side to expose the gunshot wound. I almost sickened when I saw the doctor pull out a long probe he gently inserted it into the bullet hole in Sir Tom's back. My master grimaced, but surely held in a silent scream.

"Mrs. Drayton," the doctor tried to get her attention. "If I can locate the bullet and remove it; Tom might have a good chance of regaining his health." Mrs. Drayton did not respond. She shook her head.

After a few minutes of twisting the rod into Sir Tom's back, the doctor exclaimed. "Aha! He carefully pulled the bullet out using the small jaws he controlled with the wire attached to the instrument's handle. Once the bullet was out, more red blood dripped onto the porch deck.

Mrs. Drayton asked, "Doctor Hatch. I desperately hope Tom will live; now that the bullet was out." The doctor placed a white piece of cloth over the wound. It appeared everything was going to be all right. I neighed out, "Before long, Sir Tom and I will be out near the pines hunting in no time."

What we did not know then was that often times the bullet was not the killer. It was the invisible killer that doctors in the future would call germs. Until the late into the Nineteenth Century, few doctors understood that unclean probes caused infections that ultimately killed the human. This would be the case for Sir Tom. Within six weeks, infections poisoned his blood. Mr. Joe told me he was going to die. The infection took his life.



On Saturday, June 8, 1861, Mrs. Drayton buried my master next to his father in the family plot west of the main house. Each grave's headstone faced east. The sun's rays glanced across the final resting places for the Draytons.

I was sad for Mrs. Drayton and Miss Allison. What would they do? Surely my new life would be wedded to the dreary work of pulling cotton and rice carts to and from the fields; however, I would soldier on.

The next few months were trying times for the Drayton family. The summer crops needed cutting, hauling, and selling. The Draytons were not the only plantations in an economic bind.

All the neighboring plantations were financially strapped. Mr. Joe told me our country was breaking apart. The South wanted their economic and social freedoms. The North wanted the Southern rebels to give up slavery.

Mr. Joe said the new Confederate States of America (CSA) army pressured Southern loyalist for more resources: food, materials for uniforms, iron, steel, lead, gunpowder, and of course, horses. All were needed to fight the Union. North and South were fighting a unrestricted civil war.

The Magnolia Plantation would eventually submit to economic demands required by the war effort. Most of the food grown for the Drayton family were sold to the CSA well below market price. The spirit of victory motivated all to contribute to the cause.

With little money and food to eat, the Drayton family reluctantly sold me to the Confederate army. My new owner's name would be Brigadier General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard.<sup>1</sup> His journey would become mine.



Mid-June, the CSA Cavalry came by our plantation. I was so impressed with how determined my fellow horses and their riders moved in unison on the old road by our home. Watching the parade of riders got me thinking about where they were going. All of a sudden, they all stopped. Two riders broke away from the group. I could see them trotting toward the main house. I stayed comfortably safe in my field, watching from a distance. The two riders were wearing gray uniforms. Mr. Joe said, "Lucky, gray uniforms are worn only by white men serving the South. Dayd don't like people like me and most likely won't like you, boy."

One of the men riding towards us—as well as the horse—looked very familiar to me. I was not certain, for I was a good hundred yards away in the north pasture. Sticking my nose in the air, I detected a familiar aroma; that horse was my Red! Well no fence was going to keep me away from her.

Looking at the six-foot-high fence, I figured I only needed fifty yards of running distance to clear it. As expected, I cleared the top pole and

galloped over toward Red. She saw me coming. Red reared up, almost throwing her rider off. Now closer, I could see he was Mr. Goodwin.

The officers' appearance stirred up somewhat of a commotion outside the main house. Alerted, Mrs. Drayton walked out the front doors holding Miss Allison's hand. I was standing by Red near the front steps. When I heard the shorter, man say, "Good morning, ma'am. My name is General Beauregard. With me is Lt. Goodwin. I understand he is an old friend of your husband, Sir Tom Drayton Junior.

Mrs. Drayton looked at RW. "Good to see you RW." He uncovered his hat, and said. "Much obliged to be here ma'am." She asked, "How can I help you gentlemen?" The general took over the conversation. "As you know ma'am, the South declared war on the Union. My troopers are in need of supplies and horses to help further our cause. I noticed that black horse there looks strong and spirited. We need more horses like that to pull our cannon wagons. Are you willing to sell him?"

Miss Allison, now standing by her mother, looked up. "No, mother. We can't let go of Lucky. He brought daddy back to us!" Mrs. Drayton put her hand on Allison's shoulder. "Allison Marie Drayton. Young lady, I want you to go back into the house. This going to be an adult conversation." Allison turned around and stomped back into the house.

Mrs. Drayton turned towards General Beauregard and Lieutenant Goodwin. She presented herself as a stern woman. "Gentlemen. The Magnolia Plantation would be glad to help the South's cause. We do not have any crops to share since harvest is not until next month. We do have yams and a few hogs that can go with you. Is the CSA able to provide us a small payment?"

General Beauregard reassured her. "The CSA will make reparations once the currency has been printed." He continued. "With all due respect Mrs. Drayton, the reason we are here. The CSA needs to commandeer that black horse."

Mrs. Drayton eyes widened as she looked at me. I scanned he front windows and saw Miss Allison looking peering out at me. Tears were running down her face. I looked at Mrs. Drayton. It seemed like hours passed, then she said, "I suspect that would be the right thing to do for the war effort. He is a special animal."

General Beauregard tipped his hat towards Mrs. Drayton. "Thank you ma'me. He will be well taken care of. Trust me. I will have a few soldiers pull the wagon over to collect what foodstuff you can spare." Realizing she had no other options, she called over to Mr. Joe standing by the



stable. “Mr. Joe. Please bring Lucky’s halter over. Lucky is going to leave us for a time.”

Looking displeased, Mr. Joe turned and walked into the stable. He returned outside with my bridle. He slipped it over my muzzle and behind my ears. He then secured the chin strap; careful not to make it too tight. He whispered in my ear. “Soldier on Lucky boy. Sir Tom would expect noth’n else from youza. Da soldier on.”

Reflecting on the days since my birth, I spent the first years of my young life smelling the sweet magnolias during the many misty spring mornings. Little did I know, one Mr. Joe tightened that chin strap, the next four years of my life would be spent running through smoke-filled battlefields, where death and suffering would overcome the living.

Lt. Goodwin led me away. I looked back at the main house where Mrs. Drayton, Mr. Joe, and little Miss Allison waved goodbye to me. It was funny, because to the left of the house where they buried Sir Tom, I thought I saw him waving too. So I stopped for a moment to behold the green pastures and cotton fields one more time. It occurred to me at that moment, I would never smell the sweet fragrance of freshly cut hay and honeysuckles, or watch the morning mist floating over the Magnolia Plantation pines.

Lt. Goodwin clucked at Red. “Come on girl. We need to go north. Lord willing you may be back here someday.” I walked behind Red feeling sorrowful. Red neighed at me. “Lucky. At least we are together now.” She was right. However, I was leaving my blood family. My dad would have said, “It was time to grow up son.” I wished he were with me.



July 18, 1861, Thursday afternoon. The Confederate army wagon train clambered through thick brush and air full of smoke and dust for ten hours; ever since reveille.

My tired legs relied upon four sore hooves now aching from pulling a supply wagon loaded with a half-ton of guns and ammo across Ole Virginny. I overhead the wagon driver, Private Smitty say, “Men, it won’t be long. We will be give’n those yella’ belly Yankees a thrash’n.” I neighed to Red. “Where were we going? What was a Yankee? Where was Ole Virginny?” Red did not have an answer. Nevertheless, we pushed forward north, hoping the night would bring rest. The horses had

not eaten in two days. I suspected Smitty had something to do with it. He looked and smelled untrustworthy.

Private Smitty presented a scrawny-looking man standing five feet ten, weighing about 160 pounds. He had an abrasive disposition. Smitty constantly yelled at us “get going, you mules.” I was insulted. The horse team was not a mixed breed. Smitty was ignorant. He did not know mules were a cross between a male donkey (jack) and a female horse (mare). Mules were half-way to perfection.

The wagon burden was shared. Three other horses pulled the wagon with me. The two horses closest to the driver were called *Wheel Horses*. I was a wheel horse; The strongest horses were harnessed nearest the front wheels. The two horses in front were called lead horses. Two warmbloods shared that duty. Together we pulled a wagon loaded with thousands of bullets and rifles by the infantry marching ahead of us, and over a hundred supply wagons pulling up the rear.

I sympathized with the soldiers trudging alongside the hardened road top. Each of them looked so young. Their mismatched uniforms were not like the officers; clean and pressed. Even the soldier’s boots were mismatched.

When an infantry column needed passage, Smitty pulled the wagon to the side of the rode and stopped. Soldiers would look at us as they marched by. Their eyes told a story being written with dogged determination and pride.

Silence was rare on the road. The men sang songs to take their minds off the miles ahead of them. Some of those songs reminded of my dear master—Sir Tom—who hummed the same tunes. Now to a horse, the human words don’t make much sense. But the lyrics I remembered for the rest of my days would be *Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord*. I liked that song. It motivated the army to press forward.

Our brigade traveled over 480 miles through swamps, muddy roads, and fields to get to the center of Virginia. The general ordered our brigade to set up camp and get rested. He passed down the word to all his officers to prepare for battle. The next few days were challenging.

The soldier’s rest was short lived. The next morning the soldiers were all in a huff. The men did not the rest promised. One of the soldiers walked over to back of the wagon and woke Smitty up. The man wore a sergeant’s uniform. He commanded, “Get up ya backwoods barker. Reveille sounded and you are still sleeping.” Smitty squirmed under his grey blanket. He sat up and rubbed his eyes. He sighed and said, “I hear

ya serge. Gett'n up." The sergeant responded. "Don't talk. Just get going. The general's order changed. We are pulling up stakes and moving north to meet the enemy."

The last leg of the march was interesting. Several rivers and creeks were crossed. The thunderstorm rain kept them flowing pretty fast. The first river was wide and deep in some spots. When we got the river's edge, Private Smitty stood up in the wagon seat and said, "Boys and girls, we are going have to take a swim in the Rappahannock River today." He went on to say, "Someday, we will be right back her fighting those blue bellies in Fredericksburg." He would be right. In December 1862, many would die.

We marched twenty more miles on Thursday until a suitable open space was found to accommodate four thousand men and a supply train. During that evening, the campfires burned and the men sang. Their songs were not as gleeful. I sensed the men were getting anxious. Many did not sleep.

We all ate well that night. General Beauregard made sure we camped by the river to stay cool. Being in the middle of summer, the feel of the cool breeze coming off the water felt good. Looking up at the stars, I stood tied to the tree wondering where Red was now. How I missed her. When we crossed into Virginia earlier in the week, I had heard Lt. Goodwin make some comment about his company transferring to another cavalry regiment under the command of a colonel named James Ewell Brown, (J.E.B.); known affectionately as Jeb Stuart. All I knew was that one morning Red was there, then the next day she wasn't. She could have told me beforehand. I am beginning to think she does not like me or is simply teasing me.

Friday morning's sunlight cut through the old oaks and maples lining several farms laid out before us. The camp began to stir. One soldier blew hard into a bugle to signal time to rise. Thousands of soldiers started crawling out of their tents. The soldiers next to our wagon were grumpy.

Many complained about their breakfast. I heard one young soldier say, "Miss my mamma's cook'n. She'd fix me up ham, eggs and fresh bread in the morn'n. There has to be something else besides hardtack and lard."

An older soldier walking near our wagon, stopped and admonished the private. "Quit your complaining Private Jack. I got a good reason for you to stop. Myself and several others did some fish'n last night back in the run we crossed yesterday."

“Sergeant Delaney. How is that possible. We ain’t got no cane poles around here.”

“Lad. I used my bare hands.” The younger repeated himself. “No cane pole?”

The elder soldier smiled. “Son, I swam along the banks; periodically pushing my hands underwater to feel for holes. Catfish back themselves into the little caverns and wait for baitfish to swim by.”

“Sergeant. Can I get trade you some coffee for one?”

“Nope. But if you help me skin and cut ‘em up, you can have a cut or two.” Private Jack nodded in agreement.

The sergeant left and returned with one soaked burlap sack he used to preserve the fish he cleaned not two hours earlier. He opened the sack and pulled out a two-foot long catfish. He held it up by its lip. “What do you think Private Jack? Good enough for breakfast. Yep... bout six pounds I imagine.”

The soldiers returned to their campfires and set up a Dutch oven over the fire. The private ladled in some yellow lard into the heated oven. I could smell the lard coming to a boil. The sergeant carefully dropped cut up catfish steaks into the hot liquid.

The fish did not take long to cook. Within ten minutes, several other soldiers followed the smell and joined Private Jack and the sergeant. I do not think I recall seeing the soldiers smile as much that morning, since leaving South Carolina.



Smitty was resourceful. He knew how to acquire local resources. He never said how he did it. Smitty had an uncanny way with people. Evidence was in freshly cut hay he fed us that morning. We enjoyed fresh hay, while the men enjoyed their catfish. Then then Smitty started acting strange.

“These are General Beauregard’s orders,” Smitty said in a drunken tone of voice. He rambled on, “Looking for a fight. We need to pack up and get on down the road I tell ya.” He walked from the wagon over to the trees where our team was tethered.

Standing next to me, Smitty said, “Boy, I noticed ya branded like the rest of them slaves.” He walked towards my rear while running his smelly hands over my withers, then to my left flank. His hands stopped on the brand. Feeling the raised scar, he said, “Boy, I recognize that

brand. You be from Magnolia Plantation near Charleston, South Carolina.” He walked back to stand in front of me.

His squinty eyes stared me down. “I used to hunt around dem thare parts. Old man... forgot hiz name; kicked me off his dang property one day. Never did care for dem uppity people thinking theyz better than us swamp folks.” He turned around and stumbled over some dead wood. Catching himself, “Dang it. Who put that there. Got get you boys harnessed up. Time to go.” I snorted at him and neighed, “I did not care the words spoken.” Something was not right with Smitty.



Our brigade arrived on July 2, 1861. We were not alone. General Beauregard positioned arrays of soldiers and reserves near a place Smitty said the locals called, Manassas Junction. We had help. General Joseph Johnston came in from the west; bringing the total strength to about 32,000 men; though only half of us would be committed during the battle.

Jefferson Davis assigned General Beauregard to lead the CSA into the first Battle of Manassas. At the time, we did not know that Manassas would play host to one more battle during the following summer.<sup>3</sup>

The first Battle of Manassas changed my life. I witnessed humans kill one another. The soldiers fought bravely, as well as the horses who carried them and pulled artillery to the line. I did my part as well during the Battle of Manassas.

Early morning on July 2, Smitty positioned our wagon behind a grassy hill, not three hundred yards over and down a hill from a house that the men called the Stone House.<sup>3</sup> Though we were out of sight, the sounds of war echoed across the leas and valleys.

The explosions did not bother me as much. I was used to the gunfire I had grown accustomed to during hunting trips near the Magnolia Plantation. However, what I did not care for was the loud explosions of the canons; the soldiers called them twenty-four-pounder howitzers.

The amount of white, grey, and black smoke bellowing across the fields made it impossible for soldiers to see on the battlefield. There were moments during the battle I questioned if we were losing or winning. It was hard to tell.

Our horse team were noticeably scared and jumpy. However, I remained steadfast and unafraid. It did not take long for the Smitty to recognize we would calm down if he unhitched us and tethered us to the

tree line below the hill. Once tied up, I continued to remain calm, while the shooting and explosions over the hill escalated. Unfortunately, my friends tied next to me did could not control herself. In fact, she jerked her head back with such force, the rope line pulled away from the branches. The rope loosened and slipped away from our halters. Her fear set us free.

I saw my friend Bucky from Georgia run to the top of the hill. I neighed out for him to stop. He could not hear me. It was then too late. Union cannon shot exploded in front of him. Bucky rolled back down sideways. He stopped just before where I stood. His hooves remained motionless. A red liquid covered his head. I walked to Bucky's left and nudged him, but he did not move. At that very moment, fear gripped me. I had never seen a friend die that way. I could not move.

Looking left, I saw a deer trail winding north towards a hill. I had to summon enough courage to get my legs moving and to the higher ground. Once on top, I could get better view of what was happening and where. Before I could take on step forward, Private Smitty had snuck up on me and secured a lasso around my neck.

Smitty was anxious. He tugged hard on the lead, but I gave no ground. Instead of a wagon harness, a halter laid across his left shoulder. I was confused at first, but then my suspicions gave way to the truth. He was trying to put a halter on me. It was clear his intention was to leave the battlefield.

I would differ from his intent. While he attempted to force the bridle bit into my mouth, I closed my front teeth hard on his right hand. The man let out a shrilled scream silenced only by the cannonades. He looked at me and pulled his revolver from his pocket; I could see he intended to kill me, so I reacted quickly. I reared up on my hind legs and came down hard on his right arm, which loosened his grip on the weapon. Smitty simply snarled those yellow teeth at me, and then he turned and ran like a coward.

Turning to my right, I galloped to the hilltop overlooking the battlefield. I stopped to look north. Before me was a Confederate officer mounted on a gilded sorrow. The officer's blouse had three gold stars stitched on each collar. He held the rank of colonel.

I remembered seeing the colonel and his horse a few days earlier. I had heard the officer call his chestnut-colored horse, Little Sorrel. Both the horse and officer remained calm throughout the cannonades. A

dismounted officer next to him called out, "Colonel! Colonel Jackson, Sir!" The man turned and looked down. He rubbed his long dark beard as if contemplating a response. He replied, "Make it so lieutenant. Make no delay. Charge."

On Little Sorrel, Colonel Jackson rallied his troops to push back the Union flank. He would have nothing to do with defeat. It was this moment his soldiers nicknamed him, "Stonewall Jackson."<sup>4</sup>

Several hours passed without a shot being fired. The cannons went silent by day's end. Eighteen thousand Yanks had enough fighting. The Union retreated. To my right in the east, I witnessed civilians packing up their picnics just outside the battlefield lines. Those folks looked like they were doing what Sir Tom and Mrs. Drayton did on Magnolia Plantation. I could not believe my eyes.

The higher ground was indeed a tactical advantage. I saw what the colonel saw, miles of open fields spotted with abandoned artillery and lifeless horses and soldiers laying on the ground. The sight made me ill. I shook my head and snorted to clear things up.

Still on high ground, I saw movement from below. It was Private Smitty running toward the Union, waiving a white flag. One word came to mind at that moment... traitor! He managed to flag down a civilian carriage to escape. I did not understand why.

Glancing back, I watched Colonel Jackson ride Little Sorrel down to where our team had been secured. I followed them. Curiosity drove me towards them. Since the killing stopped, it seemed to be no better time to go over and meet Little Sorrel. I wanted to understand where he came from.

Cautiously, I walked up behind Little Sorrel who reared up and snorted at me. I was surprised how unfriendly he seemed at first. However, after stomping the ground and head shaking, Little Sorrel accepted my presence. I asked him, "Who is your trooper?"

"My rider is a great, God-fearing man who has no limits in bravery and courage. Like him, I am fearless of the unknown ahead of us."

"Why do you put your life in Colonel Jackson's hands?"

"Because it is our duty. You should take note to serve your rider just as well as I."

"I have no trooper. I am a wagon horse. Our team driver fled the battlefield. My friend Bucky lying dead over there was killed by Yankee cannon shot."

“What is your name?”

“Lucky.”

Forget about him, Lucky. You will need a trooper. You look strong and capable of running fast.”

“Yes, I am very fast. Perhaps I would better serve the Confederacy carrying a rider into battle?”

“Lucky, mounted soldiers riding horses into battle are called cavalrymen. When you were on top of the hill, did you see those brave soldiers on horse race towards the Union line?”

“I did.”

“Those men and horses have a name. They are the First Regiment Virginia Cavalry led by Colonel Jeb Stuart.” I had heard that word *cavalry* before. Lt Goodwin and Red were in the Cavalry. Maybe, just maybe I would see my Red again.

Colonel Jackson pulled up on Little Sorrow’s reins and galloped back up the hill. I watched them both disappear in the sky. From below, it looked like they flew like angels.



After the Battle of Manassas, the First Regiment Virginia Cavalry under the command of Colonel Stuart took my charge.<sup>5</sup> My first trooper was attached to the First Regiment Virginia Cavalry, Company H. His name was Loudoun Light Horse Captain Robert W. Carter.

I was glad to carry a rider and not pulling ammo wagons. My trooper was young and an experienced horseman. Other horses told me Captain Carter was not afraid of sitting up in the saddle while shooting his rifle. But then, I also heard he had two other horses shot out from underneath him. I planned on not being the third.

We patrolled northeast looking to collect information on enemy movements and positions. We were looking for a fight. Serving with Colonel Stuart, we engage in more than one hundred skirmishes with Union patrols across the Northern Virginia area during ’61.

I was proud and encouraged. My fellow cavalry horses were surprised with how well the cavalry fed and cared for the troopers and us horses. Rightfully so. Our riders deserved special treatment. Most soldiers assigned to Confederate cavalries were experience Southern horsemen.



Each trooper named his charge. Of course, Captain Carter did not know my real name, so he called me Virginia. I was not amused, since Virginia sounded like a girl's name. I was a stallion. No matter. The captain and I pushed forward to the next skirmish with the Union.

By the time winter came, my eyes had seen enough glory and death for a lifetime. Thousands of my kind had gone to heaven. Unfortunately, many injured men remained behind on the battlefields. The horse toll was horrifying to me. Undaunted, our hearts remained true to the cause of Southern freedom. This unyielding belief kept us moving forward with little sleep and food in between battles. My horse brothers said it was what made Americans strong and courageous; better than the rest of the world. After all it is said, "you do your worst, and we will do our best."



The cold winter of '61 eventually passed. I did not freeze to death since horses grew winter coats to keep warm most of the time, except when it snowed. Snow drove us to look for cover under trees. Our Confederate soldiers had it tough. All they had were the clothes on their backs and a few woolen blankets. Their heat sources were limited to a campfire and tent.

While in winter quarters, our commander, Colonel Stuart prepared for spring patrols in Southeastern Virginia. The next battleground for our Confederate brothers would be Williamsburg, Virginia. It was at the Battle of Williamsburg, on May 5, 1862, where I would lose my Captain Carter to a Union sniper's bullet.<sup>6</sup>

Captain R.W. Carter was a very good trooper. During ten months of fighting together, I got to know him very well. He surely wanted to end the war and go home as soon as possible. I think he missed his old way of living. Being of southern gentry, the captain was accustomed to the better side of things. To maintain his simple pleasures, he sure seemed to have a knack for ensuring our comforts were taken care of; even though others went without. Perhaps it was his cavalier attitude that was from being older and wiser. Captain Carter was not young; he was maybe around twenty-three or twenty-four years old, but he sure seemed popular amongst the rest of the troopers.

Early Monday morning and time to work. The troopers emerged from their tents around four thirty. As had been the case for the whole year, we quietly packed up and rode out before dusk; guided only by the stars.

Captain Carter said, “Virginia, look up at the Lord and you will never get lost at night.” Looking left and right, I wondered what he meant. He said, “No, Virginia, look up. See the stars formed into a kite pattern. The star at the top of the kite points pretty much north. If you lose me, always remember to follow that star in the opposite direction to go home—south.” He was smart about things like that.

The captain was not a big man. I would say his saddle weight was about 170 pounds. He made me feel light on my hooves. We made good time during patrols. Captain Carter also had a good sense of humor. He hummed a tune every time we crossed over a railroad track. I remembered him saying that singing in church made him feel closer to God. One of his songs went something like this:

Good morning, captain, when are we going home?  
I said good morning, captain, we’re feeling so alone.  
Good morning, captain, let this train roll on home.  
Captain says so keep shovel’n, that coal will move us on.  
I said good afternoon, captain, have we lost our way?  
I said hello, captain, are we going home to stay?  
He said don’t worry, son; the Lord will get us get home today,  
He said don’t worry, son; the Lord will get us get home today.



The sound of a single gunshot echoed before the bullet hit my trooper in the chest. I felt Captain Carter’s weight shift on my back. He slumped over in the saddle. The captain’s legs loosened from my sides. The reins dropped onto my shoulders. For a split second, the image of Sir Tom flashed across my eyes. It was happening all over again: like the time I lost Sir Tom.

I knew how to respond. I took him back to the camp where Colonel Stuart was planning his next attack. Colonel Stuart looked saddened by the loss of another good officer. He stepped up to my right side and placed his hand on my withers. He rubbed my neck and said, “You are a brave one. Thank you for not leaving him behind.”

Colonel Stuart ordered two soldiers to remove Captain Carter from the saddle. Interestingly, the colonel stood looking at me. He scratched his brown beard in silence. Then he spoke. “I am impressed with your loyalty. Since I am in need of a horse, I will ride you into the next battle.

I was honored to have been chosen, but then according to other horses, Colonel Stuart also tended to get shot at often. I was unsure about my new trooper. However, I remembered the words of Little Sorrel: “Because it is our duty!”

The quartermaster provided me a new saddle and blanket. The saddle had the letters *CSA* embossed on the black leather seat jockey. I also noticed an interesting mark on the side of the blanket. It was in the shape of a star. The soldiers no longer uttered the word *colonel*. The new title spoken around camp was “General.” Colonel Stuart was promoted to Brigadier General Jeb Stuart. On September 24, 1861. I was now serving the CSA Army of the Potomac carrying General Stuart through several more battles during the remaining months of 1861.

The new commander of the Army of Northern Virginia—General Robert E. Lee—ordered newly promoted Brig. Gen. Jeb Stuart to get behind enemy lines to the north.<sup>7</sup> General Stuart complied with General Lee’s order. An order from a general officer heralded as one of the greatest military minds at the time.<sup>7</sup>

The First Regiment patrolled Southern Maryland for two months. We identified Union army concentrations closer to the north of the Union capitol. General Stuart said the Yanks spent more time worrying about protecting Washington politicians than confronting the Confederacy on the battlefield.

Once back in Virginia, I met one of the most famous horses rode during the civil war. His name was Traveller. His rider’s name was General Robert E. Lee.

When I first met Traveller, the exchange of snorts was much different than with Little Sorrel. Traveller was in fact a courteous horse that carried much pride and wisdom; becoming of a loyal charge to the Confederacy.

General Lee purchased Traveller in February 1862 from Major Joseph M. Broun, quartermaster of the Third Virginia Infantry. It had been six months and Traveler still carried General Lee. I was impressed with the gray-colored gilding. What I did not understand was why Traveller was so nervous and spirited. I asked and he told me. “I miss my home in Greenbrier County, Virginia. Where is your home?” I answered him. “I am from Magnolia Plantation near Charleston, South Carolina. I miss home and the smell of my childhood.”



The spring of '62 was a wet one. The sky rained down on our backs with a vengeance. The infantry seemingly marched in the mud every day during the move northward. The cavalry horses were better off. We could maneuver around and not get hoof rot like the soldiers.

General Stuart and company crossed the Potomac River and back into Maryland in June 1862. The Union patrols never detected our movements. This excursion was to be one of our finest moments. General Stuart circled the Union Army of the Potomac in a three-day raid which produced reliable information on enemy locations and capabilities of troops Union General McClellan was amassing in Southern Maryland.

General Stuart dispatched messengers to arm General Robert E. Lee with intelligence necessary to launch his counteroffensive against the Union right wing north of the Chickahominy River. We moved across the Virginia countryside in response to the Union's Peninsula Campaign. The Peninsula Campaign consisted of fifteen different battles between our sides during March to July 1862.<sup>9</sup>

The day after the last Peninsula Campaign Seven Days Battle engagement finished, my luck ran out. Crossing over a rocky creek caused me to stumble, creating a limp that would have normally required a bullet to solve the problem. However, General Stuart showed mercy. He turned my care over to the quartermaster who wrapped up my hoof with a clean bandage and lard.

Whether it was because of the lard or the rest, I was back on my hooves in no time. I was no longer Brigadier General Stuart's horse. He had taken another horse he named Star of the West. I was disappointed I could not ride into battle with the general; perhaps it was fate or simply God's hand that kept me safe. It was not long after the Seven Days Battles that a Union trooper shot down Star of the West from underneath General Stuart.<sup>10</sup> The death toll for the Confederates and Union sides was heavy. General Lee's Army of Northern Virginia suffered about twenty thousand casualties. Union General McClellan reported casualties of about sixteen thousand. Despite our victory, the losses of men and horse stunned the South.<sup>11</sup>

I healed up quickly. My flesh wound fought infection thanks to the care of old Sergeant Delaney from Georgia. The soldiers of Company A called Delaney "Pops." I knew him as an old man who knew his way around the farm and knew how to use old fashioned remedies to fix us

animals. Thanks to him, I would go on to ride into more battles before the war was over.

On the morning of August 3, 1862, near Germantown, Virginia, the sun rose up behind large, gray clouds. The horizon was streamed with brilliant red, blue, purple, and orange colors. Perhaps the colors were a warning of some sorts or maybe a blessing. I had seen a few sunrises from the same spot since we had been encamped there for a few days while awaiting orders from Richmond. I was glad Sergeant Delaney had parked his chuck wagon near a stand of trees that offered much needed shade during the midday. I knew it was going to be another hot one, with thunderclouds building up as usual in the afternoon. I heard my caretaker coming up, breathing hard as usual. Looking behind me, I saw old Sergeant Delaney carrying a bucket of water. Suddenly, out from behind the chuck wagon, there was the commotion.

Like a wet cat, a young Confederate officer rushed by him, knocking the water bucket out of his hand. The young officer did not have a pleasant look on his face, and I could see Sergeant Delaney was unnerved by his rudeness. The trooper was certainly in a hurry for something. Captain Mathew C. Butler was from the Second South Carolina Cavalry and was in need of a new mount.

Sergeant Delaney said, "Sir, how can I help you?" Using commanding voice, Captain Butler replied, "Sergeant, I need that black horse there. Are there any problems with him?"

"No, sir."

"Well then, get me a halter. I need a mount for battle. We have to move out of here soon, and my other horse has gone lame. Unfortunately, I had to shoot the old black stallion."

This new officer meant business. I was not thrilled about the idea of carrying a horse-killer on my back, but then at least I was moving out of here. I knew he had to do what was best to stop the suffering.

My new regiment was attached to Colonel Hampton's Legion from South Carolina serving under Brigadier General Stuart. We had an important mission ahead of us. According to Captain Butler, our job was to get intelligence on Union positions in the state of Maryland.

We would have to negotiate many creeks, mountains, and of course, the enduring Potomac River during the months of August and September 1862. General Lee wanted us to patrol Northern Virginia and eventually into Maryland. General Lee wanted to mount an offensive.

After crossing the Potomac at White's Ford, we made our way into Maryland. The hours seemed like days; time was slowing down. The mornings could not come quick enough for me to get to the next day. For some reason, I felt uneasy about what lay ahead. The conversation between Captain Butler and the officer riding next to us, troubled me.

Captain Butler said, "Alex, I wish I did not have to do it."

"What you talking about, Matt?" Captain Alexander Hamilton Boykin asked.

"Having to put down that black stallion I had for the past year. He served me well. There were times he ran so fast; I could see the wind passing me by. I will miss that horse." Captain Butler then patted my withers. He said, "But this one seems just as good. We will see."

"Matt, as long as we've known each other, you never got attached to a horse. You know they are going to be the first in a sharp shooter's sight. Plus, you never take time to groom them. That black horse you're riding looks like a bay with so much dirt on him."

"Yes, I know. But that old horse was special. In fact, he had been branded with the crescent moon and palmetto tree."

I thought of home every time I got on his back. The words he said — crescent moon over palmetto—were familiar words to me. I could not remember what they stood for. I did not know at the time, but Captain Butler would remind me after we crossed back over the Potomac in to Virginia. The war made me forget many things. I guess forgetting was a way warriors could cope.

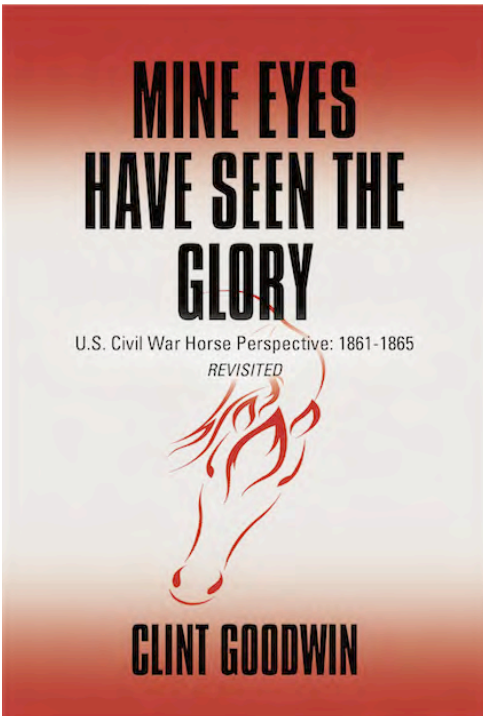
On Sunday, September 7, 1862, we made it to a key rendezvous point west of Urbana, Maryland. We were about thirty miles east of Sharpsburg. Our regiment stayed around the Urbana area for about five days during which Brig. Gen. Jeb Stuart took time to review strategic plans and build goodwill with the local leaders.

I welcomed the rest, for it had been a month since we had stayed in one place for more than a day. The trees started to turn colors as the fall season neared. Those trees were mighty beautiful. Orange and red colors tinted the edges of the leaves like wood singed by fire. The morning air was light and fresh. I would not mind living up there in the north if it were not for the Yanks.

Over the next few days, Captain Butler and I reconnoitered between Urbana and Frederick located to the northwest of us. The locals called the valley east of South Mountain the Cumberland Valley. To the west of South Mountain lay the Hagerstown Valley. According to Special

Orders, No. 191, it was the intent of General Lee to occupy both valleys, giving the Confederates a strategic advantage in the north. Our job was to assess enemy strengths and positions south of Fredericktown (now known as Frederick), Maryland. The only problem; General Lee was marching up from the south to Sharpsburg located on the west side of South Mountain. How could we get intelligence to General Lee before the Union Corps moved on top of our Divisions?

On September 11, Captain Butler and I observed three Union Corps encamped nearby, and the rest of our regiment moved out quickly from Urbana toward the northwest of South Mountain. The Union would have to cross several mountain gaps to advance toward General Lee's position. Our job was to help turn the Union's right flank towards Lee's chosen field of battle south of Sharpsburg. The place of battle would be known as Antietam.



*Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: U.S. Civil War Horse Perspective 1861-1865 (Revisited) delivers a coming-of-age story where the protagonist (a courageous Confederate black stallion) embarks on an epic journey of self-discovery. Experiencing harsh realities of life will take Lucky from innocence to experience; a veteran of war.*

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