

WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 35

THE TAKING OF ATLANTA: Dr. Beach narrates.-- On July 2th Gen. Howard and Wood's divisions joined us and we moved forward, only Hooker's corps and Newton's division of our Corps were engaged. We advanced on the Cross Keys Road toward Atlanta fighting all day on the 20th and 21st. Capt. Benj. Snodgress in command of Company A of the 40th O. V. I. was killed this day on the skirmish line. On the evening of the 22nd our lines on the north and east were close up to the city, so near that at many points we could look into its streets. Our army settled down in front of the city waiting on a chance to assault. For many weeks there was not much to change the monotony of skirmish fighting. We put Atlanta under siege.

On August 3rd we made a demonstration to our front with little result. It was repeated on the 5th. On August 25th the siege was abandoned. Our Corps with Gen. David S. Stanley now in command, Gen. Howard having been assigned to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Gen. McPherson, moved out of the trenches at dark losing quite a number of stragglers during the night. We halted at 2 a.m. on the 26th and marched again at 8 a.m. and went to the right and encamped 8 miles southwest of Atlanta. Marching again on the 27th we skirmished with the enemy cavalry and formed a line of battle near Mr. Gilead's church. On the 28th we engaged in tearing up the railroad toward Atlanta and then encamped at Red Oak.

On the 31st we moved toward Rough and Ready on the Macon Road and threw up barricades facing Jonesboro. In the afternoon the Battle of Jonesboro was fought. Our division rushed forward but was so delayed by the thick undergrowth and enemy skirmishers, the fury of the battle had passed up before we reached the field. By nightfall, the enemy had fallen back to Lovejoy Station.

On September 2, 1864, a reconnaissance from the Chattahoochee River was met by the Mayor of Atlanta, who formally surrendered the city. On the night of the 5th, we withdrew from our entrenchments and fell back to Jonesboro. On the 8th we passed through Atlanta and out on the Augusta Railroad, our brigade going into camp two miles from the city.

For nearly a month following the occupation of Atlanta, our forces had uninterrupted rest. At midnight of October 2, orders were received for marching. Our division marched at daylight and went into camp 5 miles from Marietta near where we fought on July 4th. On October 4th we marched through Marietta and encamped again. On October 5th we march slowly, the Battle of Allatoona being in progress. Gen. Sherman was with our Corps at this time. We encamped for the night at Pine Mountain and rested on the 6th of October. From our position on Pine Mountain, we had a fine view of the relative positions of the armies.

On October 7, 1864, while at Pine Mountain, Georgia, Companies A, B, C, and D were mustered out of the service. The men whose terms had not expired were sent to the 51st O. V. I. to fill out their service.