

A SAD SIGHT

On the side of Gettysburg, nearest the Eleventh corp's battle-line, is York Street. After the battle, in an enclosed lot a few yards from this street, beside a small stream of water, was found a corpse in Federal blue. Nothing unusual that--- for the dead were everywhere for miles of trodden, blood-soaked battle-field. Tightly grasped in the dead soldier's hand was the likeness of three sweet, innocent, little children, and on them his last gaze had been fastened as, alone and unattended, on the dreary field of slaughter, his soul had departed to it's God. That awoke the tenderest sympathies of those who found him, dead and unknown, another of the numberless sacrifices on the altar of an imperilled nation. He was buried at the time on a lot of Judge Russell's near where he had been found.

Some gentleman had thousands of copies struck of the picture found in his hand. They were widely circulated, and at length one reached Cattaraugus county, N.Y., and was there recognized as a likeness of the three children of a man named Hummiston, who had left his humble home to enlist in the 154th N.Y. This regiment belonged to Coster's brigade of the Eleventh corps, and Hummiston had been killed whilst Coster was trying to save the line of retreat, ( as mentioned in a preceding section of this book)

The remains of Orderly-Sergeant Hummiston now rest in grave No. 14, section B of the New York lot in the National Cemetery. His children were for several years in the Orphan's Home, at one time located in Gettysburg, within a few rods of the National Cemetery.

The Philadelphia branch of the Sanitary Commission offered a prize of \$50 for the best poem upon this touching incident. The award was made to James G. Clark of Danville, N.Y., for the thrilling and well known stanzas:

Upon the field of Gettysburg  
The summer sun was high,  
When freedom met her traitorous foe  
Beneath a Northern sky;  
Among the heroes of the North,  
Who swelled her grand array-  
Who rushed, like mountain eagles forth,  
From happy homes away,  
There stood a man of humble fame,  
A sire of children, three,  
And gazed, within a little frame,  
Their pictured forms to see;  
And blame him not if, in the strife,  
He breathed a soldier's prayer-  
"O ! Father, guard the soldier's wife,  
And for his children care."

Upon the field of Gettysburg  
When morning shone again,  
The crimson cloud of battle burst  
In streams of fiery rain;  
Our legions quelled the awful flood  
Of shot, and steel, and shell,  
While banners, marked with ball and blood,  
Around them rose and fell;  
And none more nobly won the name  
Of Champion of the Free,  
Than he who pressed the little frame  
That held his children three;  
And none were braver in the strife  
Than he who breathed the prayer:  
"O ! Father, guard the soldier's wife,  
And for his children care."

Upon the field of Gettysburg  
The full moon slowly rose,  
She looked, and saw ten thousand brows  
All pale in death's repose;  
And down beside a silver stream,  
From other forms away,  
Calm as a warrior in a dream,  
Our fallen comrade lay;  
His limbs were cold, his sightless eyes  
Were fixed upon the three,  
Sweet stars that rose in memory's skies,  
To light him o'er death's sea.  
Then honored be the soldier's life,  
And hallowed be his prayer:  
"O ! Father, guard the soldier's wife,  
And for his orphans care."

from:

A Complete Hand-Book of the  
Monuments and Indications  
and guide to the positions on the  
Gettysburg Battle-Field.  
By J. Howard Wert, A.M.  
Principal of the Boy's High School  
Harrisburg, Pa., and Late Lieutenant  
Pennsylvania Volunteers.

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