

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommssen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Descartes Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Darwin Dickens Schopenhauer Rilke George
Wolfram von Eschenbach Melville Grimm Jerome Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus Moltke
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
Marx vom Stein Lawrence Irving
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Forty-Six Years in the Army

John M. Schofield

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PREFACE

Most of the chapters constituting the contents of this volume, were written, from time to time, as soon as practicable after the events referred to, or after the publication of historical writings which seemed to me to require comment from the point of view of my personal knowledge. They were written entirely without reserve, and with the sole purpose of telling exactly what I thought and believed, not with any purpose of publication in my lifetime, but as my contribution to the materials which may be useful to the impartial historian of some future generation. These writings had been put away for safe-keeping with "instructions for the guidance of my executors," in which I said:

"All the papers must be carefully revised, errors corrected if any are found, unimportant matter eliminated, and everything omitted which may seem, to a cool and impartial judge, to be unjust or unnecessarily harsh or severe toward the memory of any individual. I have aimed to be just, and not unkind. If I have failed in any case, it is my wish that my mistakes may be corrected, as far as possible. I have not attempted to write history, but simply to make a record of events personally known to me, and of my opinion upon such acts of others, and upon such important subjects, as have come under my special notice. It is my contribution to the materials from which the future historian must draw for his data for a truthful history of our time."

Now, in the winter of 1896-97, I have endeavored to discharge, as far as I am able, the duty which I had imposed on my executors, and have decided to publish what I had written in past years, with corrections and comments, while many of the actors in the great drama of the Civil War are still living and can assist in correcting any errors into which I may have fallen.

After my chapters relating to the campaign of 1864 in Tennessee were in type, the monograph by General J. D. Cox, entitled "Franklin," was issued from the press of Charles Scribner's Sons. His work and mine are the results of independent analysis of the records, made without consultation with each other.

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FORTY-SIX YEARS IN THE ARMY

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CHAPTER I Parentage and Early Life – Appointment to West Point – Virginian Room- Mates – Acquaintance with General Winfield Scott – Character of the West Point Training – Importance of Learning how to Obey – A trip to New York on a Wager – The West Point Bible-class – Dismissed from the Academy Without Trial – Intercession of Stephen A. Douglas – Restoration to Cadet Duty – James B. McPherson – John B. Hood – Robert E. Lee.

I was born in the town of Gerry, Chautauqua County, New York, September 29, 1831. My father was the Rev. James Schofield, who was then pastor of the Baptist Church in Sinclairville, and who was from 1843 to 1881 a "home missionary" engaged in organizing new churches and building "meeting-houses" in Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. My mother was Caroline McAllister, daughter of John McAllister of Gerry. We removed to Illinois in June, 1843, and, after a short stay in Bristol, my father made a new home for his family in Freeport, where he began his missionary work by founding the First Baptist Church of that place.

In all my childhood and youth I had what I regard as the best possible opportunities for education, in excellent public schools where the rudiments of English were taught with great thoroughness, and in a fair amount of all kinds of manly sports, and in hard work, mainly on the farm and in building a new home, which left no time and little inclination for any kind of mischief. At sixteen years of age I spent three months in surveying public lands in the wilds of northern Wisconsin, and at seventeen taught district school in the little town of Oneco. By that time I had chosen the law as my profession, and was working hard to complete the preparatory studies at my own expense.

APPOINTMENT TO WEST POINT

The winter's school term in Oneco having closed early in the spring of 1849, I returned to Freeport and resumed my struggle with Latin. Then an unforeseen event turned the course of my life. The young man who had been appointed to West Point from our district only a year or two before had failed to continue his course in the Military Academy. Thus a vacancy occurred just at the close of Mr. Thomas J. Turner's term in Congress. There was no time for applications or for consultation. He must select another candidate to enter the following June, or leave the place to be filled by his successor. Fortunately for me, Mr. Turner, as one of the public-school directors, had been present at an examination where the subject with which I had to deal was mathematical; if he had caught me at Latin, the result must have been fatal to all my prospects. Besides, Mr. Turner had heard from his brother James of the stamina I had shown in the public land-surveying expedition; and also from my father of my determination to get a good education before beginning the study of law. So he brought me a cadet appointment when he came home, and said he believed a boy with that record could get through West Point, the training there being, in his opinion, a good preparation for the study of law.

The little savings from all my past work had been invested in a piece of land which was sold to fit me out for my journey to West Point, including some inexpensive visits en route. I reported at the Academy on June 1, 1849, with less than two dollars in my pocket, which I conscientiously deposited with the treasurer, as required by the regulations. My reception was of the most satisfactory character. William P. Curlin of the second class, and Hezekiah H. Garber of the third, both from Illinois, found me out very soon after I reported, took me under their protection in a brotherly way, and gave me some timely advice—not to take too seriously any little fun the "men" might make of my blue dress-coat and fancy gilt buttons, or anything like that; but I never experienced anything even approaching to hazing. My rather mature appearance may have had something to do with the respect generally paid me. It was true I was only seventeen years and nine months old, as recorded in the register, but my experience may have had some visible effect.

I was assigned to a room in the old South Barracks, which were demolished the next year. My room-mates were Henry H. Walker and John R. Chambliss, two charming fellows from Virginia. We had hardly learned each other's names when one of them said something about the "blank Yankees"; but instantly, seeing something that might perhaps have appeared like Southern blood in my face, added, "*You are not a Yankee!*" I replied, "Yes, I am from Illinois." "Oh," said he, "we don't call Western men Yankees." In that remark I found my mission at West Point, as in after life, to be, as far as possible, a peacemaker between the hostile sections. If the great West could have been heard, and its more dispassionate voice heeded, possibly peace might have been preserved.

My experience at West Point did not differ in many particulars from the general average of cadet life, but a few incidents may be worthy of special mention. My experience in camp was comparatively limited. The first summer I was on guard only once. Then the corporal of the grand rounds tried to charge over my post without giving the countersign, because I had not challenged promptly. We crossed bayonets, but I proved too strong for him, and he gave it up, to the great indignation of the officer of the day, who had ordered him to charge, and who threatened to report me, but did not. That night I slept on the ground outside the guard tents, and caught cold, from which my eyes became badly inflamed, and I was laid up in the hospital during the remainder of my encampment. On that account I had a hard struggle with my studies the next year. While sitting on the east porch of the hospital in the afternoon, I attracted the kind attention of General Winfield Scott, who became from that time a real friend, and did me a great service some years later.

CHARACTER OF THE WEST POINT TRAINING

In our third-class encampment, when corporal of the guard, I had a little misunderstanding one night with the sentinel on post along Fort Clinton ditch, which was then nearly filled by a growth of bushes. The sentinel tore the breast of my shell-jacket with the point of his bayonet, and I tumbled him over backward into the ditch and ruined his musket. But I quickly helped him out, and gave him my musket in place of his, with ample apologies for my thoughtless act. We parted, as I thought, in the best of feeling; but many years later,

a colonel in the army told me that story, as an illustration of the erroneous treatment sometimes accorded to sentinels in his time, and I was thus compelled to tell him I was that same corporal, to convince him that he had been mistaken as to the real character of the treatment he had received.

That third-class year I lived in the old North barracks, four of us in one room. There, under the malign influence of two men who were afterward found deficient, I contracted the bad habit of fastening a blanket against the window after "taps," so that no one could see us "burning the midnight oil" over pipes and cards. The corps of cadets was not as much disciplined in our day as it is now. If it had been, I doubt if I should have graduated. As it was, I got 196 demerits out of a possible 200 one year. One more "smoking in quarters" would have been too much for me. I protest now, after this long experience, that nothing else at West Point was either so enjoyable or so beneficial to me as smoking. I knew little and cared less about the different corps of the army, or about the value of class standing. I became quite indignant when a distinguished friend rather reproved me for not trying to graduate higher—perhaps in part from a guilty conscience, for it occurred just after we had graduated. I devoted only a fraction of the study hours to the academic course—generally an hour, or one and a half, to each lesson. But I never intentionally neglected any of my studies. It simply seemed to me that a great part of my time could be better employed in getting the education I desired by the study of law, history, rhetoric, and general literature. Even now I think these latter studies have proved about as useful to me as what I learned of the art and science of war; and they are essential to a good general education, no less in the army than in civil life. I have long thought it would be a great improvement in the Military Academy if a much broader course could be given to those young men who come there with the necessary preparation, while not excluding those comparatively young boys who have only elementary education. There is too much of the "cast-iron" in this government of law under which we live, but "mild steel" will take its place in time, no doubt. The conditions and interests of so vast a country and people are too varied to be wisely subjected to rigid rules.

But I must not be misunderstood as disparaging the West Point education. As it was, and is now, there is, I believe, nothing equal to it anywhere in this country. Its methods of developing the reasoning faculties and habits of independent thought are the best ever devised. West Point *training* of the mind is practically perfect. Its general discipline is excellent and indispensable in the military service. Even in civil life something like it would be highly beneficial. In my case that discipline was even more needed than anything else. The hardest lesson I had to learn was to submit my will and opinions to those of an accidental superior in rank, who, I imagined, was my inferior in other things, and it took me many years to learn it. Nothing is more absolutely indispensable to a good soldier than perfect subordination and zealous service to him whom the national will may have made the official superior for the time being. I now think it one of the most important lessons of my own experience that, while I had no difficulty whatever in securing perfect subordination and obedience in a large public school when I was only seventeen years old, or ever afterward in any body of troops, from a squad of cadets up to a body of men, others did not find it by any means so easy to discipline me. What I needed to learn was not so much how to command as how to obey.

My observation of others has also taught much the same lesson. Too early independence and exercise of authority seem to beget some degree of disrespect for the authority of others. I once knew a young major-general who, in his zeal to prevent what he believed to be the improper application of some public funds, assumed to himself the action which lawfully belonged to the Secretary of War. The question thus raised was considered paramount to that of the proper use of the funds. The young officer lost his point, and got a well-merited rebuke. But it is not to be expected that complete military education can be obtained without complete military experience. The rules of subordination and obedience *in* an army are so simple that everybody learns them with the utmost ease. But the relations between the army and its administrative head, and with the civil power, are by no means so simple. When a too confident soldier rubs up against them, he learns what "military" discipline really means. It sometimes takes a civilian to "teach a soldier his place" in the government of a republic. If a soldier desires that his own better

judgment shall control military policy, he must take care not to let it become known that the judgment is his. If he can contrive to let that wise policy be invented by the more responsible head, it will surely be adopted. It should never be suspected by anybody that there is any difference of opinion between the soldier and his civil chief; and nobody, not even the chief, will ever find it out if the soldier does not tell it. The highest quality attributed to Von Moltke was his ability to make it clearly understood by the Emperor and all the world that the Emperor himself commanded the German army.

A TRIP TO NEW YORK ON A WAGER

My constitutional habit once led me into a very foolish exploit at West Point. A discussion arose as to the possibility of going to New York and back without danger of being caught, and I explained the plan I had worked out by which it could be done. (I will not explain what the plan was, lest some other foolish boy try it.) I was promptly challenged to undertake it for a high wager, and that challenge overcame any scruple I may have had. I cared nothing for a brief visit to New York, and had only five dollars in my pocket which Jerome N. Bonaparte loaned me to pay my way. But I went to the city and back, in perfect safety, between the two roll-calls I had to attend that day. Old Benny Havens of blessed memory rowed me across the river to Garrison's, and the Cold Spring ferryman back to the Point a few minutes before evening parade. I walked across the plain in full view of the crowd of officers and ladies, and appeared in ranks at roll-call, as innocent as anybody. It is true my up-train did not stop at Garrison's or Cold Spring, but the conductor, upon a hint as to the necessity of the case, kindly slackened the speed of the express so that I could jump off from the rear platform. In due time I repaid Bonaparte the borrowed five dollars, but the wager was never paid. The only other bet I made at West Point was on Buchanan's election; but that was in the interest of a Yankee who was not on speaking terms with the Southerner who offered the wager. I have never had any disposition to wager anything on chance, but have always had an irresistible inclination to back my own skill whenever it has been challenged. The one thing most to be condemned in war is the leaving to chance anything which by due diligence might be foreseen. In the preparations for defense, especially,