

From: Martha McKee <mrmm100@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 12:47 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: 0 N. 29th Street, Pedestal Removal

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>>> Libby Hill Park is enjoyed by many citizens from throughout the City. Weddings, family reunions, pictures, athletic activity, family picnics, etc. are enjoyed by many. This is especially true since parking within Chimborazo Park has been eliminated.

>>> I am against the removal of the pedestal, fencing, etc. How wonderful it would be to have a statue honoring a person of color, such as Harriet Taubman or Matoaka, in Libby Hill Park. To this end, the pedestal, fencing, etc. could be repurposed to an appropriate hero. Perhaps, engaging school students, churches, neighborhood associations, etc. to participate in the selection of the honoree as well as the design of the statue.

>>> I know of no efforts by the City to engage the public on this issue.

>>> During the past year, Covid has hampered the citizens of Richmond to establish alternative plans for the pedestal, etc.

>>> Martha McKee
>>> 7 N. 30th Street
>>> 804-869-2744

From: CS Silvers <silvers3310@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 4:46 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: 0 North 29th Street

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing in reference to the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors monument at 0 North 29th Street in Church Hill, and the recommendation by the Urban Design Committee to completely remove the remaining column and pedestal that supported it. I grew up on that block of North 29th Street in the 1970s and '80s, directly under the monument. Intellectually, I knew and bristled at what the monument represented, but as a white child in a predominantly Black neighborhood, I could never know its meaning and impact for our Black neighbors. I also cannot say whether removal of the statue was a high priority for the local Black community, as compared to other ways to support the neighborhood, but it is done and I do not question it nor the end of its oversight of Libby Hill Park.

I do, however, question the proposal to spend over \$36,000 to remove the remaining pedestal and column without soliciting input from the community, and specifically from the Black community most impacted over generations by the constant presence of monuments honoring those who enacted and defended the enslavement of their ancestors. Perhaps the community will see this as a powerful opportunity to repurpose that column and pedestal to honor the African American history and heroism of the area so intentionally erased for generations, and possibly rededicate the park as Liberty Park, as members of the community apparently now refer to it.

So, in addition to arguments you have already received regarding the architectural and traffic calming merits of the column and pedestal, as well as their inoffensiveness as compared to the statue they supported, I also propose that those tens of thousands of dollars budgeted for their unnecessary removal may be much better spent on community-based services in support of Church Hill's Black community, services that might support healthcare, mental health, schools, housing or food security for your constituents.

Therefore, I respectfully request that:

1. the Commission reject the plan for removal;
2. the proposed budget be redirected to services in direct support of the Black community;
3. the City pursue a community based process to decide on the fate of the column, pedestal, and the \$36,000 associated with their proposed removal;
4. this community based process specifically and intentionally solicits input from Black community members and organizations, and that it includes Black community members in leadership and decision making positions.

I also suggest the City use this approach in determining the fate of other empty monument pedestals and their associated budgets throughout the city.

I represent myself in writing this letter, and I have no economic or professional relationships relevant to this agenda item.

Sincerely,
Cressida Silvers
silvers3310@gmail.com

From: Staples macdonald <dstaplesm@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 8:59 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Church hill monument.

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

I have been a Church Hill neighbor for 50 years

The city is full of complex and painful reminders of the Civil War and slavery, with issues that are very difficult to talk about.

In my opinion this column is neutral and an architectural asset that can be easily rededicated to reflect the city's true values today.

Sincerely

Denison S Macdonald

A symbol of freedom in Libby hill park

From: Robert <farbob53@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 12:05 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Column and Pedestal at Libby Hill Park KEEP IT!!!!

Expires: Friday, December 17, 2021 12:00 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

I have been a Church Hill neighbor for over 40 years

While I realize that the city is full of complex and painful reminders of the Civil War and slavery, with issues that are very difficult to talk about.

In my opinion this column/pedestal is neutral and an architectural asset that can be easily rededicated to reflect the city's true values today.

Sincerely ,
Robert M. Farley
A symbol of freedom in Liberty park

From: Christopher McQuale <camcquale@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 19, 2021 2:48 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Cc: Newbille, Cynthia I. - City Council; Patterson, Samuel - City Council Office
Subject: Leave the Column and Base in Libby Hill Park

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Dear Planning Commission,

Please pardon the length of my discussion, but I have been thinking long and hard about this issue for some time, and I live a block away from the Column. I think you will find it worth reading and considering. (Thanks.)

First, allow me to clarify something that first struck me when I moved to Virginia (initially to Charlottesville and then to Richmond) some 30 odd years ago from New England: that being an observation that the states of the former Confederacy seem to be the only places where they have erected monuments to the losers of a war. These, which should never have been allowed to be erected to begin with, are not monuments, but memorials. Memorials to those who fought for the preservation of an oppressive regime.

That said, we have this majestic column and base on Libby Hill, the remnant of a so-called monument whose image of a Confederate soldier/sailor has been properly removed. This is now just a handsome column and block of stone that has been predominantly sanitized by removing the soldier image. The only thing remaining to be expunged is the inscription. This could much more efficiently, economically, culturally, and less reactively be put to use as an actual monument to the great cause we are now about: inculcating the actual purpose of the Emancipation Proclamation that the Civil War and Reconstruction were supposed to accomplish, but didn't, except for a handful of individuals who took advantage of the opportunities those short-lived initiatives were supposed to continue to provide.

Unfortunately, Reconstruction lost its momentum and the political will that fostered it almost immediately when President Lincoln was assassinated and the wholly corrupt Andrew Johnson took over; undermining, and in many cases, reversing the original purposes of both the Civil War and Reconstruction. (Had Reconstruction been allowed to continue for 80 to 100 years instead of ten, the vast majority of African Americans as well as all Americans, would not be having the problems we all are today.) As Americans we are so busy patting ourselves on the back about our greatness, we have blinded ourselves to how far short of the mark of fairness and decency we have fallen.

The question we as Richmonders need to ask ourselves, when considering what is now just a beautiful Corinthian obelisk column, with both recent graffiti and inscription that could be easily

removed, is, "where will this end?" Are we so obsessed with the vestiges of a previous way of life that has gone on for tens of thousands of years, well before the African slave trade, before which it was Slavs (slaves) that served the purpose for European dynasties and the Ottoman Empire, et al. No ethnic group in history has been above making slaves of those they conquered, some make slaves of their own people, it is a human propensity that has very gradually been legislated and educated out of mainstream behavior, but will always be there needing to be isolated and restrained.

But what is next on the list: shall we burn down the slave owning Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, along with the original buildings of the University of Virginia (no doubt built with slave labor), along with all the other antebellum homes of slave owners? The removal of all of this low-hanging fruit might give momentary satisfaction to those who insist upon it, but it won't change anything, or serve the purpose of real emancipation. To make real opportunities for all those African Americans that have not been able to find their way through the morass of a society that gives lip service to the rights of individuals, but has institutionalized racial bigotry to the disadvantage of everyone, white, black, Asian, and all people of color.

What we need is not the total destruction of all the meaningless memorials and symbols of an ancient way of life, but a reinstatement of Reconstruction, with most of the same goals that it originally started with and began to accomplish, with the heaviest emphasis on education of people of color and whites. The cost of removing the column and base is a perfect example of being willing to put "form over substance". Give that money to the Board of Education, to civically minded community projects, move out of darkness into light by engaging and investing in initiatives that directly benefit those who, though disadvantaged because of any and all previous prejudices, have the will to work and to improve their lot and that of their community.

For example: make biographies of socially prominent African Americans required reading and discussion topics in all high schools. Folks who were not only successful in their own right, but applied themselves wholeheartedly to the task of uplifting their people, like Booker T. Washington, Ida Wells, Frederick Douglas, and W.E.B. Du Bois (and their more recent counterparts) who really made a difference and can serve as mentors and inspiration for the rising generations. Shifting emphasis away from protest, to forging new lives with new ideas that result in both individual and collective growth and success, instead of trying to put new wine fatalistically in the old wine bottles of resentment.

Put a bronze plaque over the despicable inscription, and have a contest in Richmond Public high schools for a new slogan or title for a worthy cause, one that will stand the test of time. Taking a lead from the Virginia Museum of Fine Art example of erecting a monument to a better, more creative cause, have the mayor and governor come and make proclamations of their own.

Sincerely yours,
Christopher McQuale, P.E.

From: Matthew Klimas <mattklimas@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 9:29 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Libby Hill Monument removal

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Dear Planning Commission,

I have been a Church Hill neighbor for 15 years and live in proximity to the site.

I wish to voice my opposition to the complete removal of the column and pedestal at Libby Hill.

Rather, I support re-envisioning and re-contextualizing the column through direct community involvement to reflect our current values. Many of us feel that there has not been enough public process to provide and explore options for the future of these sites. I do not feel the removal process should proceed without a community approved re-purposing plan for the site that addresses the structure's potential as a reclaimed symbolic/architectural asset as well as park and traffic considerations.

best,
Matt

--



Matt Klimas
Graphic Designer / Art Director / Illustrator
mattklimas.com

From: John Harding <jlharding@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 11:16 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Objection to the removal of the Libby Hill Park Monument Pedestal

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

The removal of this column/pedestal serves no positive purpose and only takes away from one of Richmond's most spectacular locations. This can be seen from far away and is still something special as part of Church Hill and Libby Hill. I have read that the removal will cost in the range of \$36,000 and this does not include the work needed to repair that part of the street. That money could nearly pay for two instructional assistants in one of our elementary schools, a much better use of the taxpayer's money.

I suggest removing the plaque or covering it since the statue is now gone and then not rushing into the next move. The one consideration that really seems to make sense is replacing the former monument with one of Chief Powhatan.

I appreciate your efforts to protect and preserve and fine community and for using good judgment in not making a regretful decision that would only do damage and offer nothing positive.

John Harding

From: Anita Garcia-stein <winterspring2@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 6:50 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Pedestal and Column in Libby Hill Park

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Please do not spend any taxpayer time or money removing the remaining pedestal and column in Libby Hill park. Many Richmonders would enjoy a new statue there in the future when Richmond has enough \$ to spend on one. Please leave it alone. Thank you for your attention. resident.and taxpayer

From: Leslie Armstrong <lsarmstrong57@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 12:10 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Pedestal at Libby Hill Park.

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Please vote to oppose the removal of the tall pedestal presiding over Libby Hill Park. We have a beautiful view of the city skyline and the pedestal adds to this beauty, especially when lit at night (as has been done previously). The monument once erected on top of the pedestal has been removed. The pedestal itself is a work of art/architecture and is offensive to no one. Please let it remain.

Leslie and Grant Grayson
Private citizens (no affiliation with any group)

Sent from my iPhone

From: Jennie Dotts <jennie@oldhouseauthority.com>
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 9:59 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Preserve & repurpose the pedestal

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I'm unsure why Church Hill's taxpaying residents aren't deciding on the preservation, removal or reuse of a character-defining landmark of our neighborhood but we should. After all, we're the ones who daily walk, jog, picnic, and meet friends around it. We use it to help explain 400+ centuries of American history--the proud and disgraceful--to awestruck visitors.

With the residue of the Confederacy scrubbed from it, a spectacular stone column remains to provide visual delight from its panoramic perch. Statueless, it is an opportunity to discuss what was, what is, and our country's powerful capacity for change.

It is also an opportunity to reflect current values. One can easily imagine the white man who dominated the landscape (both literally & figuratively) replaced by a woman of color, perhaps Pocahontas. Wouldn't it be nice to point to the stately column, which signals antiquity, and elaborate on the long history of indigenous peoples.

In short, Church Hill's iconic stone column has nothing to do with the Lost Cause. Let's not make it a Lost Opportunity.

Jennie Dotts

From: marion macdonald <macmarion@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 3:20 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Removal of Monumental Column and Pedestal from Libby Hill

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Dear Planning Commission,

I have been an active member of the community for 15 years participating in park work days as well as many project renovations of old houses in Church Hill.

While I supported the removal of the confederate statue I believe that careful consideration ought to be given to the fate of the pedestal.

Being a builder myself I respect and admire the design and skilled labor that went into the construction of this beautiful creation.

Do we even know whose labor actually went into this effort? Could the people who actually did the work be some of the people who were meant to be suppressed by the "lost cause"? I doubt that the people who funded it and supported it's construction are the same people who built it.

Leaving the pedestal without the statue could declare our changing values. Put something on top that reflects this change.

The historical location of this site-"The view that named Richmond" as well as a variety of significant events entices us to memorialize this site in a way that reflects our growing awareness and changing values.

For these reasons I believe that more research and community input would be wise before making a decision about what would be the best use of this beautiful structure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Koren

Sent from my iPad

From: marion macdonald <macmarion@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 2:50 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Removal of column and pedestal at the View that Named Richmond

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Dear Planning Commission,

I have been a Church Hill neighbor for over 40 years

The city is full of complex and painful reminders of the Civil War and slavery, with issues that are very difficult to talk about .

It is the site of many important occurrences in the city's history. The panoramic view shows where the city was named, the Manchester docks where enslaved individuals entered the city, and where Abraham Lincoln entered the burning city in 1865.

An ideal spot to teach Richmonds history.

In my opinion this architectural asset can be easily rededicated to reflect the city's true values today.

Thank you for your service to the citizens and for giving this very important issue the careful scrutiny it deserves

Sincerely ,

Marion Macdonald

Chair, Friends of Libby Hill Park

Sent from my iPad

From: John Hebbard <jrhebbard@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 9:29 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: Stop the vandalism

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

When I moved to Church Hill from the Fan in 1972 a large part of its allure -- beyond the cornucopia of architecture -- was the sheer span of its history.

People from all over the world have at least heard of Patrick Henry's speech, but the Hill was the place where he gave it to help launch an 18th century. experiment in liberty.

Fewer people know that Lincoln passed along Main Street at the foot of Libby Hill near the conclusion of an experiment in liberty in the 19th century. And fewer still know about the tablet commemorating the battle of Bloody Run at the foot of Libby Terrace, a battle that took place in the 17th century.

Whatever one thinks about the true purpose of the statue now gone from the pedestal at the 0 29th St. , the pedestal itself is a significant architectural feature well worth preserving.

Left without its original statue it is at best an ambiguous symbol but topped with a new statue it can take on a new meaning with a subtle subtext about our ability to better understand the past.

There is nothing subtle or uplifting about the salted earth approach.

How we treat with the past says a great deal about who we are in the present and how we will be viewed in the future.

--

John R. Hebbard

(804) 353-6856 Home Mobile 804.393.8325

jrhebbard@gmail.com

From: JOHN WHITWORTH <jbwhitworth@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 18, 2021 6:16 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: The Soldiers and Sailors Monument

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

I understand and accept the decision to remove the 'Soldier'.
I would not like to see the monument itself removed. I suggest the "community" should come together and decide who they would like to see on this icon pedestal
From downtown the view of the pedestal is a wonderful sight atop Church Hill and having a "Richmonder" on view for the world to see how he/she contributed to our City would be a very positive step forward.
Please don't remove it just because of its past history - let's use the monument to create a new beginning which we all can all identify with

John Whitworth

A 20 year resident of Church Hill

- E Grace, and latterly O St.

804 243 2382

From: K Gauthier <karengny@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2021 10:12 AM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Subject: UDC 2021-23 - an opposition to removal

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Mr. Ebinger,

As a native Virginian, and a 20-year resident of Richmond, specifically in Church Hill for all those years, I am adamantly opposed to the removal of a remarkable, historic landmark simply due to the fact that it once held reference to the Confederacy. While a painful and hurtful memorial it once was, we should look at how to repurpose this icon and important marker with a new message that represents our city and region, embracing hope, peace and community, without sacrificing such a beautiful piece of art and craftsmanship. We need to look at how to redefine it vs just knocking it down or destroying it--it is too valuable as it could be a beacon for how to reconcile our past with embracing our future!

Please consider the negative impact of removing this Column from Church Hill, our fellow citizens and visitors, and determine a better use for it in this location, for all of us.

Thank you.

--

Karen C Gauthier
804-241-7914
karengny@gmail.com

From: Damon Silvers <silversdamon@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2021 1:01 PM
To: PDR Land Use Admin
Cc: cressida silvers
Subject: UDC Item 2021-23 Final location, character, and extent review of the removal of a monument and pedestal; 0 N. 29th Street

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

My name is Damon Silvers. I am currently the Director of Strategy for the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations ("AFL-CIO"), but I am writing to you in my personal capacity regarding the fate of the monument at 0 N. 29th Street.

I grew up at 9 North 29th Street. The monument was a fixture of our neighborhood but one whose purpose neither my family nor many other white neighbors of ours approved of. We thought of the monument as embodying a history that was not ours and a cause, the Confederacy, which we despised, though as a monument for the ordinary soldier it did feel different than the monuments to those who organized the defense of slavery on Monument Avenue. I assume our African American neighbors felt even more strongly than we did, though in the 1970's this was not discussed.

However, the Commission should be aware that the monument was part of an effort in early 20th century Richmond by resurgent white supremacists to erase the glorious history of our neighborhood-- the site of one of the greatest moments in American history-- April 1, 1865, the day of the liberation of the enslaved African American community of Richmond by African American soldiers of the 28th United States Colored Infantry and the 29th Connecticut Coloured Infantry, the emergence into daylight of the anti-slavery interracial resistance unit based in the Van Lew Mansion a few blocks from Libby Park, now the site of Bellevue School, and the subsequent arrival of President Abraham Lincoln to greet the freed people of Richmond at the base of Libby Hill.

I have included below an excerpt of two accounts of what that day was like on Church Hill written by the Reverend Garland White, Chaplain of the 28th U.S. Colored Infantry, and formerly enslaved Richmonder, and by Isaac J. Hill,

I have not lived in Richmond since the 1980's, but my friends in the neighborhood say that now some in the African American community refer to Libby Park as "Liberty Park," and I have a dim memory from my childhood of hearing that name as well.

But in the face of this, the true history of Church Hill, the monument was built to make the African American community of Church Hill feel powerless and to symbolically enforce the

suppression of the great deeds done by the African American community and their army in Church Hill in April, 1865.

It is that community that should decide how and where that history is remembered.

If it were up to me, I would erect a statue of the Richmonders who freed their city and their people on the top of that column, the fighting men of the 28th Connecticut Coloured Infantry.

But that is a decision that should be left to the African American community of Church Hill. The City of Richmond and the elected officials of the community should encourage dialogue and you should take your time.

And if such a process has already been gone through, and demolition is the outcome, then that should be outcome. I have read the comment letters about the artistic and architectural value of the column and its base. Perhaps the African American community of Church Hill will be interested in those letters and comments. Perhaps that sort of thing has already been taken into account.

But something should be done to properly commemorate the greatest thing that ever happened in Richmond, which was the liberation of the city by African Americans on April 1, 1865, which began on Church Hill and should be commemorated on Church Hill.

If I can be of any further help to the Commission in its work on this matter you can reach me at silversdamon@gmail.com or by phone at 202-256-5344.

Sincerely,

Damon Silvers

From a published letter to the Christian Recorder by the Reverend Garland H. White, Chaplain, 28th Connecticut Coloured Infantry. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garland_H._White

"I have just returned from the city of Richmond; my regiment was among the first that entered that city. I marched at the head of the column, and soon I found myself called upon by the officers and men of my regiment to make a speech, with which, of course, I readily complied. A vast multitude assembled on Broad Street, and I was aroused amid the shouts of ten thousand voices, and proclaimed for the first time in that city freedom to all mankind. After which the doors of all the slave pens were thrown open, and thousands came out shouting and praising God, and Father, or Master Abe, as they termed him.

In this mighty consternation I became so overcome with tears that I could not stand up under the pressure of such fullness of joy in my own heart. I refired to gain strength, so I lost many important topics worthy of note.

Among the densely crowded concourse there were parents looking for children who had been sold south of this state in tribes, and husbands came for the same purpose; here and there one was singled out in the ranks, and an effort was made to approach the gallant and marching soldiers, who were too obedient to orders to break ranks.

We continued our march as far as Camp Lee, at the extreme end of Broad Street, running westwards. In camp the multitude followed, and everybody could participate in shaking the friendly but hard hands of the poor slaves. Among the many broken-hearted mothers looking for their children who had been sold to Georgia and elsewhere, was an aged woman, passing through the vast crowd of colored, inquiring for one by the name of Garland H. White, who had been sold from her when a small boy, and was bought by a lawyer named Robert Toombs (2), who lived in Georgia. Since the war has been going on she has seen Mr. Toombs in Richmond with troops from his state, and upon her asking him where his body-servant Garland was, he replied: "He ran off from me at Washington, and went to Canada. I have since learned that he is living somewhere in the State of Ohio." Some of the boys knowing that I lived in Ohio, soon found me and said, "Chaplain, here is a lady that wishes to see you." I quickly turned, following the soldier until coming to a group of colored ladies. I was questioned as follows

"What is your name, sir?"

"My name is Garland H. White."

"What was your mother's name?"

"Nancy."

"Where was you born?"

"In Hanover County, in this State."

"Where was you sold from?"

"From this city."

“What was the name of the man who bought you?”

“Robert Toombs.”

“Where did he live?”

“In the State of Georgia.”

“Where did you leave him?”

“At Washington.”

“Where did you go then?”

“To Canada.”

“Where do you live now?”

“In Ohio.”

“This is your mother, Garland, whom you are now talking to, who has spent twenty years of grief about her son.””

From A Sketch of the 29th Regiment of Connecticut Colored Troops, by Isaac J. Hill.

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/60700/60700-h/60700-h.htm>

Col. W.B. Wooster led us on, he had no right to fear, there was not a faint heart in the 29th Volunteers.

All was quiet here until the 1st of April, when all was in readiness, and the order was given to strike tents and move on to Richmond. During Sunday night the brigade was out in line of battle, and at three o'clock in the morning the rebels blew up three gun boats and commenced vacating their works in our front. At 5 A.M. the troops commenced to advance on the rebel works—the

29th taking the advance, the 9th U.S.C. troops next. Soon refugees from the rebels came in by hundreds. Col. W.B. Wooster passed them about, and made them go before the [Pg 26] regiment and dig up the torpedoes that were left in the ground to prevent the progress of the Union army. They were very numerous, but to the surprise of officers and men, none of the army were injured by them. On our march to Richmond we captured 500 pieces of artillery, some of the largest kind, 6,000 stand of small arms, and the prisoners I was not able to number. The road was strewn with all kinds of obstacles, and men were lying all along the distance of seven miles. The main body of the army went up the New Market road. The 29th skirmished all the way, and arrived in the city at 7 A.M., and were the first infantry that entered the city; they went at double quick most of the way. When Col. Wooster came to Main st. he pointed his sword at the capitol, and said "Double quick, march," and the company charged through the main street to the capitol and halted in the square until the rest of the regiment came up. Very soon after the arrival of the white troops the colored troops were moved on the out-skirts of the city, and as fast as the white troops came in the colored troops were ordered out, until we occupied the advance. The white troops remained in the city as guards. We remained on the outpost.

The 3d instant President Lincoln visited the city. No triumphal march of a conqueror could have equalled in moral sublimity the humble manner in which he entered Richmond. I was standing on the bank of the James river viewing the scene of desolation when a boat, pulled by twelve sailors, came up the stream. It contained President Lincoln and his son, Admiral Porter, Captain —, of the Army, Captain —, of the Navy, Lieut. W.W. —, of the Signal Corps. In some way the colored people on the bank of the river ascertained that the tall man wearing the black hat was President Lincoln. There was a sudden shout and clapping of hands. I was very much amused at the plight of one officer who had in charge fifty colored men to put to work on the ruined buildings; he found himself alone, for they left work and crowded to see the President. As he approached I said to a woman, "Madam, there is the man that made you free." She exclaimed, "Is that President Lincoln?" My reply was in the affirmative. She gazed at him with clasped hands and said, "Glory to God. Give Him the praise for his goodness," and she shouted till her voice failed her

When the President landed there was no carriage near, neither did he wait for one, but leading his son, they walked over a mile to Gen'l Weitzel's headquarters at Jeff. Davis' mansion, a colored man acting as guide. Six soldiers dressed in blue, with their carbines, were the advanced guards. Next to them came President Lincoln and son, and Admiral Porter, flanked by the other officer right and left. Then [Pg 27] came a correspondent, and in the rear were six sailors with carbines. Then followed thousands of people, colored and white. What a spectacle! I never witnessed such rejoicing in all my life. As the President passed along the street the colored people waved their handkerchiefs, hats and bonnets, and expressed their gratitude by shouting repeatedly, "Thank God for his goodness; we have seen his salvation." The white soldiers caught the sound and swelled the numbers, cheering as they marched along. All could see the President, he was so tall. One woman standing in a doorway as he passed along shouted, "Thank you, dear Jesus, for this sight of the great conqueror." Another one standing by her side clasped her hands and shouted, "Bless the Lamb—Bless the Lamb." Another one threw her bonnet in the air, screaming with all her might, "Thank you, Master Lincoln." A white woman came to a window but turned away, as

if it were a disgusting sight. A few white women looking out of an elegant mansion waved their handkerchiefs. President Lincoln walked in silence, acknowledging the salute of officers and soldiers, and of the citizens, colored and white. It was a man of the people among the people. It was a great deliverer among the delivered. No wonder tears came to his eyes when he looked on the poor colored people who were once slaves, and heard the blessings uttered from thankful hearts and thanksgiving to God and Jesus. They were earnest and heartfelt expressions of gratitude to Almighty God, and thousands of colored men in Richmond would have laid down their lives for President Lincoln. After visiting Jeff. Davis' mansion he proceeded to the rebel capitol and from the steps delivered a short speech, and spoke to the colored people as follows:

"In reference to you, colored people, let me say God has made you free. Although you have been deprived of your God-given rights by your so-called masters, you are now as free as I am, and if those that claim to be your superiors do not know that you are free, take the sword and bayonet and teach them that you are—for God created all men free, giving to each the same rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

The gratitude and admiration amounting almost to worship, with which the colored people of Richmond received the President must have deeply touched his heart. He came among the poor unheralded, without pomp or pride, and walked through the streets, as if he were a private citizen more than a great conqueror. He came not with bitterness in his heart, but with the olive leaf of kindness, a friend to elevate sorrow and suffering, and to rebuild what had been destroyed. The 6th inst. General Weitzel's headquarters were moved to a large [Pg 28] mansion on the north corner of Franklin and 4th streets. Here the hearts of the detached men were made glad with the expectation of remaining sometime, but our hopes were soon blasted when the General told me that on Tuesday the 11th, we should move to Petersburg. On Tuesday morning the 25th corps moved by regiments to the regret of all, both white and colored. As we moved down Main street to Broad, I could hear what the rebels said as they stood on the corners in the drenching rain. They expressed their feelings freely, saying "We never were protected until the colored troops came here. They treat us better than our own troops did." We moved in the drenching rain and marched on the Petersburg turnpike within two miles of Petersburg. Nothing of interest occurred up to the 16th of April, when we received the terrible news that President Lincoln was dead. He was stricken down by the hand of the assassin on Friday evening, April 14th, 1865, while in company with his family at Ford's Theatre, in Washington, D.C. The fatal shot was fired by John Wilkes Booth. This was four years after the opening shot was fired upon Fort Sumter, and on the very day when the same old union flag that was then taken down again floated over the Fort. This good and God-fearing President died on the morning of the 15th of April at half-past seven o'clock, and he bore to heaven the fetters of four millions of slaves, and I think I can hear him say to the Father of all good spirits, "These are they that came up through great tribulation." He was meek, like the Lord and Savior, and forgave his enemies to the last. I fancy I can almost hear him say in his dying moments, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." No class of people feel his death as the colored people do, for we have lost the best friend we had on earth, our great deliverer. He has done all a President could do for the poor colored race, and in speaking of him let me, in conclusion, adopt the language of the poet:

"Sleep brave warrior, sleep:
Thy toils and fears are o'er;
Around the living stream of bliss,
May we meet where parting is no more."