

**SACRIFICE**  
AT  
**SHILOH CHURCH**



A NOVELETTE

BY

**BOB ROGERS**

AUTHOR OF FIRST DARK

# **SACRIFICE AT SHILOH CHURCH**

## *Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

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This book is a work of fiction based on actual events and the deeds of real people during the American Civil War. The point of view character and supporting cast (James Darby and Allen Parker) who engage in dialogue are my inventions. The historic men and women referenced herein, along with organizations, places, events, ships, geography, weapons, and the acts of war and kindness are all real. [See the bibliography.](#)

First Edition

Cover photograph: Shiloh Church near Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee; Courtesy of the U.S. National Park Service.

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*Bob Rogers*

# **SACRIFICE AT SHILOH CHURCH**

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*Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

**Works by Bob Rogers**

*The Laced Chameleon* (Novel)

*First Dark: A Buffalo Soldier's Story* (Novel)

*Hitting Life's Curveballs* (Novel)

*Sacrifice at Shiloh Church* (Novelette)

*Lieutenant Flipper's Trial* (One Act Play)

*Duty Called* (Short Story)

*Buffalo Soldier Christmas Story* (Short Story)

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## **Dedication**

In Memory of  
[Carroll Ulysses Thompson](#) (1941-1966),  
Captain, United States Army.

(Panel 12E, Row 57 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial)

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**Acknowledgements**

Salute to my comrades-in-arms who provided encouragement and counsel, including Colonel Leroy Zimmerman, (Artillery, US Army, Retired), Houston Wedlock, and the late John Craig. Houston and John are former US Army sergeants and cofounders of the Baltimore chapter of the Ninth and Tenth (Horse) Cavalry Association.

Though I am much obliged to many, any errors herein are mine.

Bob Rogers  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
April 5, 2014

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## Chapter 1

For a split second, a flash of lightning made the night into day and caused an iridescent glow in the fog. Crashing thunder followed almost instantly, shaking the steamboat. The mist turned in to a steady downpour through the fog. Seconds later, the rain was a torrent.

Alone, with his face in his hands and elbows on his knees, nineteen-year-old Private James Darby sat on the third step of the rear stair that led from the lower deck to the parlor deck of the paddle wheeler *Aleck Scott*. Because of the fog, the *Aleck Scott* and her sister steamers and gunboats were tied up along the banks of the rising Tennessee River.

The deck above James shielded him from the rain. He felt a sudden violent shudder along his spine and knew the truth. Though he was cold, his body shook in anticipation of the coming battle. In an attempt to disguise his fear, James pulled the cape of his mud-splattered overcoat and covered his head and the short-brimmed forage cap he wore adorned with a brass insignia consisting of the number two perched atop crossed sabers. As he stared into the murkiness beyond the company's horses tied to rope lines on deck and the ship's idle paddlewheel, he told himself again to stop shaking. His body refused to obey. Inside, James felt gloom deeper than that brought on by the rain and fog.

From behind, a hand clasped his shoulder. "Lad, don't dwell on it. I know this is only your second fight, but, mark me words, you'll be perfectly fine after you fire your first shot at the Secesh."

James looked up and into the eyes of First Sergeant Allen Parker. He felt compelled to deny his fear. His lips parted, but quickly he thought better of lying to an old soldier—a hero of the

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Battle of Molino del Rey during the Mexican War. Both came from the edge of Springfield in Sangamon County, Illinois. Now, they served together in Company A of the Second Illinois Cavalry, presently attached to Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant's Army of Tennessee. Instead of attempting to deceive, he muttered, "Maybe, I made a mistake by enlisting." James looked about, and then whispered. "Top, it's like this before every mission. I get the shakes just thinking about a new battle. And, to think, I enlisted for three years. What can I do?"

Allen Parker sat beside James and smiled, showing brown teeth, his brown hair graying at the temples and in his stubble. "Lad, how old is you?"

"I'll be twenty on the last day of next month—if, I live to see it."

Allen laughed. "Of course you will. So, you were born March 31, 1842? I guess that made you little more'n a toddler during the last war."

"That's right. I started school the year you returned from Mexico."

"Young or not, I've seen you on patrol. You have the instincts of a fine scout. And, me thinks, you'll be an excellent leader of men."

James turned and looked into Allen's eyes. "Top, I'm sure you've got a speech ready for every private you think will go over the hill." His voice became animated. "But I want you to know, now that I've signed up, by God I'll keep my word. I'll serve."

The older man threw his head back in a hearty laugh and slapped his thigh. "Bully for you! And right you are about me having a speech. And I've given it many a time; more'n me can count. But me think you don't need it." Allen laughed again as he loosened the strings on his small pouch of shredded tobacco

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and placed a pinch in his cheek. He offered his tobacco pouch to James.

Reluctantly, James put a smidgen in his cheek. Soon, he stopped trembling and was laughing at Allen's stories about growing up where James' father was born—back in the home country of County Derbyshire, England. James smiled at the way Allen called it, "Darbyshire."

A bugler sounded the Scottish Tattoo for lights out. Both men stood and stretched. James made a loud yawn and Daniel, his horse, neighed. James and Allen laughed about the Daniel's apparent comment as they mounted the stairs.

At the top of the stairs, James turned to join his squad mates. Allen put a hand on James' shoulder, causing him to pause. "You've trained hard and well. You've been an apt cavalry pupil. General Grant knows what he's doing. By Thursday, mark me words, Fort Henry will be a Union post."

James grinned, wishing he could be as confident. "Okay, First Sergeant. Your words are marked: Thursday, February 6, 1862! Goodnight!"

\* \* \*

By midmorning on Wednesday, James and his Company A comrades, and their sister unit, Company B, were in their saddles and had marched four miles over muddy roads to reconnoiter the land side of Fort Henry. James and his comrades owned, or were still paying for their steeds, since the army had not yet furnished volunteer cavalry units with horses. They did their best not to take unnecessary risks that would injure their mounts. In the meantime, Grant's infantry divisions were still disembarking.

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Halted on a knoll overlooking the fort below them in a swamp at the edge of the Tennessee River, First Sergeant Parker and their company commander, Captain John R. Hotaling, predicted the rising water would cover the fort within a few days. Captain Hotaling ordered a squad to carry the news to General Grant's chief of staff.

James sat his horse studying the fort while he waited to speak with Captain Hotaling. He thought, *even with slave labor, why would any fool build a fort in a swamp?*

When the order was given, James rode closer and reported in an excited voice to Captain Hotaling. "Sir, there're many tracks leading away from the fort to the east. It looks like hundreds left here this morning since the rains ceased."

The threesome rode about fifty yards together and examined James' discovery. Captain Hotaling said, "Well done, Private Darby! Top, get the men ready to give chase."

First Sergeant Parker gave James a nod, turned his horse, and said to Captain Hotaling, "Yes, sir!" Within two minutes, Parker had the bugler sound "Boots and Saddles."

\* \* \*

With the point squad, James rode ahead of Parker and Hotaling. They tried to gallop at first along Telegraph Road toward Confederate Fort Donelson, some twelve miles ahead and east on the Cumberland River. But after one horse slipped in the deep mud and fell, they slowed to a canter, then a trot.

Near midafternoon, James spotted the mounted rear guard of the Confederates. He and his squad mates opened fire and gave chase. After a running battle of several miles, Captain Hotaling called a halt and the company rounded up Confederate stragglers and marched them back to the Union enclave on the east bank of the Tennessee River, downstream and north from Fort Henry.

\* \* \*

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As early dusk approached that cloudy wintry Wednesday, Allen rode beside James out of earshot of others. He grinned. “You don’t look like the nervous chap me saw last night.”

James sighed. “Thank, God. You were right. I fired a shot and my shakes were gone. I was surprised that I could do anything at all.”

“Not only did you do your duty, you did it extremely well. Keep that up and you won’t be a private for long.”

\* \* \*

Cold torrential rains returned on Thursday morning. Cold coffee and wet bacon did not cheer James. At first light, he ate with trembling hands, surprised that he felt the same butterfly stomach as Tuesday night. James wondered if the bravado bantered between his squad mates was cover for their fears. As he finished his coffee, sounds of the infantry divisions making breakfast grew louder as thousands of soldiers made ready for battle.

Daylight slowly penetrated the gloom and heavy rain. “Boots and Saddles” sounded. Minutes later, Company A mounted and rode out on patrol in the continuing rain to ensure that the infantry did not march into a Confederate ambush. They found nothing and returned to the enclave where the infantry had again delayed its departure.

Upriver a short distance from the enclave, the Navy’s gunboats opened fire on Fort Henry.

“You can count on the Navy. As usual, they’re right on time. So where’s the infantry?” Allen shook his head.

James grinned and shrugged. “I hope the brass will note that the cavalry did its duty before the big guns fired.”

Then came the sound of artillery from Fort Henry responding to barrages from the Navy’s gunboats. James’ butterflies increased in number and activity. The duel between the fort and the gunboats continued for more than an hour, and

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then stopped. James listened for someone who would say why the Navy's assault stopped. For a long moment, it appeared everyone else, including officers, pondered the same question as they glanced from face to face.

Because it was early Thursday afternoon and the infantry still had not marched, Captain Hotaling ordered his company out on patrol again for a fresh reconnaissance. Once underway, James' butterflies left him. The rain stopped before they arrived at the knoll on Telegraph Road above the fort. They looked down at Fort Henry and saw that Confederate Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman had struck his colors. Fort Henry flew a white flag. The men of Company A cheered as their startled horses pranced in the mud and nickered.

Some distance away, James caught Allen's eye and tipped his forage cap. He called out to Allen. "I note and mark your words! Fort Henry is this day a Union post!"

## **Chapter 2**

After celebrating the capture of Fort Henry that Thursday afternoon, February 6, 1862, James sat with Sam Fletcher and Allen on pine branches they had broken from saplings beside the road at the edge of the woods. The branches keep them above the mud. With his head resting on a canvas haversack, Allen was fast asleep, arms folded across his chest and forage cap over his face. James heard horses approaching. Sam glanced toward the horsemen. “Hey, James. There’s Neil Belles with that bunch riding in from the landing. You still wanna hear from the boys who liberated that wretched Negro? Neil was the ring-leader.”

“Yeah, sure.”

They made room for Neil. Sam beckoned and Neil joined them. Sam stood and put a hand on Neil’s shoulder. “You know James, from Sangamon, don’t you?”

“We’ve met.” Neil sank with a sigh.

James sat, cradling his carbine across his lap. He nodded to Neil. “Hello.”

Sam resumed his seat. “James, like us, hasn’t seen slavery close-up. I mentioned to’im about your little adventure week afore last while we were over in Murray, Ken-damned-tucky.”

James was sure he saw Neil shiver before he answered Sam and wondered if it were the cold or the subject. “Oh, that.” Neil sighed again.

Without waiting for a response, Neil began. “I hope you don’t mind if I leave out some nasty details.”

Sam put in, “I already told’im about the after part.”

Neil ignored Sam and continued. “Well, as you might recall, some of us were sleeping in a carpenter’s shed, so’s we could be out of the cold ass rain–like we’re in now.”

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James nodded. "Yes, I remember. My squad was across the way in a stable."

Neil spoke as if he had not heard. He appeared to stare, trance-like, at the heels of his high-top cavalry boots. "We discovered a God-awful stench coming from a little building behind the jail. After a couple of days, me and the boys decided to investigate. We went before sunup and found a Negro man chained to the floor by a metal collar about his neck and another around his waist. The poor creature couldn't move more'n five feet in any direction. He had been there for almost three months, living in his waste, his food thrown through the door at a filthy tin pan..."

Neil's voice trailed off. He remained in his reverie and silent.

Sam and James scanned Neil's face. James said nothing. Sam turned and faced James. "When I returned from picket duty early that morning, Neil and the boys had already busted the poor fellow outta the jail. The deputy sheriff was not happy. The boys washed the Negro and gave him clothes, for he only wore a thin shirt—nothing else."

James shook his head. "What the hell? In this weather?"

"Yes. Then, Neil and the boys took'im to a blacksmith to remove those collars."

"What was his crime?"

"Glad you asked. His misdeed was he had escaped his master."

James shook his head again. "Damn. And we're told this war is about saving the Union..."

Sam's eyes were fixed on the woods across the narrow muddy road. He took a deep breath and interrupted. "I'm worried about our union when the Chief Justice of the United States writes that a Negro has no rights a white man is bound to respect..."



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James did not hear Captain Hotaling approach until he spoke to First Sergeant Parker. “Hey, Top. It’s time to ride. Get me a platoon together. Let’s go reconnoiter toward Fort Donelson. I wanna be back here by dark.”

\* \* \*

“Top, can you count me in for the ride to Donelson?” Slogging through the mud and panting, James caught up with First Sergeant Allen Parker as he rounded up men for the recon mission to Fort Donelson.

With barely a hint of a smile, Allen turned to James. “Private Darby, haven’t you heard that you don’t ever volunteer for anything in this man’s army?” The men in front of Allen laughed. “Anyway, I’ve already got you on my list.”

Allen stepped away from the men and met James, toe to toe. He kept his voice down. “Are you a wantin’ to go so’s you can overcome your butterflies?”

“No, Top. You were right. They go away as soon as any action starts. I wanna go because I think this war is worth fightin’ and I figure I can become good at soldierin’ by watchin’ you and the captain. In short, I want your help to make me a soldier’s soldier—like you.”

Allen took a step back, mud oozing above his ankles, put his hands on his hips, looked James up and down, and gazed for a long moment into James’ eyes. “Lad, that’s a mighty high compliment. I appreciate it. But, lemme tell ya, that ain’t how old soldiers like me and the captain were made. We trained hard and learned everything we could. Then, we went off to war and Molino del Rey happened. We relied on our trainin’ and drillin’ to assault the enemy. We did the best we could, just like others who’d had the same drills—but died in battle. Experience was our best teacher, but even that won’t mean you’ll live to be an old soldier. Me bloody knee gave way and a soldier we called ‘Pops’ at del Ray stopped a bayonet meant for

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me. He had taught me to survive. He was a soldier's soldier—and there he lay dead on a faraway battlefield.” Allen rubbed his stubble and made a deep sigh.

Catching his breath, James stood holding his carbine by its stock, muzzle down, his mouth agape. After a moment, he overcame the awe he felt and stammered, “I-I-I didn't know you and the captain were together at Molino del Rey.”

“Yeah, we passed through hell together.” Allen was looking about. He spotted the bugler and signaled. “Boots and Saddles” sounded crisply through the trees. Men in a nearby infantry company paused to watch the cavalymen scurry for their steeds. Allen paused and studied James' face again. Moving toward his horse, Allen said over his shoulder, “Get mounted. You're riding point.”

James nearly slipped in the mud as he snapped to attention with a toothy grin on his face. “Yes, First Sergeant!”

\* \* \*

A reflection from the tree line on the knoll to the east ahead of James flashed across his eyes. He held up a hand and signaled a halt. He scanned the knoll for movement. Seeing none, he glanced over his shoulder and signaled the four man squad behind him to join on his side of the north flowing creek and form a line. The main body, led by Captain Hotaling, was following them through the woods and had not reached the west bank of the creek.

From the knoll, James heard a sneeze followed by a string of muffled obscenities and the neigh of a horse. James and the squad readied and raised their carbines. He was startled, but was not surprised when elements of Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Forrest's Tennessee and Kentucky Cavalry raised their bloodcurdling rebel yell as they topped the ridge, crashing through the undergrowth among the leafless trees, and twelve Confederate horsemen charged down the slope and into the field

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of cornstalk stubble toward James and the four men beside him. Without hesitation, James shouted, “Right two men! Pick a target! Fire!” Two Confederates fell from their saddles.

“Left two men, fire!” James fired with them and missed his target. He cursed himself for jerking his trigger. Only one more Confederate fell.

Captain Hotaling appeared beside James and without a command, the line behind them doubled. Captain Hotaling glanced back, raised his saber, and ordered, “Charge!”

Following Captain Hotaling, James raced forward and chose a target for his saber. When he met the Confederate, his man ducked and turned his horse. James recovered from his swing and miss, while turning his horse, aware that his back was exposed to a healthy enemy. Once turned about, James saw that a second line of six comrades was charging from the creek into the cornfield, led by First Sergeant Parker. His adversary looked ahead and aft. James saw fright rise in his enemy’s brown eyes as the Confederate was caught between James and the second line closing on him. The man’s hesitation allowed James to reach him with his saber, slicing the back of his coat and hitting an elbow. The man shrieked, turned his horse south and spurred the animal—hard. Before James recovered from his follow-through, the Confederate hacked by Captain Hotaling’s saber galloped past to the south, slumped in his saddle, bleeding profusely from his shoulder and neck.

James took a deep breath and realized, though it was over and the Confederates were fleeing, his heart raced at a rate he could not remember experiencing. His hands trembled.

\* \* \*

The next day at Fort Henry, they took care of their horses and rested. The weather had turned almost spring-like. James was currying Daniel when First Sergeant Parker stopped by. “Me think you’ll keep this under your cap—and, not get the big

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head.” Allen glanced about. “The ol’ man said he’s gonna promote you to corporal in the next batch.”

James stood straight and swallowed. “Thanks, Top.” Allen left, and James thought, *what if I can’t lead men? What if I make a lousy corporal?*

\* \* \*

On Saturday, February 8, 1862, a second day of warmth without rain, Companies A and B of the Second Illinois Cavalry joined two companies from the regular Union Army’s Second and Fourth Cavalry for a reconnaissance in force comprised of almost two-hundred men under the command of Colonel Silas Noble. James noted that they had not encountered enemy pickets though they had advanced to a position almost two miles east of the scene of Thursday’s skirmish and about one mile from Fort Donelson. The recon force rode toward the fort along a road at the top of a ridge with steep ravines to the south and north. From his vantage, about two-hundred feet back from the front of the column, James could see Colonel Noble, ahead, sitting his horse and peering through his field glasses at what James assumed to be Confederate breastworks. If his guess was correct, there should be enemy works along the ridge to their left and rear. His head spun with the thought of Confederates between their recon force and Fort Henry. He thought, *Damn!*

James said, “Sam, could it be that we’re in a trap of our own making?”

“Huh?”

James pointed to his left. “That ridge over there the colonel is studying ought to be where the Secesh would build their outer works.”

Sam craned his neck until he found Colonel Noble. Then, he traced the ridge across the ravine westward with his eyes back to their position. “Damn. You’re right. If I were in the Secesh’s boots, that’s exactly what I’d do.”

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James pointed again, this time to a rocky rise on the opposite ridge. “Look across the hollow to the right o’ that giant oak. I’m guessing there’s Secesh infantry up there and we’ll be hearing from ’em soon—real soon.”

Sam looked worried. “Doggone it, and here we are facing the wrong...”

Shots came from the ravine south and east of them. The sound of galloping horses reached them and James knew from the sound that they had to be outnumbered by enemy cavalry nearly four or five to one. Colonel Noble’s command was relayed. “Fours right! Gallop! March!”

James muttered, “Too late! Dammit!”

Without a command, the regulars of the Second and Fourth US Cavalry formed a line and fired volley after volley into the oncoming Confederate cavalry. The effect was to slow the enemy, but the Confederates recovered and charged up-hill toward the road occupied by James and his comrades. Companies A and B fired volleys.

Above the din, James yelled to Sam, “Cover me while I reload. I’m watching that ridge behind us.”

“Okay!” Sam kept his eyes on the Confederate cavalry and fired again. A horse and rider fell.

Seconds after James had reloaded, he saw a sergeant leading foot soldiers down the slope and through the woods to their rear from Confederate Colonel Adolphus Heiman’s sector. The new threat represented James’ worse nightmare—to have to fight an enemy on two sides of his position.

Captain Hotaling was turning the hundred plus men of Company A for an escape to the west. But, James realized they would have to ride past the Confederate infantrymen racing to cut them off, just as unseen enemy cavalry must be doing simultaneously.

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James reasoned that there was no time to report and ask for orders. He opened fire on the approaching infantrymen. Sam followed, and then others saw the new threat and did the same. Before his next shot, James remembered the words of a sergeant from the Tenth Missouri Sharpshooters, "Shot the enemy's leaders first." James found the Confederate sergeant again almost two-hundred feet away, stopped his horse, aimed, and squeezed his trigger. The Confederate's arms flew outward as he fell backward among the wild grapevines and undergrowth.

James heard Sam say, "Great shot!"

With their leader down, the remaining Confederate infantrymen halted their advance and fired up at the road from behind trees, missing the Union cavalrymen galloping by because they aimed too high. Miniballs zipped overhead. James' chin was barely above Daniel's mane as he galloped westward. The regulars brought up the rear. Three miles on, the Confederate cavalry gave up the chase as the better-mounted Union cavalry slipped further ahead.

\* \* \*

At first dark, exhausted and hungry, Company A and the recon force arrived back at Fort Henry. After taking care of their horses, the soldiers of Company A dined on roasted wild boar, shot by their mess man while they patrolled. When they gathered to eat, Captain Hotaling banged his metal cup with a spoon. "Men, let me commend you on your fine patrolling today. Though it became necessary to depart the area of Fort Donelson in a bit of haste, ours was a job well done." The soldiers laughed. Smiling, Captain Hotaling continued, "We didn't lose a man, except Frank Hatch, who was captured when his horse went lame. We owe a debt of gratitude to one young man who correctly anticipated enemy infantry action and with a single shot, stopped their advance. Thank you, Sergeant James

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Darby. Yes, I'm making his a brevet promotion, right now, skipping corporal."

Allen and Sam led the applause and cheers. "Hip, hip, hooray! Hip, hip, hooray!" then, they sang, "For he's a jolly good fellow." James sat red-faced and smiling.

\* \* \*

Reconnoitering to the front and flanks for General Grant's infantry divisions, Companies A and B of the Second Illinois Cavalry and the two regulars rode in spring-like weather on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 11 and 12, 1862, from Fort Henry to the vicinity of Fort Donelson. James' butterflies were fluttering away on Tuesday morning at breakfast, and had left him at about the time he swung himself into his saddle. The march was routine and uneventful. By Wednesday afternoon, Second Illinois was assigned to patrol for General McClelland's division on the extreme right side of the Union Army's lines surrounding the landside of Fort Donelson and the small town of Dover.

Thursday brought light rain and a cold wind from the northwest. At first dark, the temperature hovered around freezing. Though James, Allen, Sam, and their comrades were behind their infantry, they still could not risk building a fire, lest they make a target for Confederate artillery. Instead of a pinch of tobacco, James held a piece of hardtack in his cheek to soften it with salvia before risking his teeth attempting to bite it. He said to Allen, "I wonder whether the idea was to make hardtack this hard so's it would survive wet weather like this, or was it insects they had in mind?"

"Well, there's no doubt in me mind, it'll stand up to either."

Sam called, "Hey fellows, watch me!" He staggered into position, his face skyward, tongue out, and caught a snowflake amid the raindrops pelting him. With a satisfied smile, he announced, "There. I've caught the first snowflake."

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Allen was not impressed. “Humph! Bully for you. Why don’t cha catch the rest of ’em? Me sure as hell don’t need ’em!”

James laughed and almost lost his hardtack, the last of the rations he drew back at Fort Henry. Minutes later, all the raindrops became snowflakes. Then, he thought, *this isn’t funny anymore and, dammit, I feel even colder just looking at snow*. “Boys, it looks like we’re in a pickle. Too bad we can’t call off the war until winter is over—or, have our elders learn to settle their disagreements without war.”

Allen rolled his eyes. “Yeah, that’ll be the day. Soldiers like us will always be in demand. I predict there’ll be wars on Earth so long as man survives.”

Sam sighed. “Amen.”

James nodded solemnly. “Top, I fear your wisdom is right.”

Just before midnight, they took their restless and hungry horses to the rear looking for forage. Snow fell unabated. Finding nothing to feed their horses, they used a farmer’s rail fence for fuel and made a fire trying to warm themselves. James slept about three hours on branches of pine saplings under a lean-to he constructed with Sam from sticks and pine branches. His last thought before sleep overtook him was, *I wonder whether Pearl got my Valentine’s Day letter already*.

\* \* \*

Before sunrise on Friday, February 14, James and his comrades were back reconnoitering along McClernand’s lines while the cold infantrymen, also without tents, waited for the Navy to strike. Company A’s cheers went up when the gunboat attack began in midafternoon and caused James to mostly forget the cold weather and snow underfoot. That was their last cheer. For the rest of the duel of big guns between the gunboats and the fort, it was the Confederates whose cheers echoed over the hills and through the hollows around Fort Donelson and Dover. The Confederate celebration continued for some time after the



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big guns were silent. Though the Union cavalrymen and infantrymen could not see the duel, from the sounds they knew the results of the engagement immediately. James felt dejected and thought *this ain't Fort Henry. We'd best get ready for a long siege.*

As Friday drew to a close, Captain Hotaling met with his lieutenants and sergeants to review their observations from a day of reconnoitering. James listened as Captain Hotaling added each man's report to his own observations and concluded that the Confederates, for some unknown reason, were moving many soldiers and strengthening the left side of their line, facing southeast, in front of McClelland's infantrymen. Allen spoke quietly, "For the life of me, I don't know why, but it looks to me like the Secesh wanna breakout and make a run for it down toward Nashville."

Captain Hotaling nodded emphatically. "Top, that's what I think, too. If I were in their shoes, I'd do my utmost to defeat us here, or make General Grant pay dearly for a victory. This place is our doorway into West Tennessee and Mississippi. If the Secesh win here, we're headed for a stalemate. Never mind my Secesh logic; it looks to me like you're right." He paused for comments while looking about. James met Captain Hotaling's eyes as they settled on his. Hotaling pointed to James. "Sergeant Darby, go find Colonel Babcock. Report our findings and ask him to come to our position while we still have some daylight left. Our right side needs reinforcements tonight."

"Yes, sir. Er, sir, who is Colonel Babcock?"

"Oh, I forgot. You haven't met him. Colonel Babcock is General Grant's chief of staff."

James' butterflies stirred.

\* \* \*

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James returned with Colonel Babcock at first dark. The colonel listened as Captain Hotaling pointed out where the shifts in Confederate infantrymen had occurred. Babcock promised to report the matter to General Grant. But no reinforcements arrived that cold night. A heavy snow fell. Their horses went another night without forage.

\* \* \*

Around nine o'clock on Saturday morning, Lieutenants Bennett and Jackson led most of the company about two miles back toward the Tennessee River in another vain search for forage. During their return toward the center of the Union line, James heard intense and sustained fire from rifles and artillery coming from the right side. Allen and James exchanged knowing glances, and with the rest of the company they turned their famished horses, and raced to the extreme right.

They discovered that the Confederates had pushed McClellan's division about a half mile back from their original position. The Union infantrymen were in disarray, but to James' dismay and relief, he saw the rear—not front—of a large body of Confederate cavalry leaving the field instead of pursuing McClellan's beaten troops. James said to Allen, "Not that I'm one to invite havoc upon myself, but why is the enemy turning away when they have clearly won the day?"

"Incredibly stupid decisions get made on battlefields by officers who should know better or because they're too sure of themselves. The result is usually the same—disaster. This blunder could mean the Secesh are snatching defeat from the jaws of victory."

James laughed as they watched the Confederates retire behind their original works. "We gave them this victory on a platter by our inaction last night."

"Like me says, incredibly stupid decisions get made—by both sides. Look at the dead and wounded littering the field."

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Allen sucked his teeth. “The same damned thing happens in every war.”

“The stupid ass decisions that led to this inane war are the real source of our troubles.”

Allen stopped and looked at James for a long moment. “For a young man, you have unusually great insight, Sergeant Darby.”

\* \* \*

Sam shook James by his boot. “James, wake up! You ain’t gonna believe your eyes. This you gotta see!”

Bleary eyed, James crawled from their lean-to that Sunday morning. “Samuel Fletcher, this had better be damned good or I’m going to hafta kick your ass. You know I had picket duty in the middle of the night.”

Smiling broadly, Sam made a sweeping open palm gesture from James’ chest to the direction of Fort Donelson as if introducing him. Sam said nothing.

James stood with slack jaw gazing at the white flags flying above the Confederate works and the fort beyond. Presently, he exclaimed, “Wake me at any hour for a sight like this!”

\* \* \*

Daniel slept where he stood beside Sam’s horse at the land end of a wharf in Dover on the Cumberland River. James and Sam sat on the wharf with their feet hanging off the edge in stocking feet while both wrote letters. James wrote:

Wednesday, February 20, 1862

Dearest Pearl,

By now you must have seen the newspapers and no longer have to ask me, “Who is this General Grant?”

By the end of the week, he’ll be the most famous general in the country. He was great. The general returned to the field from a morning meeting aboard one of our wrecked gunboats to find the Secesh on the verge of victory. Right away, he ordered General McClelland to resupply with ammo and counterattack on the right. Then, sensing that the Secesh had only a thin line on our left, he rode personally over there and ordered General Smith to assault the

## *Bob Rogers*

works in front of his troops before the Secesh had time to redeploy. He rode along encouraging us soldiers as he went, telling us not to let the enemy escape. That night, we slept within the Secesh's works!

When the Secesh General Buckner asked for an armistice to discuss terms, our man replied, "No terms except an unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted." We're already calling him "General Unconditional Surrender Grant!" Me and the boys are happy to stand with General Grant and Mr. Lincoln to free the Africans among us, though Mr. Lincoln won't let it be known yet that that's why we're in this war.

Perhaps, with more generals like Grant, Mr. Lincoln can put the Union back together again real soon. Then, we can get married and live in peace by a river someplace as you dreamed.

With everlasting love,  
James

### Chapter 3

“Halt! Who goes there?” As James waited for a reply, he felt the hair on his neck rise. He was sure he heard a twig snap. Clutching his carbine, James guessed the time to be half past two. A small gray cloud hid the Moon, making it nearly pitch black. Sam stirred and slowly sat up.

More insistent, James repeated, “Halt! Who goes there?”

No reply. The cloud passed from the face of the Moon. James’ heart pounded, for two eyes shone in the moonlight through a bush still wet from the rain and less than twenty feet away. That Friday night, February 21, 1862 was cold at Metal Landing on the Tennessee River. Nonetheless, James felt perspiration trickle from both armpits. Sam was now crouched shoulder to shoulder beside James with his carbine pointed in the same direction as James’. They shared a small depression they had dug in the damp ground for picket duty.

Sam whispered, “What’re you going to do?”

James thought, *I have no idea. But I’d better think of something fast. Those eyes are closer than the snapping twig.* James whispered, “Cover me. I’ma fire.”

Sam nodded. “Okay.”

The sharp crack of James’ carbine echoed through the forest. He cursed himself for jerking his trigger. His shot was high. The eyes charged, crashing forward through the underbrush. The startled perpetrator ran between James and Sam, knocking them aside. James held onto his carbine. Sam’s was knocked from his hands. Both men landed on their backs. James sprang up and sat on his butt in time to glimpse moonlight glistening off a rapidly receding shiny black coat of fur.

*Bob Rogers*

Reflexively, James snapped his carbine to his shoulder. Then, he realized he could not fire toward their camp. Slowly, he lowered his weapon. Sam was laughing uproariously as he rolled onto his knees and staggered to his feet.

James was incredulous. “What’s so damned funny about a Secesh knocking us on our asses? I need to run and report this to the captain.”

Sam grabbed James’ sleeve. “Not so fast. I never met a Secesh, or any other unwashed soldier, who smelled like a bear.”

“What?”

“You heard me. That was a Secesh bear!”

First Sergeant Allen Parker arrived in time to hear Sam and joined the laughter.

\* \* \*

On Saturday morning, James and Sam stood by the company’s cook fire on the east side of a crude log hut holding thick bacon over the flames with bayonets. Allen passed and remarked, “Enjoy your bacon. That may be the last meat you’ll see for a while.”

James made a grim smile. “I guess I shouldn’t have missed my shot at that bear last night.” Tilting his head to one side, he continued. “Say, isn’t it a tad early for bears to be outta bed? It ain’t spring yet.”

Allen almost kept a straight face. “Remind me to send all the damn bears an almanac next fall so’s they can properly set their clocks.”

James and the men around the fire guffawed.

After a long minute, Sam was still holding his side with one hand and his bayoneted bacon in the other. “I don’t know about early rising, but that bear and all the rabbits, deer, raccoons, and the rest of the critters in this neck of woods have mo’ sense than

## *Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

our whole company. They know to skedaddle when the water rises.”

Allen pointed to Sam. “Now, that’s exactly right. Critters know when to leave. But here we sit like fools watching the water rise by the hour.”

James did not look away from his bacon, dripping grease into the fire. “Yeah, Top. Our horses are already standing in water. So when are we leaving? Or do we get to wait and float outta here on the logs of this hut?”

\* \* \*

Monday, March 31, 1862

My dear Pearl,

Thank you for your wonderful Valentine poem. I have read it many times. I still read it every day.

Please forgive me for not writing for a spell. As you see, I’m writing on my birthday. We have been moving about and I’m still not allowed to tell you where I am. Mail has been spotty. I received three of your letters the day we arrived at a certain large encampment in Tennessee. Getting here was an ordeal. The first place we were sent flooded. I thought it was bad news when we had to stop setting out pickets. After a few days, there was not space enough for both the men and horses to stand on dry land. The horses had to stand in water. Captain Hotaling didn’t wait for orders. He and Top began hailing every boat that passed. When we were down to a space of only twenty by fifty feet of land for the whole company, and after four days of hailing, we were rescued by a steamboat captain who transported us and our horses.

Thank you for sending the articles rumoring a second star and promotion for General Grant. I’ll tell you, out here with the men, he is a star. All of us were very happy when he actually got his second star.

Please thank Arthur and our classmates for sending greetings ahead of my birthday. Sometimes, I wondered if I’d live to see twenty. But not anymore. Now, I’m confident that I’ll be around long after the close of this war.

Your love sustains me. Thank you for all you do. Hope you like the enclosed Tennessee daisy.

With all my love,  
James

\* \* \*

James carefully folded his letter to Pearl and put it in his pocket. From his leather-bound combination toilet and writing kit, he withdrew a soap brush and his black-handled folding

straight razor. Into a small amount of warm water scooped with his tin drinking cup from the company cook's kettle, he dropped a small piece of Gossage brand mottled soap. Briefly, he reflected on his deceased father who knew William Gossage, the soap manufacturer, in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, and Aunt Susan who sent him the soap. With the soap brush, he briskly rubbed and swished the soap, creating sudsy foam which he applied with the brush to the stubble on his face and neck.

Satisfied with the fresh smoothness of his face, James set out with Sam for the sutler's tent at Pittsburg Landing, almost two miles from their bivouac, to purchase envelopes and mail his letter. While Daniel carried James back to their company camp at a walk, James mused aloud, "Sam, there must be troops camped damn nigh three to four miles deep from the landing. How many do you suppose have been in battle?"

Sam turned his head slowly from side to side, scanning the tent cities in the forest that were the many regiments that made up Grant's six divisions. "I hadn't given that much thought. But, now that you mention it, I'd say less than half have been fired on."

A long pause ensued. Daniel and Sam's horse appeared to be in step, like soldiers marching. Presently, James removed his forage cap and ran his fingers through his brown hair, front to back, like a comb. Then, he sighed. "Suppose—now mind you, just suppose—the Secesh decide not to cooperate and wait down at Corinth for us to slowly gather four more divisions from Ohio and attack them at our leisure."

"What're you thinking? Johnny Reb could come and hit us here?"

"Yep. It seems to make sense. Why wait until we outnumber them by even more and march on their prized railhead? Why not blast your enemy before he can lay waste to you?"



## *Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

“Why, sure. That makes sense. I guess I would, too. Do you think they will come, I mean the Secesh?”

“Oh, I don’t know. Look at the way we’re camping here—spread about and without entrenchment. It’s clear that General Grant doesn’t think so. Though we’ve reconnoitered to within sight of Corinth, the general has far more information than us. So I’ll keep faith with him.

“You know what? We’d best get on back. I’d hate to be late for the grand review General Grant is putting on in honor of my birthday.” James nudged Daniel into a trot.

Sam laughed. “Yes, I know what! Birthday boy, you’ve lost your marbles!”

\* \* \*

The rains ceased during the night and the morning was fair. Allen was combing his horse’s mane when James and Sam arrived at their makeshift corral that Sunday morning, April 6, 1862. James called out as they closed in on Allen. “Hey, Top. Me, Sam, and a few boys are going to visit some homies in the Twelfth Infantry after breakfast. Wanna go with us?”

“Sure lads, I got me no special plans.”

Unhurried, they bantered and laughed as they ate. Still grinning from the last joke, James pushed his last chunk of bacon into his mouth and stood to catch up to comrades heading for the Twelfth’s bivouac area.

Suddenly, James stopped chewing. Everyone froze. James heard sustained gunfire that sounded in volleys. Silently, they looked at each other. In a split second, First Sergeant Allen Parker took charge. “That’d be the Rebels! To the horses, lads! Get mounted!”

The din of more volleys was heard from various directions as they ran to the company’s corral. And then, their comrade, J. L. Padgett, sounded “Boots and Saddles.” Minutes later, James

and all of Companies A and B were galloping behind Captain Hotaling and First Sergeant Parker toward Shiloh Church.

Abruptly, the gunfire ended. Captain Hotaling halted the companies and formed a line. He held the line in place and waited. James felt a butterfly flutter near his bacon. James knew Hotaling was listening for more gunfire to determine where his cavalry could best help the infantry. James squirmed on his saddle and cursed his body for trembling. Ahead, he saw a black snake racing for the cover of underbrush.

Startled, James turned toward the sound of approaching hoof beats. A small group of horsemen arrived and went straight to Captain Hotaling. The leader's campaign hat bore a yellow braided cord about the base of the crown and he wore shoulder boards bearing two stars. His dark-blue saddle blanket, with a double yellow border, also bore two stars in its lower rear corner. James and Sam exchanged smiling glances.

Captain Hotaling held his salute. "Good morning, General Grant."

Grant returned the salute and, with the same hand, removed a cigar from his clinched teeth. "Captain Hotaling, I detail you on to my staff today. I want you to take charge of the Tenth Missouri Sharpshooters. Place them and fight them."

"Yes, sir!"

General Grant turned to Lieutenant Bennett. "I want you to take Company A and go with as much dispatch as possible to Crump's Landing. Present my compliments to General Lew Wallace and tell him to bring his division here immediately, you being the escort."

"Yes, sir!"

Before Lieutenant Bennett and General Grant exchanged salutes, James and Allen had turned their horses about. Allen ordered the company into a column of twos and they were off, Bennett galloping to catch up.

## *Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

James rode beside Allen at the head of the column. Once on River Road, Daniel skidded into Allen's horse, causing it to nearly lose its footing. The road was a deep, muddy, and rutted way from the recent heavy rains and horse traffic. To remain mounted, James held his saddle horn and leaned from side to side or to and fro. Without a command, the company slowed their steeds to a trot—and where deep water stood, they let their horses set the pace. They had traveled only half a mile when James heard heavy rifle and artillery fire resume behind them. The lull was over. The firing was unrelenting. He looked at Allen, who shrugged.

James pointed over his shoulder with a thumb toward the battlefield. "I've never heard that much gunfire in my life."

After a minute, Allen said, "This much sustained fire is more'n I experienced at Molino del Rey. Me thinks much dying is going on back there."

Lieutenant Bennett joined. "That's all the more reason for us to ride, as the general told us, with as much dispatch as possible. I sense our guys need General Wallace's division as fast as we can deliver General Grant's order."

James and Allen increased their pace, but were compelled to slow again in the mud after leaving the bridge over Snake Creek. They moved not much faster than a man on foot in mud, covering the six miles to Crump's Landing in a little more than three hours. The company arrived at General Wallace's headquarters around noon and found him waiting for orders. He already had his division ready to march.

General Wallace ordered one of his brigades to take the point, leaving Lieutenant Bennett and Company A to act as the rear guard instead of escort as General Grant directed. James, Allen, and Bennett glanced at each other. Allen spoke what each was thinking. "This is ass-backwards. But, as I always

say, incredibly stupid decisions get made in war by people who should know better.”

James shook his head. “The big problem is good men die because of somebody’s stupid mistake.”

Lieutenant Bennett ignored the criticisms aimed at officers. He dismounted. “Top, have the men dismount, eat, and rest our horses while General Wallace’s brigades march past us. Then, we’ll be their rear guard.”

\* \* \*

“Top, you’re not going to believe what I see! The head of the column is coming toward us!”

Allen craned his neck in vain to see past the unit in front of them. “James, surely you jest! What the bloody hell?”

“I wish.”

Two minutes later, still shaking his head, Lieutenant Bennett called a halt. “Let’s get off the road and give our horses a break here in this cornfield. Let General Wallace’s men have the whole road to slog past us again.”

Standing amid the stubble left from the previous year’s corn crop, Daniel nibbled at the three-inch nub of a brown cornstalk. James held his forage cap under his arm and scratched his head. “Top, instead of spending hours marching in a circle, why do you suppose General Wallace didn’t order the men to simply face about and march back to River Road?”

Allen sighed deeply. “James, I already told you...”

James laughed and held up a hand. “Okay, okay. I know.”

Bennett chuckled and repeated in unison with James: “Incredibly stupid decisions get made in war by people who should know better!”

Allen slapped his thigh. “Lads, move to the head of the class.” Unsmiling, he folded his arms and looked to the south where the battle raged. “This is no laughing matter. How many lives will be lost because this column took the wrong bloody

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road? Me thinks we're screwed! I tell you, the only way the Secesh can lose this battle is by making more stupid mistakes than we make."

\* \* \*

When Company A crossed the bridge over Snake Creek and reentered the Pittsburg Landing battlefield on the heels of General Wallace's last brigade, a waiting Tenth Missouri Sharpshooter corporal called out. "Sir, are you Lieutenant Bennett?"

"I am."

"Sir, Captain Hotaling sends his compliments and asks that you and yo' company follow me to his position at once."

The sun was low in the west and the din of musket and artillery fire heard when they departed in the morning had ceased. James thought *this is a ride back into hell*. Fouling admiration of the spring's new light-green foliage and perfume of blossoming wildflowers was the haze and smell of blue smoke from gunpowder and the blood of wounded and dying men, horses, and mules littering the fields and edges of woods as far as James could see. He tried for a moment to ignore the scene before him, but could not, for the moans and cries of the wounded seared indelibly into his brain. He felt a chill, though weather on the first Sunday in April 1862 was agreeably pleasant. James recalled his first smell of blood was that of a hog his father butchered; he found the smell of human blood indistinguishable from that of pigs and horses. He thought, *this carnage is only going to be worse before it ends—whenever that is*.

They plodded along, wading through a crush of humanity in blue and horses going to and fro in near panic. Limericks and artillery pieces drawn by teams of six horses or mules sped across their way appearing to have some specific place to be as dazed individual soldiers stumbling and wandering about

moved aside to avoid Company A's horses. James noted that a cannoneer rode on each of the three left horses in a set. At length, they found Captain Hotaling with the Tenth Missouri Sharpshooters felling trees in a hurried attempt to create a breastwork on the south slope of a hill above the steep banks of Dill Branch and the swampy hollow through which it flowed. Backflow from the swollen Tennessee River, less than a mile away as the crow flies, had raised the water level in the Dill. Captain Hotaling quickly explained that the mission was simple. Prevent the Confederates from crossing Dill Branch and overrunning batteries D and K of the First Illinois Light Artillery, led by Captain Stone, and First Missouri Light Artillery, led by Captain McAllister. With the loss of any more ground and the artillery pieces, the Union would suffer a crushing and far-reaching defeat. With infantry help, the two batteries had turned back an assault by Confederate General J. R. Chambers' brigade when his men swarmed down the bank on the opposite side of the hollow shortly after five o'clock—just two hours prior to the arrival of Company A.

James pointed to the northwest. "Hey Top, if this our new front, looks like we've lost all those division camps three and four miles out—each and every one in less than a day. By God, we're nearly on the banks of the river."

Allen sighed. "Yes, all done been lost."

Sam put an axe on his shoulder. "Is all lost?"

Allen straightened to his full height. "No. I mean we've suffered big losses; including dead, wounded, and just as bad, skedaddlers. The question to ask is, is our little company, General Wallace's division and General Buell's fresh troops too little too late?"

In the waning daylight, James swung his axe again. He pulled it from the tree and chips fell. "Top, do you think the Secesh will attack again tonight?"

## *Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

“Me think not. And, if they come, we’ll be better prepared than we were this mornin’—and, they know that.”

\* \* \*

Groans and pleas for help came from the wounded Confederate infantrymen who were shot down trying to climb the steep north bank of Dill Branch. A strong storm arrived early Sunday evening and added to the misery of everyone. James was soaked, cold, and hungry. The rain ceased around three o’clock Monday morning. While not on picket duty and after the rain stopped, he slept fitfully propped against two trees he and Sam had cut down.

With only a breakfast of hardtack shared by a company of Thirty-sixth Indiana Infantrymen, who were reinforcements fresh off a steamboat, James and Company A sallied forth at six o’clock. They marched as guardians of Captain Stone’s battery, which was in support of General John A. McClernand’s new division of stragglers and broken units. By midday, in seesaw attacks and counterattacks, the Union line of divisions and brigades had regained most of the ground lost the day before. On a field a mile south and east of Shiloh Church, which was fought over three times, inch by inch, James saw one of Confederate General Braxton Bragg’s batteries stand their ground and fire until the batteries of Stone and McAllister had damaged every gun and all their horses and mules were killed. Shortly after three o’clock, the Confederate commanding general, P. G. T. Beauregard ordered his divisions to retire to Corinth.

James could hear birds again. He looked about at the field littered with dead and wounded men, horses, and mules. He said to Sam in a low and somber tone, “The only way to describe what happened here is to call it a slaughter—a mutual slaughter.”

*Bob Rogers*

Sam pointed about. "One could walk from where we're standing in several directions for more than five to six-hundred feet and step only on the bodies of men."

James sighed and realized the stench of the dead was increasing by the hour. "We must find some way short of this to settle differences..."

\* \* \*

On Tuesday morning, Company A rode with several other Illinois and Ohio cavalry units to support General Sherman's reconnaissance in force with an infantry brigade. They passed burial details digging graves. The horses and mules were being burned where they lay.

James asked, "Top, are we going out to run down the Secesh?"

"We can't do that. General Grant's boss told him to stay put."

"So why are we out here?"

"Me thinks General Grant wants to know for sure if the Secesh are gone and not out here somewheres a lickin' their wounds and gettin' ready for another attack."

About five or six miles into their march along Ridge Road, they came to an old cotton field partially littered with fallen trees. Beyond the fallen timber stood a Confederate hospital comprised of several tents. They spotted Confederate Colonel Forrest's cavalry and formed a battle line. No sooner was the line formed and infantry skirmishers sent out, Forrest ordered a charge. His men charged from a small hollow beyond the timber shattering the quiet with the rebel yell, firing pistols, shotguns, and some welded sabers.

Daniel was wounded by a shot from a pistol at close range. He staggered, but held his ground. The order came to volley and retreat. James fired and pulled Daniel's reins to turn and fall back. Daniel stumbled and wavered, losing precious



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seconds. As Daniel went down, James ducked a viciously swung saber and got both feet out of his stirrups before he hit the ground. On contact with the ground, James twisted his right ankle, but hobbled to his feet and attempted to join the infantrymen. He tripped over a tree limb and fell.

Down on his hands and knees and in great pain, James crawled toward the infantrymen. He stopped when he saw that they were being shot or captured by Forrest's men. Suddenly, a familiar horse stopped beside him. Allen Parker leapt to the ground, grabbed James' collar with his left hand and James' belt in back with his other hand. Allen swung James onto his horse in one motion. Forrest's men were swarming and firing at anything blue that moved.

In the distance, James heard Lieutenant Bennett order, "Rally, Company A." He knew they would, turnabout, fire a volley, and countercharge Forrest's cavalry without consulting or asking for orders. Meanwhile, Allen hopped onto his horse behind James. His horse leapt forward and in a few steps was galloping. Company A fired a volley and charged. The Confederates did not stand and wait. They turned and fled past James and Allen traveling the opposite direction. Several Confederates fired pistols over their shoulders at the chasing Company A. One bullet struck Allen between his shoulder blades. Allen's grip about James' waist went slack and he fell from his horse. James turned the horse about as his comrades passed, chasing the Confederates.

On the ground, James tried in vain to stop Allen's bleeding. Allen groaned and protested. "Ol' chap, it's no use. It's over for me."

"Don't talk like that! You can't go. You're my teacher. Besides, I owe you my life."

*Bob Rogers*

Allen's voice was a hoarse whisper. "Thanks." He coughed. "Me thinks you no longer need a teacher." He coughed again. "Pass on what you've learned."

James sniffed. "But I'm not the soldier you are. I have nothing to pass on."

"You're a lad no more." Allen's pause was long as he fought to breathe. "You're already a fine soldier..." Allen spoke no more.

"Sarge, don't go... Sarge? Sarge?"

James slowly realized that Allen was gone—had sacrificed his life for him. He closed Allen's eyes. James sat in the muddy cotton field with his mentor's head on his lap. Allen's horse walked closer and nudged Allen's ribs.

James patted the horse's muzzle. With his dirty yellow gauntlet, James wiped a tear from his cheek. "We'll both miss him."

*Sacrifice at Shiloh Church*

**Partial List of Nonfiction Characters Appearing in  
*Sacrifice at Shiloh Church***

Babcock, Orville E.,	Colonel, US Army
*Beauregard, P.G.T.,	Lieutenant General, CS Army
Belles, Neil,	Private, US Army
Bennett, ____,	Lieutenant, US Army
Bragg, Braxton,	Major General, CS Army
Chambers, J.R.,	Brigadier General, CS Army
Grant, Ulysses S.,	Major General, US Army
Gossage, William,	England-based Soap Manufacturer
Fletcher, Sam,	Private, US Army
Forrest, Nathan,	Lieutenant Colonel, CS Army
Hatch, Frank,	Private, US Army
Heiman, Adolphus,	Colonel, CS Army
Hotaling, John R.,	Captain, US Army
McClelland, John A.,	Brigadier General, US Army
Noble, Silas,	Colonel, US Army
Tilghman, Lloyd,	Brigadier General, CS Army
Wallace, Lew,	Brigadier General, US Army (Author of <i>Ben Hur</i> )

\*Also appears in the novel, *First Dark*.

## You may also like...

This book is a prequel to Bob Rogers' highly acclaimed [\*First Dark: A Buffalo Soldier's Story\*](#). Follow James Darby in action in *First Dark* as he joins historic Civil War Union Army cavalry legend Colonel Benjamin Grierson. Englishman James Darby and his friend, former slave Isaac Rice, come of age as they live action-filled lives and find wives on the Western Frontier in the 1870s.

*First Dark* is a character-driven historically correct nineteenth century coming of age quest for seven teenagers. In an epic journey, the central character, Isaac Rice, a young ex-slave and Buffalo Soldier, struggles to overcome bitter family losses, enemies, and forces of nature. High adventures await Isaac and James, their friends, and enemies amid the violence of the American Civil War, Indian Wars, Reconstruction, and spillover bloodshed from a Mexican Revolution.

“The Gripping saga of Isaac Rice is a hero’s journey. [Don’t] be surprised if *First Dark* ends up as a popular movie. It’s also a darn good read.”

-- *Baltimore Post-Examiner*

You may also like Rogers' [\*The Laced Chameleon\*](#), a full-length detective novel set in 1862 New Orleans and is also a prequel to *First Dark*. New Orleans native Francesca Dumas is a quadroon courted by moneyed white men. She leads a sheltered life of elegant gowns and lavish balls until a bullet shatters her dream world. Francesca is [\*The Laced Chameleon\*](#). While awaiting arrival of the Union Navy atop a Mississippi River levee April 25, 1862, Francesca’s lover is shot dead. Rain soaked and bloodstained Francesca vows revenge. Conundrums confront Francesca: solve her identity crisis,

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succeed as a spy, find and defeat a three-time murderer. In 1871, she appears in [\*\*\*First Dark\*\*\*](#).

Both novels are available as print books and as “native” e-books for Kindle, iPad, iPhone, Kobo, Nook, Sony, and other popular ereaders.

Follow the links to discover purchase options.

*Bob Rogers*