

*S. F. ATWELL.*

41

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 Note: correct spelling is

ATWILL

**S. F. ATWELL,**

OF WESTMORELAND COUNTY, VA.; CORPORAL, CO. "A," CORPS OF CADETS.

Cadet S. F. ATWELL was a native of Westmoreland County, Virginia, his father living near Montrose. On the 20th of May, 1862, when in his seventeenth year, he became a cadet. In his college-life the record is excellent. At the end of his fourth class-year he had attained honorable standing in his studies, and for his soldierly qualities was appointed fourth corporal in Co. "A." Of his private character, a room-mate and friend says, "He was a consistent member of the Episcopal Church, and I can bear testimony that he exerted himself continually to impress the truth of the doctrines of Christianity upon his companions. I well recollect his zealous efforts to repress profanity amongst us."

Only those who remember the utter recklessness as to religion of the greater number of the corps during the war, when foolish boys high-strung with the excitement of the times imitated the vices of camp without imitating its virtues, can appreciate the moral force and courage requisite to assume the stand of young ATWELL, to lead the life of godliness, and to be esteemed a manly Christian by his companions. Within a week from the close of his second year, in May, 1864, the cadets were ordered to join General Breckinridge at Staunton. Before daybreak on Wednesday, the 11th, preparations were being made to leave the Institute, and when, after an early breakfast, the corps filed out of the Virginia Military Institute grounds, it is no special praise to say that ATWELL'S heart beat high at the prospect of serving his country. Every young heart there went forth to battle not only willingly, but gladly. The writer now, ten years after, recalls it vividly as the most joyous moment of his life, and the impression that so felt all the boys. As we passed along the road to Staunton this feeling showed itself in snatches of song shouted out merrily

along the column, more frequently the whole battalion joining in whistling "Rosser's Quickstep," then a favorite among us. Little we anticipated that in a few hours some of our comrades would lay dead on the field of battle; that others, in terrible suffering from deadly wounds, would be longing for death as a relief.

Such was the sad fate of the subject of this memoir. Arrived at the little village of New Market, in Shenandoah County, on Sunday morning, the 15th, the cadets were carried into battle about noon. Held in reserve until about two o'clock, it then became necessary that they should be ordered into the thick of the fight. Of this battle, its results and the casualties, a full account has been given. Among the wounded was ATWELL, struck in the calf of the leg; his wound was considered severe, though not dangerous. Being removed to Staunton, he had almost gotten well, when he was attacked with lockjaw, and died in the most excruciating agony. His pain was so intense that he could not touch the bed without a groan of agony, and death came to him as a blessed relief.

A true soldier of his mother-country, an earnest child of Jesus, he laid down his life for the cause, and gained life immortal in the company of the Master, whose blessed name he had tried to defend while on earth.

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