


***JAMES CARSON
ELLIOTT***



***THE SOUTHERN
SOLDIER BOY:
A THOUSAND
SHOTS FOR
THE CONFEDERACY***

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James Carson Elliott

The Southern Soldier Boy: A Thousand Shots for the Confederacy

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PREFACE.

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A readable book should instruct, entertain and amuse. The author, outside of the historical interest of this little book, has aimed to cover a broad-enough field for all classes of readers to find some nourishing food—at least in the way of variety and shifting scenes—from the standpoint of a young private.

And in order to understand his viewpoint, a brief sketch of the author is admissible. Born in Cleveland County, N. C., about midway between Charlotte and Asheville, July 12, 1845. His father, a small slaveholder and a farmer, he was brought up to work on the farm and was well practiced in the use of firearms, and was well seasoned in the fox-chase and hunting sports. His father was an ardent Whig, and they got their political inspiration from William G. Brownlow's Knoxville, Tenn., Whig. (See Brownlow's and Pryneis' debate on Negro slavery.) Brownlow proved conclusively that slavery was of Divine origin; that it had always existed and always would exist, because the Bible said, "The heathen you buy with your money shall never go free, but shall be an inheritance to you and your children forever." But when hostilities began, Brownlow sided with the Union and was the War Governor of Tennessee. The war spirit ran high in our section and all the boys were eager to take a hand in the fun of chasing the invaders out of our country. The first Manassas battle started them back the way our *smart men* said they would go. And I thought the fun would all be over before I would have a chance to share in the glory. But they

kept coming in larger swarms. After I had organized and drilled with the Home Guards, I saw there was still a prospect to get to the front in time to take a hand. Two years had dragged along, the battle of Gettysburg had turned the scale, more than half of my early in friends had been knocked out when I entered the army for a three-years' term at the age of 18 years. We had understood at the first that we must fight three to one, but to whip that many Yankees was not thought to be much of a job; but when I waded in, it was quite evident that we must fight five to one. But we still thought they must be whipped, all the same. The numbers come up to our expectations, but we were sadly deceived in their fighting qualities. When they first came our climate did not agree with them, but the longer they stayed the harder they were to persuade away; and they finally worried us out, until we had to let them alone; and after staying with us awhile we learned they are as good as we are. From a distance, they are inclined to view us with a critic's eye, as through a glass darkly; but when they come down and bring their washing, they get a clearer view. Then, and not until then, the veil is removed away, and all our problems stand revealed in open day. Progress comes through evolution and revolution; where moral forces lag physical force compels the way. The only issue now is in patriotic rivalry of the sections. The heritage of one is the property of all.

"Oh! carry me back to old Virginia," "The old Kentucky home," "Carolina," "Oh, for Carolina," "Away down in Georgia," "On the Sewanee River," etc., are refrains not equaled in the more frigid region. Then we have "Dixie,"

covering the whole Southland. All these are now held in common by our whole people. Whoever heard of any one ever wanting to be carried back to New England, where the natural resources are mainly ice, granite, rock, codfish and beans. Still we are all proud of the hardy New Englander who makes the desert blossom as the rose wherever he pitches his tent. His hard environment has been a blessing to every other part of the country, forcing him to seek greener pastures in balmy climes, and to disseminate his energy and frugality in those more leisureful sections that need encouragement to greater thrift. It was the combined qualities of the Virginia cavalier and the New England Puritan that made Stonewall Jackson invincible and Robert E. Lee the highest type of the American patriot.

THE SOUTHERN SOLDIER BOY.

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JAMESTOWN AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

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The English settlement at Jamestown, Virginia, was the beginning of the highest civilization in the liberty of man and the establishment of the purest and best political government the world has ever known—perfected through many vicissitudes, stands as the beacon light of human liberty for all the world.

THE JAMESTOWN EXPOSITION.

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The 26th of April, 1607, is the date that will linger in history after many a dreary record of battle and coronation has been swept away. For on that date the first permanent colony of English speech made its landing on the soil of North America. It is fitting that the three hundredth anniversary of this event should be marked by the opening of the Jamestown Exposition.

The founding of Jamestown was not a step in a struggle, but a trophy of victory. And, though it began the westward march of the Saxon tongue, which has long since encircled the globe, it marked the victory less of a race than of a civilization. It was really the dedication of a continent to individual liberty; it was the definite announcement that the worn-out systems of empire should not usurp the new western land. It was a trophy gained in a hundred years of such warfare as the world has rarely seen, but it was a thousand times worth the price.

When the peoples of Europe landed on the shores of the sixteenth century, they were a curiously assorted company. Germany was still playing the solemn farce of the Roman Empire, whose real existence had terminated a thousand years before. Spain had just driven the last armed infidel from her borders, and was preparing to use in foreign conquest the military excellence she had developed in her long crusade at home. Italy, divided into a dozen small states, had carried civilization as high as a purely city civilization can go, and was ready to decline. France was halting between two opinions, but, on the whole, leaned strongly toward the course of European aggression, which she pursued for centuries. All these countries were

organized on the military plan. The individual counted for little among them; commerce counted for less; all who were not soldiers could escape contempt only by becoming priests. In England and Holland a different organization prevailed. There the civilization was industrial, rather than military. Commerce was accounted a worthy work; not so high as fighting, of course, but still perfectly respectable; and the individual enjoyed a freedom and security unknown elsewhere.

Which type of civilization would endure? That was the great question before the world. Would the soldier and aristocrat, or the merchant and artisan, survive in the struggle which had already begun? The sixteenth century passed, and the contest was decided. The sturdy mechanic had outworn his armored and tinsel lord. Italy was ruined; Germany broken in two; Spain hopelessly wrecked; France, bled white by civil war, was gasping for breath. But England and Holland stood erect and at ease; and, pausing only to make sure that the victory was theirs indeed, went forth to possess the world. Jamestown and New Amsterdam were the first efforts of the free northern peoples to possess the land they had won.

And not only was Jamestown the first English colony on the continent, but it was the first white settlement that deserved the name of colony at all. The adventures of the Spaniards were not colonizing, but conquest. They were crusaders, going forth to found kingdoms, not settlers seeking out homes. They went to the most densely inhabited parts of the new world, simply because only a dense population of slaves could uphold the costly military