

1902

George Tate's "Icident of Williamsburg"

George Tate

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/arthur-mckinstry-correspondence>

Preferred Citation

[Title of Document], Arthur McKinstry Correspondence, Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library, Mississippi State University Libraries

This Letter is brought to you for free and open access by the Civil War Soldiers at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Arthur McKinstry Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com.

Incident of Williamsburg
as related by Mr. Geo. Tate.

On the night of the disastrous battle of Williamsburg, in the rain and mud, the scattered members of Co. D. and of the 3d Reg. tried to gather themselves together around a smouldering fire, wet and chilled and wounded, without food or shelter. As one by one they came around the camp fire, to report themselves among the living, and tell of the comrades who were among the fallen, the question was asked: "how many are present?" The Captain asked Sergeant Billy Post to call the roll, so that those present could answer to their names. Post began the roll, intending to omit the names of those known to be among the slain, but long practice had made roll call mechanical and when he reached McKinstry he called it, then Miller, then Moon. He could go no farther, but broke down amidst a tempest of sobs from the comrades who surrounded him.

In August of 1902, a party including the only sister of Arthur McKinstry, visited Yorktown and the National Cemetery. The day was a glorious one, the sail up the noble river one of enchantment. On reaching the old and diminished town, now consisting of only a few houses, the first object that greets the eye is the Monument erected by Congress to commemorate the Surrender of Yorktown and by that, the close of the long struggle for Independence. A short walk brings one to the National Cemetery, made historic as being the field on which the British stacked arms, now inclosed by a brick wall, shaded by trees, and kept in the most beautiful order. Here are gathered, as far as could be, those who fell at Yorktown and Williamsburg. Close to the home of the Superintendent, near the gate, lies one ever dear to all who knew him, far from kindred and home. Of his comrades few survive, they fell in the hard fought battles of the peninsula--but he keeps watch and ward over the blue river, the sandy plain, the sacred soil,

Twice won for Freedom.
