

THE SHIRLEY HOUSE DURING THE SIEGE.



This picture, the original of which was taken during the siege, shows the shacks in which were encamped the 45th Illinois, to which regiment was assigned the distinction of leading the Union forces that entered Vicksburg on the morning of July 4, 1863. The picture also shows the beginning of "Logan's Sap." It is a reminiscent view that every Illinois Veteran will, it is thought, be glad to see, aside from its historical value. The existence of such a picture has but recently come to the knowledge of the Park Commission, it having been sent but a few weeks ago to Chairman W. T. Rigby by Lieut. A. N. Reece of the 12th Illinois Infantry.

THE SHIRLEY HOUSE RECONSTRUCTED

Interesting Sketch of a Building Familiarly Known as the "White House" and which Played a Prominent Part in the Siege of Vicksburg.

BY THE strange mission of chance it now and again happens that some intrinsically unimportant and common-place building is suddenly immortalized by its relation to and association with a great historical event. Such was the case with the farm house of La Haye Sainte, about which broke the fiercest and reddest waves of the battle of Waterloo; with the insignificant adobe structure known as the Alamo, where died the Texan patriots in the glory of a sublime heroism; and with a typical southern plantation home, which stood directly in the Union investment line, and on the highest point of that line, during the siege of Vicksburg, and which was known to that army far and near as the "White House." It is true that no hand-to-hand conflict raged through its rooms and halls—that no men died there, back to the wall with a circle of fallen foes about them; but it is also true that it was riddled with hostile missiles, that several soldiers were killed or wounded beneath its roof and scores of them in its immediate vicinity, and that it was such

A LANDMARK TO BOTH ARMIES

as to have been again and again referred to in official orders during, and official reports of, the forty-seven days of close and continuous

fighting from the investment to the surrender of Vicksburg. It was these considerations, and especially the last one, that impelled the commissioners of the Vicksburg National Military Park, after having purchased for park purposes the land upon which it stood, to request from the secretary of war authority for its restoration as nearly as possible to its condition and appearance at the beginning of the siege.

The "White House," also known as "Shirley House," from the name of its owner and occupant at the time of the investment of Vicksburg, was located about two and one-half miles from the city, just north of the old thoroughfare locally known as Jackson road, and on and near the west line of section 18, township 16, range 4, east. This land was originally entered by Dr. Wm. B. Bay, whose announcement to "commence the practice of medicine in Vicksburg," with an "office in East Second street, opposite the late residence of Dr. Kettridge," appears in the *Republican* of that city over date of May 4, 1825. The house is thought to have been originally built and occupied by Dr. Bay about the year 1830. In 1836 the property was sold to T. H. Goodall, and in 1837 to Nicholas Gray, who also made it his home for some time, selling it in 1849 to Ben Johnson, who in turn sold it March 22, 1851, to James and Adeline Shirley. Prior to the last transfer the place was occupied for an indefinite period by the family of a lawyer named Sloan, then practicing in Vicksburg.

Capt. James Shirley, or Judge Shirley, as he seems to have been called in Vicksburg, where he served as magistrate, was a native of New Hampshire. He had spent some time in the South, where he met and married his wife, a Boston lady, before settling in the Vicksburg home which was then known as "Wexford Lodge." The daughter Alice (now Mrs. Gen. John Eaton, of Washington, D. C.), whose girlhood was spent there, thus describes the place in the *Fredonia* (N. Y.) *Censor* of May 30, 1900:

"The house was built after the southern fashion, a story and a half in height, a wide hall in the center, large rooms on each side, ceiling high, upper and lower porch in front and veranda in rear. A driveway describing a semicircle passed the door, and a wide walk ran from the front porch to the



Front and West End View of the Shirley House Before Restoration.

road, which was reached from that point by a flight of steps. This walk was bordered with red flowering quinces, fragrant syringas and roses, while close to the edge bloomed

VIOLETS, JONQUILS AND HYACINTHS.

On one side of the porch was a beautiful pink crape-myrtle and on the other an althea tree. The rustic summer house made of green grape vines and roots, with beds of flowers all around it, was a great delight to me, as was also a little vegetable garden where my brother Quincy and I planted our names in peas, lettuce and radishes."

Such was the quiet sylvan scene May 18, 1863, when the skirmishers of the Union army advanced along the Jackson road, pressed back those of Pemberton's army into their main defensive line, so close at hand that the salient fort, known as the Third Louisiana Redan, nearly west of the house and immediately north of the road, was not over 350 yards distant. The house was at that time occupied by Mrs. Shirley and her son, a lad of 15. As the building was an obstruction to the fire from the Confederate line, it was to have been destroyed; but, according to the story of Mrs. Eaton, already referred to, the presence of her mother delayed carrying the order into execution so long that the Confederate soldier who came to do so, while holding a ball of blazing cotton to the building, fell under the fire of the advancing vanguard and was buried the next day upon the spot. As for Mrs. Shirley, she first had a sheet attached to a broomstick and hung from an upper window, which gave some respite from the fire of the Federals. But their line soon reached the house itself and practically rested there, so that a steady firing upon it from the other side was inevitable. Notwithstanding this, Mrs. Shirley remained there for three days, much of the time sitting behind the large chimney for shelter. Having in the meantime learned of her situation, orders came from General McPherson for her removal. She went, accordingly, into a shallow cave hastily prepared in a nearby ravine. Here Mr. Shirley found her several days later and, after both had sickened from exposure and poor fare, they were, Mrs. Eaton says, by General Grant's personal direction, removed to a plantation three miles in the rear, where a negro cabin afforded temporary shelter.

Meanwhile the face of the earth about the old house has been transformed. A battery of 24-pounder howitzers (D, First Illinois Light) thunders from the extension to the west of the ridge on which the house stands and is

OFFICIALLY DENOMINATED "WHITE HOUSE BATTERY."

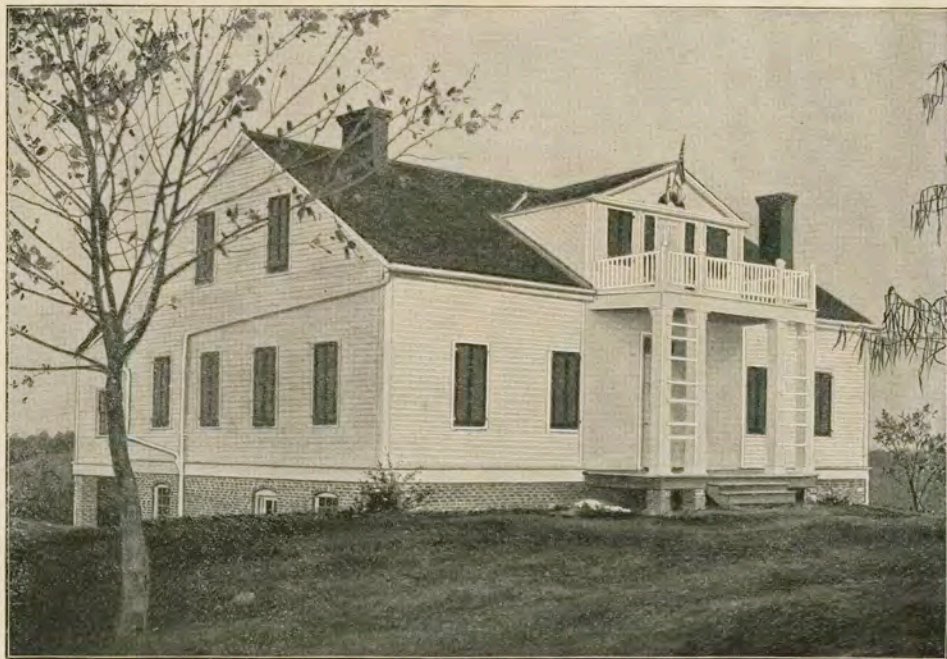
Its commander, the gallant Capt. Henry A. Rogers, was mortally wounded close by and perhaps breathed his last breath beneath its shade. The regiments

of General John E. Smith's (first) brigade of General Logan's division are camped in ravines both east and west of it. The first or main parallel of the Union army comes up the ridge from a little east of south to the road near by, whence Logan's approach or sap plows its deep-cut way through the front yard, while the parallel is continued to the northward in the immediate rear. From near the southeast corner of the house the sap turns westward, running directly in front and only a few yards distant, "eight feet wide by seven feet deep, with beam and parapet," according to the report of Gen. A. Hickenlooper, the corps engineer. It runs first to "White House Battery," then zigzags across the road and back twice, finally projecting itself against the salient angle of the Third Louisiana Redan, first having connected with "Advance Battery" directly between "White House" and the Redan, and only 140 yards distant from the latter. Other batteries are on the points of the spurs north from this one and on both sides of Glass bayou, which here runs east and west some forty rods north of "White House." South of the road, on the first parallel and at no great distance, are massed eighteen cannon, known as Battery DeGolyer, while forty rods to the eastward on a high ridge immediately south of the road is a siege battery of 30-pounder Parrots and 9-inch Dahlgrens from the navy.

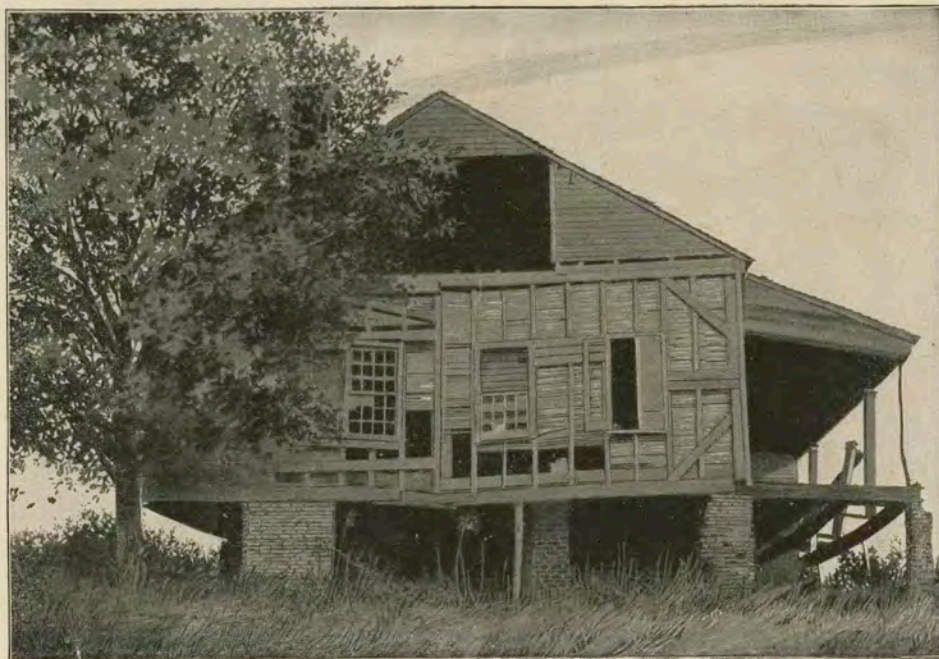
Nowhere along the Federal lines were the

SIEGE OPERATIONS PUSHED SO FAST AND FIERCELY

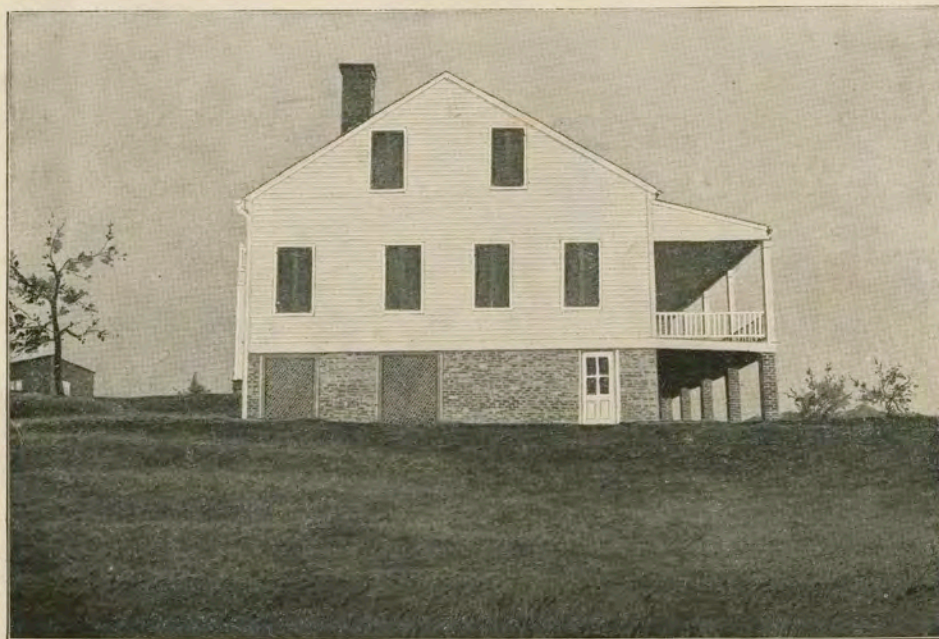
as against the Third Louisiana Redan and that part of the Confederate line adjacent upon either side, and the "White House" was conspicuous in the very midst thereof. From the time when the charging columns in blue swept along the road in its front and up the slope south of the road, May 22, it is constantly in evidence,



Front and West End View of the Shirley House After Restoration.



East End View of the Shirley House Before Restoration.



East End View of the Shirley House After Restoration.

both in the memory of the survivors from that part of the field and the official records. Even the records of the disinterment, some four years later, of the remains of those who fell, for removal to the National Cemetery, describe the location of each original burial place by its distance and direction from that building. The unwritten history of the siege is also equally full of it. A lieutenant of Battery L, Second Illinois Light, while visiting the park, recalled going to the "White House" with his captain and asking permission from Colonel Maltby (afterward well known in Vicksburg as General Maltby) of the 45th Illinois, to use a room in the house for making out the battery pay rolls.

"Why, certainly," promptly answered Colonel Maltby, "walk right in, it's a splendid place; I was shot in the leg here yesterday."

Another and recent visitor to the park, First Sergeant W. F. Crummer, Co. A, 45th Illinois, gives a more serious reminiscence. He was sitting at a table in the northeast corner of the northeast room, the afternoon of July 2, engaged in making reports for his company, when a rifle ball from the Confederate line, having already penetrated the outside wall, struck him in the shoulder, inflicting a terrible wound which was at first thought to be mortal. But he still survives and greatly enjoyed his visit to the park last August, at which time he pointed out the exact place in the room where he sat when the wound was received.

With all these facts in view, which did space permit might be added to and amplified almost without limit, it is not strange that the comrades of both armies should have strongly desired that the "White House" be restored or repaired, and made

A FEATURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK.

Neither is it strange that the Illinois Vicksburg park commission, representing eleven regiments and batteries from that State in Logan's division, and seventeen in the 17th army corps, should have an especial interest in this matter and should, when making its official visit to the park, have petitioned the secretary of war to grant the request of the national commission already made. The same considerations, doubtless, led the secretary of war, under date of May 20, 1902, to authorize its repair, allotting the sum