



## PATRIOTIC RECOLLECTIONS



Just a Little Bit of History:

Interview with Joshua Kite, 2nd Virginia Regiment, USA<sup>(a)</sup>

We ran against Joshua Kite, at the County Reunion, and asked *What regiment were you in, Josh? In the 2nd Virginia Infantry*, he replied. *How come it got you there?* we inquired. *Well, you see, I went in on Lincoln's first call for 75,000, but Ohio filled her quota of that call before I got there, and as a company was forming at Ironton for the 2nd Virginia Regulars, I joined it. That was Capt. McAnally's company. What was the closest call you had in the war?*, asked the reporter.

*About the closest I recall that occurs to me now was the first day at the second Bull Run. That was the 31st of August 1863. Our regiment was in Milroy's Brigade of Sigel's division, and made a charge on the rebel line, which was behind a graded fill of the railroad, which made a splendid breast works. At first we were not aware that there were any troops there. When we drove in the rebel skirmishers they went over the breastworks and kept going, so we did not think there were any troops hid behind the railroad, until we got 30 to 40 steps, when they rose and let fly.*

*Well, that as the narrowest escape I ever had. The man next to me on the right was killed and the man next to me on the left was badly wounded. It was a hail of musket balls, and why it didn't sweep every man down is a mystery. But it did kill scores. I was so paralyzed I didn't know what to do. I didn't ever think of running, though the whole line retreated with great confusion. I did jump behind a clump of oak bushes, and fired my old musket at the railroad fill. I was the only fellow there and the balls were millions, I thought. First, it occurred to me to fall on the ground and make believe I was dead. But then I thought that a stray ball of the few thousand would hit me and end the make-believe. Again I thought, the rebs would come from their earthworks and take me in charge, and I believed I would rather be killed. These things all revolved in my mind, when it occurred to me, the best thing to do was to strike for the rear, as fast as my legs would carry me.*

*So I bounded forth from behind the oak bush like a streak of greased lightning. My, how I flew! The earth seemed to skip beneath my feet like a flash of powder. As I emerged from the oak bush it seemed as if all of Hill's Corps aimed at me. The balls plowed up the ground all around. I wondered if I wasn't full of ball, and I was going so fast I couldn't stop. They zipped all around me. One big shell went right over my head. I looked back and saw it coming. I thought sure it would burst as it struck my head, but it went on. As I ran, a wounded man called me and I turned to help him. He was shot in the calf of the leg. I took him and carried him behind a sycamore tree for protection, and set him up in as comfortable a*

*place as I could. While standing there a moment, catching my breath, a ball struck the tree and I began to think the sharpshooters were now after me. I moved back further and soon got where our line was re-forming.*

*I was in the fight the next day, and that too was terrible. Then I had a little experience that was interesting to me. I was struck by a grape ball, with a thump that nearly knocked me over, but it didn't break the skin. It lodged in my blouse, however. You remember it was stated that in the second Bull Run fight, the rebs shot pieces of T-rail from their cannons, and that charge was denied. I can tell you it can true, for I saw it; and I saw where the chunks struck and plowed up the ground. But excuse me from a closer call than I got at Bull Run.*

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(a) Having been a camp Patriotic Instructor, I know how hard it is to find interesting topics for camp meetings. Over the past year I have compiled 200 stories/bios of Civil War Veterans from Ohio. The first series is from the 1886 Ironton, Ohio REGISTER and is re-printed with the permission of Martha Kounse and Sharon M. Kouns, webowners of lawrencecountyohio.com website. The REGISTER produced 91 articles under the heading of Narrow Escapes, (one a week for 91 weeks) by interviewing Civil War Veterans from their area. This article appeared September 1, 1887.

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