

FIRST MARYLAND ARTILLERY.

CHAPTER I.

NO battery of artillery in the Confederate Army won more distinction during the four years of the war than did the First Maryland Artillery, or, as it was more commonly known, "Dement's Battery." Composed of young men from eighteen to twenty years of age, they were imbued with a spirit of patriotism that overcame all sense of fear, and made them invincible upon the field of battle, and it was one of the very few batteries in the Army of Northern Virginia that never lost a gun, and no battery in that army saw more hard fighting or lost more men.

The young men of this battery were from lower Maryland, the Eastern Shore and Baltimore City. They started out with the intention of forming a cavalry company under Colonel Jennifer, and rendezvoused at Fredericksburg, where the citizens supplied their wants and turned over to them the theatre for quarters. The reason they had determined to go into the cavalry was that many of them were from Charles County, and belonged to the Charles County Volunteer Cavalry.

Whilst waiting at Fredericksburg for Jennifer they were joined by other Marylanders from day to day, and also by Frederick Y. Dabney, himself a Mississippian, with a few Virginians. One day R. Snowden Andrews came along with a few men, and he proposed they should raise an artillery company. The men had become restless at the non-appearance of Jennifer, and they told Andrews they would accede to his proposition, provided W. F. Dement was made First Lieutenant, to which Andrews agreed.

The men then procured transportation to Richmond and were given quarters at the Reservoir, where, on the tenth day of July, they were mustered into the service. when R. Snowden Andrews was made Captain, William F. Dement First Lieutenant, Charles S. Contee Second Lieutenant and Frederick Y. Dabney Third Lieutenant.

After overcoming many difficulties, Captain Andrews succeeded in procuring from Governor Letcher four Napoleons and four Parrotts. The Parrotts were, however, discarded after the Seven Days' Battles. The men were now put to hard drilling under the instruction of Lieutenant Dabney, who was proficient in the artillery drill, and the battery was soon ready to take the field.

The First Maryland was ordered to Fredericksburg, to which place it was transported by rail. From Fredericksburg the battery was sent to Brooks Station,