

FIRST MARYLAND CAVALRY.

CHAPTER I.

ON the 15th of May, 1862, eighteen young Marylanders who had served one year in Company K, First Virginia Cavalry, but who had refused to re-enlist, believing a Maryland regiment could be formed, met in Richmond and proceeded to organize Company A, which served as the nucleus of what was destined to be one of the most distinguished cavalry commands in the Confederate service. Among these young men were Ridgely Brown, of Montgomery; Frank A. Bond, of Anne Arundel; Thomas Griffith, of Montgomery, and J. A. V. Pue, of Howard. Ridgely Brown was elected Captain and the rest Lieutenants as their names stand.

It had long been the desire of these Marylanders to have their State represented in the cavalry arm of the service. They were all dashing horsemen, and, as many kindred spirits had come and were coming to Virginia without any effort being made to organize a larger body than a company, which had been absorbed at once by some Virginia regiment, they built up this company with the express stipulation that it was one around which all future companies of Maryland cavalry were to rally.

Recruiting went on briskly, and in a short time the ranks of Company A were filled up with some of the finest young men who had left the State of Maryland. They were fortunate, too, in the selection of their officers, and under their leadership the company subsequently won a reputation second to that of no company in the Confederate cavalry.

After its organization the company was ordered to the Valley of Virginia and attached to Colonel Munford's Second Virginia, there to remain until other cavalry companies had been organized, with which to form a battalion or regiment. In the meantime Company A did good service, serving with Jackson in his memorable Valley campaign. It particularly distinguished itself with Ashby in the engagement near Harrisonburg with Percy Wyndham's First New Jersey Cavalry, and was complimented by General Ewell for its gallantry upon that occasion. It was with Jackson before Richmond, and subsequently in the Maryland campaign, where it distinguished itself in many encounters with the enemy.

Up to this time Company A was the only representative Maryland cavalry company, but upon its return from the Maryland campaign it found that three other fine companies had been formed, and were ready to effect a battalion organization.