



GEORGE N. GRAY.

Colonel George N. Gray was born in Western Pennsylvania, February 10th, 1838. In the spring of 1857 he came to Ohio and engaged in school teaching in Lawrence County, near Ironton, Ohio. Some two years later he returned to his native State and entered college, but soon thereafter the war's alarm resounded throughout the land, and George N. Gray was soon possessed of the patriotic fever, and in connection with his fellow students at Waynesburg College organized a company. Gray was elected first lieutenant of the company. After remaining in camp for some time, their services were not accepted, and the boys scattered out; young Gray to his books at college until the close of the college year, when he again had the Ohio fever and returned to Lawrence county, intending to teach during the winter and enlist in the spring. The war spirit was at a high pitch in the fall and winter of 1861 and our subject still possessed of the military spirit, dismissed his school and made a forced march of 40 miles across the country to Jackson, Ohio, where the regiment was organizing. He enlisted with this regiment, November 19th, 1861, as a private in Co. D. At the organization he was made first sergeant. By his manliness and martial spirit he commended himself to the regimental officers and December 5th, 1861, was promoted to be sergeant major of the regiment. His general efficiency, courageous conduct, and gentlemanly demeanor commended him for further promotion, so upon January 9th, 1862, he was commissioned second lieutenant and assigned to Company I.

At the battle of Shiloh he received a wound in the leg that disabled him for active duty for some months. In the spring of 1862 a signal corps was formed by detaching fifty-six lieutenants and 112 enlisted men, Lieutenant Gray was one of the officers honored by assignment.

When he had mastered the details of the signal code he was assigned to the Mississippi flotilla, commanded by Commodore Foote. The first smell of gunpowder by Lieutenant Gray in the navy was June 6th, 1862, at Memphis. The Confederate fleet had assembled there and they contended bravely for the mastery of the Mississippi River, but in a short and terrific fight of only about fifty-five minutes the Confederate fleet was destroyed, save one vessel, and the city of Memphis were in the full possession of Union troops. The fleet then proceeded to the relief of General Curtis in Arkansas.

June 17th, 1862, the fleet at the bluffs of St. Charles encountered a strong fort and siege guns. In the attack our fleet was punished severely, suffering the loss of the Mound City and Iron Clad, killing some seventy men. In this engagement Lieutenant Gray and two

flagmen were captured, but subsequently escaped and led the way for the 49th Indiana to attack the fort in the rear; and the Confederate forces, some 600 strong with their guns, were captured. The commander of this fort was Colonel Fry. He was severely wounded. In subsequent years this same Colonel Fry was the commander of the steamer "Virginius," and conducted a filibustering expedition to Cuba and was captured and shot under the walls of Santiago.

The campaign through which Lieutenant Gray had passed had its effect, making him almost a physical wreck. He returned to his regiment, but soon thereafter was discharged. During the winter of 1863 he had so far recovered that he organized a company of Ohio National Guard and was chosen captain. In the last call for troops he was commissioned colonel of the regiment, but the war was so near a conclusion that they had no opportunity to leave Ohio.

Colonel Gray has lived at fronton, Ohio, since the war and is one of its noted, prosperous, successful, philanthropic business characters. Colonel Gray has made his impress in the political, social, and commercial world. To know him is but to respect him.

He was happily married to Eliza Ann Humphreys, December 26th, 1856. As a result of his union three sons and one daughter bless his home. "As the father - so the sons" was exemplified in Colonel Gray's boys, as all of his sons saw military service in the Spanish-American war. One, Captain Charles Sedgwick Gray, of the United States Navy, surrendered his young life in defense of humanity and the flag, falling a victim to the dread disease of typhoid fever, dying in Garfield Hospital, Washington, in September 1898.

In honor of his memory Colonel Gray and family donated to the city of Fronton, Ohio, a half square together with the buildings, to be known as the Charles S. Gray Deaconess' Hospital.