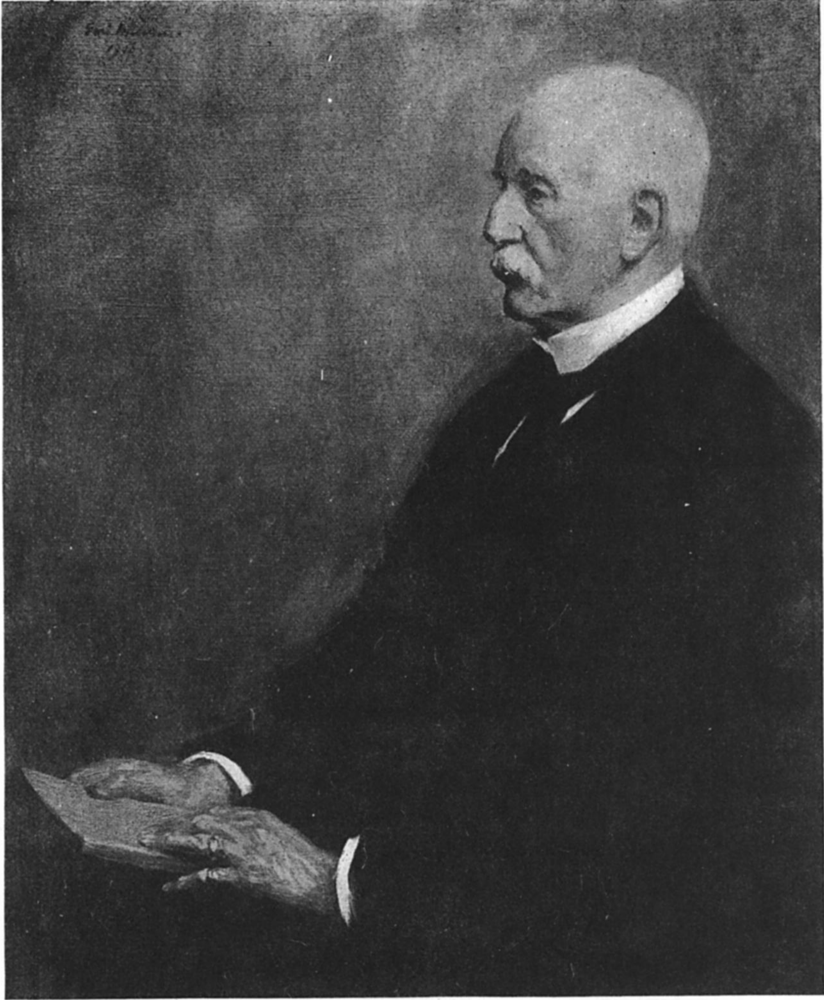

RUSH C. HAWKINS

GENERAL HAWKINS AS HE REVEALED HIMSELF TO HIS LIBRARIAN

BY MARGARET BINGHAM STILLWELL

THIS thumb-nail sketch of General Hawkins requires something of a foreword as it was written, originally, to be put on file at the Annmary Brown Memorial, of which he was the founder, and therefore takes for granted a knowledge of certain facts.

Those who knew Rush Christopher Hawkins personally will remember him erect and vigorous in spite of his eighty odd years, a man of powerful and striking personality, a combination of the rugged qualities of old-time Vermont and of the refined tastes of a dreamer and a man of the world.

He was born at Pomfret, Vermont, on September 14, 1831; his death was caused by being knocked down by an automobile as he was crossing Fifth Avenue, October 25, 1920. His most notable achievements were the service rendered his country in the Civil War as colonel of the "Hawkins Zouaves" (the Ninth New York Volunteers); and in later life, the bringing together of a collection of early printed books—in the field which it covers, now one of the most representative collections of the world.

These priceless books—together with two galleries of paintings by early and modern masters, and various antiquarian treasures—comprise the Annmary Brown Memo-

rial, established at Providence in 1905 and endowed by General Hawkins in memory of his wife. To use the General's own words, "It is first of all a Memorial to a woman of noble character. It is secondarily a collection of art treasures," which have now been left for the pleasure of those who share his appreciation of the beautiful, and for the benefit of those bibliophiles and students of history who may wish to make scholarly use of his collection of early printing.

Engraved upon his tombstone is his own

CREDO

I believe in unconditional honesty,
The power and practice of truth,
The influence of noble aspirations,
And love of the beautiful.

It had long been the General's intention to erect a building in which to house his incunabula and his other collections. It was to have been called the "Gutenberg Memorial" and it was to stand as a lasting tribute to the work of the first printers. Before this plan had been actually undertaken, Mrs. Hawkins died. The General decided, therefore, to make it a personal memorial and he gave to it his wife's maiden name in honor of the Brown family, who had always been so public spirited and so beneficent in Providence affairs. Brown University was named for Annmary Brown's grandfather, and the books collected by her uncle, John Carter Brown, are housed only a block away from her own Memorial.

The General began to attend book auctions as a habit in 1851, his twentieth year, and he acquired his first early printed book four years later. It was the interest developed in the effort to identify this little volume that led to his determination to collect representative books, if possible the first book, issued by each of the first printers. The fact that he kept always to his resolve has made the present collection at the Memorial remarkable within the scope which it covers.

His particular friends among the booksellers were Bernard Quaritch, Albert Cohn, of Berlin, and Anatole Claudin. And the General's "red letter day in early printing" occurred when Claudin took him to see Delisle who had a pavilion at Chantilly opposite the chateau. "As we went along toward the pavilion," he told me, "we saw two men waving their hats. They were Delisle and Mézières. Delisle had found out in some way that I had met Mézières, although I did not know him very well, and he had asked him for the day. So we went up to the chateau—Claudin, Delisle, Mézières and I—and saw all sorts of interesting things and those I had come especially to see. Then we went to the pavilion for lunch."

In fact, the General had bookish friends throughout Europe. For Father Antonio Ceriani, director of the Ambrosian Library at Milan, he felt both affection and admiration. And Henri Hymans, of Brussels, was a special friend, much beloved. It was largely in his memory that the General contributed to the Belgian Relief Fund during the recent war. He was fond also of many of

the English bookmen. Richard Garnett he described as "One of the strongest all-around men I have ever known—just as nice as he could be." Robert Proctor he saw for the last time only a week before the latter met his death, and the General's subsequent visits to the Museum were full of sad memories. From that time on, he began going to see Mr. Pollard, and his affection for him finally became so deep that in 1910 he enticed him to Providence to catalogue for him the early printed books at the Memorial. Of Henry Bradshaw he would often say, "He knew more than anyone about early Irish manuscripts and he was the world's best authority on Chaucer. The last time I saw him we took dinner together. He came out in the rain to the cab to say 'Good-night' and he said to me, 'I can never forget—you are an American, a General, and a collector of early printed books' as if he thought the three were incompatible!"

In the General's case they were not incompatible. He was American to the core—always attacking whatever he believed to be vicious in our public morals, advocating preparedness and, through the Union League Club, influential in originating and putting through the Naturalization Law and the Civil Service Law. Secondly, he was a born fighter—that, surely, no one who knew him would deny. And he was a very earnest student of his cherished books. The majority of the early books at the Memorial have inserted notes bearing the record of his researches, collations, and efforts to study them scientifically and accurately.

It was in the spring of 1909 that I first met General Hawkins. He came hurrying into the John Carter Brown Library: "Is Winship here? My name is Hawkins—General Hawkins." Mr. Winship was at the printer's. Could I do anything? Would he not wait? "No, no, nothing whatever. I wanted Winship. I have no time."

With that he whirled about, but halfway across the room he stopped short. "Hullo, what's this!" he said and he picked up a copy of Mr. Pearson's *Old Librarian's Almanack* which was lying on a table. "Have you read it?" he asked over his shoulder. Yes, I had, and I had found it amusing. "Amusing! It's a regular sell," and drawing out a chair he began reading one rhyme after another, chuckling to himself the while. He told me all about the hoax, how the supposed reprint had taken in everyone, even the *Outlook* having to repudiate its review. "A regular sell!" he repeated, laughing in such a boyish way that I forgot he was the imperious-looking general who had appeared in the doorway half an hour before. "Tell Winship," he said, rising abruptly, "There, I've forgotten what I came for. But no matter." And the thud of the outside door announced that he had gone.

This little incident was typical of the General in every way. It illustrates the quick change of whim which made him the always outstanding figure that he was—commanding at one moment, and demanding; at the next moment quite the reverse, relaxed, sociable, and often full of a racy humor of his own.

He was confessedly "a man of sentiment." He believed in sentiment and would say so again and again. At the same time he was distrustful of human nature, suspicious of persons. He emphatically preferred dogs to most humans. "Shakespeare sent Puck around the world in forty minutes and then said 'What fools these mortals be.' That's true. We are!" he said one day. "I have often thought the Creator made a mistake in not stopping at dogs and horses. The Superior Being is not always so superior." And another day he remarked in his whimsical, half-laughing way of poking fun at the universe, "Some pious persons seem to think that if they sign all the Articles they have a through ticket and good works are unnecessary."

The General liked cheeriness, grace, and above all serenity and gentleness of manner and of disposition. These were the characteristics of Mrs. Hawkins and of her sister Madame Bajnotti. The latter was the more sprightly of the two and Mrs. Hawkins the more serene, yet both shared these traits in common. In his latter years the General never would say "Goodbye." He had said "Goodbye" to Madame Bajnotti in 1890. It proved to be "Goodbye" indeed, and from that time on he withheld the word, sacred to her memory. Whenever he or anyone went away, it was always "Au revoir."

In those men who qualified for the inner circle of his affection, the General had supreme trust. To them his devotion was unswerving. One day some years later, he came hurrying into the New York Public Library and

found a group of us working together in the Rare-Book room. "Where is my good friend Eames?" he called out cheerily. "He does not come until afternoon. He is working on American imprints at home," we answered in chorus. "Well, well. He's a fine old man, Eames, [this of a person perhaps thirty years his own junior], a fine old man. Dry as dust until you know him, one of the great scholars of America, one of the greatest the country has ever produced—and always so simple and true."

That was in 1916. The General had just returned from Providence. Being in talkative mood he sat down to tell us about the Memorial, its trustees in whom he had every confidence, and his own desire to find someone to put in as curator of the Memorial itself.

We did not see him again until fall. Then he began dropping in quite frequently. He always came on rainy days because his eyes were in bad condition and the softened light made the irritation less. It had become known that he was in search of a curator. He was receiving applications and certain influential persons were proffering their friends.

Because I had lived in Providence and knew the Memorial, he seemed to like to run in to discuss his problem with me. He would come bringing a letter or two for me to read; we would talk the matter over together; I would try to help him to come to some conclusion. The General, so it later worked out, had ideas of his own. The discussion of letters and applicants had been one of his pleasant little ways of "detecting." And when one day he came

to the point, I discovered I had been on the witness stand all the while.

When I went to the Memorial the following June, the General came also, for the week end, for the "official inauguration," he said. He came again the first of July and remained in town a month or more going through the entire Memorial in a systematic survey of my new duties, and from that time on, he came as frequently as health permitted. He went through all his papers and letters systematically from beginning to end, that I might understand every detail. A hotter summer was never known. The General seized the thermometer one afternoon and put it on the steps. "I put this in the sun," he said, "because under this skylight we are as good as in the sun ourselves." In a few moments the thermometer registered 124°. (It only stopped there because of limitations of its own.) "There," said the General, "I knew it was a hot day! Let's stop. We've done enough for one day's work."

It was on a day much like this that one of the trustees came at closing time to take the General home. There being still time he asked me to drive with them for a cool-off before dinner. The temperature had been so high and the work so laborious that the General had been grinding his teeth and growling to himself all day long. As we swept over the quiet roads at Nayatt and Rumstick Point his tension began to relax. When we came out into more open fields, he began to hum and presently to sing half under his breath:

If I were an Os-qu-a-rey
  In the land of Tim-buk-tou,
I should eat a missionary
  Tall silk hat and psalm book too.

This amused us so much that he sang it again, this time louder in a rollicking way much as a sailor would sing, and not a quaver in the bass in spite of his eighty-six years. It took but little imagination to picture him sixty-odd years before when, in his convalescent days at New Orleans after the Mexican War, he had sung in the chorus supporting Jenny Lind—his "red letter day in Bohemia."

Being a military person the General was keen on "instructions." I soon learned that I trod safe ground, at least comparatively safe ground, if I followed instructions implicitly—it was only occasionally that instructions changed without notice. So I always kept a pencil at hand and jotted down whatever directions he gave. Meanwhile, the pencil being at hand, I managed also to jot down word for word many of his reminiscences by the way. By fitting these notes together it is possible to recount much of the story of his life in his own words. There was a rhythm in the way he spoke that makes one even now remember his phrases.

"I never was brought up," he told me one day, "I couldn't stand it. I was independent from the start."

"I began to read when I was about six years old, and my great grandmother used to read to me. She would quote little verses—to keep me from being slothful, lying in bed in the morning. She taught me my alphabet.

By the time I was eleven, I had read all the boy's books *Robinson Crusoe*, *Arabian Nights*—all the things boys read. By the time I ran away, I had read all the English poets, perhaps not Chaucer and some of the heavier ones, but all the others. When I began to earn money I began to buy books. I bought my first book, *The Life of Sir William Wallace*, when I was ten years old. That's the first book I ever read. I had read it when I was seven. I liked it so well that later I read *Scottish Chiefs* and that is how I began." Coming upon the Wallace another day he said with a little chuckle, "There's the book that gave me all those *noble* ideals which have made me make a fool of myself ever since."

The General's bookish interests were a natural inheritance. The great-grandmother who took so active a part in his training had received her education at the hand of her father, Aaron Hutchinson, a graduate of Yale College in the class of 1747. So, genealogically speaking, Yale may claim sponsorship for the Annmary Brown Memorial and intellectually as well, for the connection between Rush Hawkins and this worthy ancestor was very close. The Reverend Aaron was one of the learned men of his day, his attainments winning him second degrees from Yale and Harvard, and honorary titles from Dartmouth and Princeton. At least four of his children, all of whom had received the best education which the times afforded, lived until Rush Hawkins had himself reached youth or manhood. The library at the home of Judge Titus Hutchinson, the great uncle with whom his mother made

her home after her husband's early death, was the mecca for all the scholarly folk for miles around.

Other forces as well had a part in shaping Rush Hawkins' career. His great-grandmother, born in 1759, would tell him of Indian and Colonial affairs within her memory. Grandfather Dexter Hawkins had served throughout the Revolution. The old house at the "crotch of the roads" was the Saturday and Sunday halting-place for the old soldiers of Pomfret and several of the nearby towns. There was an "Uncle Daniel," a veteran of Lexington and Bunker Hill, who, with his cane, would show how to load and aim a gun. There was another local hero, a veteran of 1812, a captain who "put on style. He wore buttons, you know, and he walked like this—I used to practice by the hour," and the General as he told it threw out his chest and took several most Napoleonic strides across the room.

When the Mexican War broke out, the combination of events was too much for the would-be warrior. He left home at fifteen to enlist. "When I ran away," he said, "I went straight to Boston. My idea was to enlist as a drummer boy. There were four of us boys at Woodstock (near Pomfret) who agreed to run away, one night. But the others backed down. So later I went alone—and in broad daylight, mind you. I took the stage to Boston and I went straight to the Recruiting Station. It was in September, 1846, the time of all the Mexican troubles. And I was full of the war. I told them I was eighteen, that I had my parents' consent, and I gave my mother's

name because you see I did not want to be traced. It was all a transparent lie and they knew it. They told me to go home and grow up!"

The first part of this advice was not taken. Instead, the young adventurer borrowed some clothes from a chance acquaintance (his own not being considered elaborate enough for the occasion), and had his picture taken. This he sent to his mother, and the daguerrotype showing him in all his "borrowed finery" is now at the Memorial. "Then I went to my mother's brother who lived in Boston and who took me in and gave me work."

"Somehow," he continued, "I managed to grow half a head, so when I went back to the Recruiting Office they believed me. It was a lie. I was still under age. But I had a worthy object to attain. I went to camp at Carlisle and stayed there about a month. They put me in the Second Dragoons, being a good horseman. When we were mustered in we went down to the Rio Grande. I was in the army nine months. Then I was taken sick, very sick. I went to New Orleans and I was sick there. I stayed from Christmas, 1848, to the Fourth of July, 1851. It was my Red-Letter Day in Bohemia! I studied singing and music, I sang in the chorus supporting Jenny Lind and had one grand good time."

As there are some letters at the Memorial relating to this early period, I asked about the musical company mentioned in them. "The musical company? Oh yes, we were a group of young men, the 'Wandering Musicians' we called ourselves. We played and we sang—

I could sing and I had studied the 'cello—and we *wandered!* We had a fine time, too, so I thought, and during those years I grew up. When I returned to Vermont in 1851 my own mother did not know me. There was a great family council. What should be done with me? I had been floating around so long, dangling between heaven and earth without getting anywhere. What should be done with me?

"A relative in New York thought he could make a merchant out of me. So I went down there and he placed me at a dry goods merchant's, Granger and Comfort. And I stayed there just three weeks! [He chuckled in remembrance.] A young man came along, a drummer selling goods. Such airs you never saw! He wore fine clothes. He wanted to be somebody and he thought the clothes would help. If a merchant wanted to buy five yards he would unroll twenty with a flourish, cut off the five and then motion us boys to roll up the remainder while he stood by in regal splendor. I stood that as long as I could. Then one day I just doubled up my fist and punched him. And I punched his nose! Then I put on my hat and went away. Some days after that I went back to see Mr. Granger and I told him I didn't think I was made to be a merchant. 'No,' he said with a smile, 'I don't think you were. I saw that from the start.'

"Then I began to study law. About 1853 I got into the office of Daniel Bowley, maritime lawyer and attorney for the last slaver in the country. Mr. Bowley went away to Virginia and left me in charge of a case. I was green,

absolutely green. I didn't know a thing. But I knew how to read. So I got down all the law books and felt my way along from day to day. And when Mr. Bowley came back all was well and the case was won.

"I had a great uncle up at Woodstock, the leading abolitionist of the community. He wrote me a letter of introduction to Horace Greeley. The latter said to me 'There is no room for you here. New York is overcrowded. Go West, young man.' And I went West. I went to Chicago and by the end of the second day I hated it, simply hated it.

"In those days, if a business house in New York failed, none of the Western merchants would pay a cent. The West was full of scallywags, all the rough scuff of the East. They wouldn't pay a debt if they could help it.

"While I was in Chicago the largest New York house next to A. T. Stewart failed. A friend of mine had had charge of all their Western trade, so he set out to see what he could do. He came to Chicago and I saw him. I simply hated that place and I told him so. 'Come along with me,' he said. 'I need a lawyer.' I knew about as much about law as that table but I knew a law book when I saw it. So I jumped at the chance and we went down to St. Louis. There was a Vermonter there, Asa Jones, and I got into his office. The debtors were everywhere all through the Middle West—Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Southern Iowa, Illinois. I traveled all around. It would make such a good story I ought to write it down. It was so comic—the things I did and the things that happened.

"For instance, I was down in a little town in Missouri one night. The people were having a junket. The only room I could have was right off the dance hall. Everybody came and the women brought their babies! They used my room for coats—it was the *antechamber* to the ballroom you see. One woman put a very young baby in my bed.

"I was dead tired that night and wanted to go to bed myself. I stood it as long as I could but it seemed as if there were never going to be an end to that ball. So finally I undressed and went and got in, too. After a while the dance did end and they all came trooping in for their hats and coats, and the woman came for her baby. 'Oh,' she screamed, 'There's a man in bed.' And sure enough, there I was. . . . .

"It took about two years to settle up that business and it was a success. That was where I earned my first real money. Then I went back to New York, to my cousin who was a lawyer in the United States Court, largely maritime business, and stayed with him until the War broke out."

The young cousin was well introduced, and because of his own personality he was evidently well received in New York society. The letters and notes and menus packed away among the General's personal effects at the Memorial show this to have been a period of much gaiety. It was during this period that he met Miss Annmary Brown, the elder daughter of the Hon. Nicholas Brown of Providence. They met the latter part

of August, 1858, and, to use the General's own words, "By the seventeenth of September the only faltering mind had yielded to the pleadings of the other and the engagement for life was solemnly and affectionately pledged. To mè she appeared a spiritual being of rare refinement, naturalness, and unaffected simplicity. Her voice was variable, always musical in its tones; her mobile features were radiant with rare intelligence; and in her person she showed all of those charms of grace and beauty that the most exacting and cultured taste could demand."

There is a little story connected with Annmary's name which may be worth the telling. Her grandmother, Ann Carter Brown, once gave to her cousin Mary Bowen Stelle a set of Lowestoft china. In her twenty-ninth year Ann Brown died and in the course of a few years her husband married her cousin, thus regaining the china. It was in memory of these two grandmothers, the real and the step-grandmother, that Mrs. Hawkins was given her quaintly compounded name, Annmary, written as one word and pronounced by the family—Annm'ry.

The wedding of Annmary Brown and Rush Hawkins took place at Choppequonsett, the Brown country home, in June, 1860. In July the "Hawkins Zouaves" formed as a company with its namesake as its leading spirit; and, before the first year of married life had passed, Civil War had broken out and the Zouaves had been mustered into service. On the day of Lincoln's proclamation they had held a meeting and their leader started that night for Albany. The story is that he appeared at the governor's

office so early the next morning that he was the first New York citizen to offer himself or a company to the Union. It was decided to make the company, which had been privately drilling for some months, the nucleus of a regiment, and the leader was appointed colonel. A poster calling for volunteers was issued. Before the end of the third day, 3,000 recruits had volunteered for the Ninth New York Volunteers, as the Hawkins Zouaves were officially listed. From these, about 800 men were to be selected. The regiment, therefore, was made up of picked men, fitted in every particular for effective service.

Not content with fighting out the war with his troops, on the Carolina coast, at South Mountain, Fredericksburg, Suffolk, etc., Colonel Hawkins organized also a North Carolina Union Regiment and waged several petty wars of his own. Perhaps the most vital service which he rendered his country was his attack upon his commander-in-chief, McClellan, though at the time naturally enough the young colonel gained small thanks for his pains. As he explained it, "I was absolutely full of hatred for McClellan, his incompetence and his pomp, and I was very firm in my denunciation of the man. I went for him without gloves."

The General wrote a very circumstantial account of the personal campaigns in a notebook many years ago. One day he asked me to read it aloud, and I read it from cover to cover. The General listened tense and alert, his face a reflection of all his old-time dash and fire. "There!" he said when it was finished, "I have not read that for

forty years and I never heard it read aloud before. It was written when I was young, hot headed, and it does seem to have some go! But it is history. And every word of it is true."

Twice Colonel Hawkins went to Lincoln and once after the war he met the President. It was his delight to tell of these meetings, especially of the occasion when Lincoln invited him to come back at seven for toast and tea, that they might talk matters over. In the hours before the appointment, wrote the Colonel "I had but one feeling and that was to have the war ended as soon as possible, so that the great load might be lifted from the shoulders of the man whom in a few minutes I had learned to love and respect as I had never loved and respected before. 'Dear old Uncle Abe' was a revelation to me, so sadly quaint, so melancholy, so simple in his manners, humane, sympathetic, and generally so different from anyone I had ever known. The great impression was made. I would willingly have given up my life to have served him."

At the appointed hour, Colonel Hawkins returned and over the toast and tea told of an undesirable officer placed in his regiment by Governor Morgan of New York without his consent as commanding officer, for the resistance of which act he himself had been arrested. Lincoln settled the dispute with these words: "You are clearly in the right and I sympathize with you in your desire for a clean reputation."

The young colonel had been sent by General Wool to Washington, in November, 1861, to learn the intention of

the government as to the retention of Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina, then in the hands of Union forces. While waiting some ten days in Washington, he discovered that the Army of the Potomac was, as he said, "Very efficient in the execution of reviews and of dress parades but was not making any impression upon the enemy's lines, its commander seeming so well satisfied with playing soldier, that it seemed doubtful if he ever intended to move against the rebels." Convinced of the lack of earnestness on the part of General McClellan, Colonel Hawkins (aged thirty) set to work to bring about his removal. He urged the necessity of it upon members of the Cabinet, and of the Senate and the House—but all to no purpose. Among the army officers, none would listen save only General Wadsworth and, later, General Wool, from whom he finally secured a letter addressed to Erastus Corning, a member of Congress, with the writer's permission that the letter might be shown to Lincoln.

Thus fortified Colonel Hawkins returned to Washington. When Lincoln had read the letter he remarked, "General Wool knows more about these matters than we do. It has seemed to me that McClellan ought to do something. I wish you would see him and talk to him as you have to me. Report the result to me," and Lincoln wrote him a card of introduction to McClellan.

The result was that McClellan refused him admittance, in spite of the card. "Can nothing be done?" the Colonel asked when he reported his defeat to Lincoln. "I think not," said Lincoln. "I have placed General McClellan

at the head of the army and must rely upon him to put down this terrible rebellion by giving him the unqualified support of the government." To which came the query: "Mr. President, your position precludes all enquiry into the capacity of a General who has never fought a battle?" "I suppose so, for the present at any rate," and then Lincoln added kindly to his insubordinate subordinate, "If all the officers in the army had your spirit this rebellion would not last six weeks."

The young colonel's campaign against McClellan practically ended here. It was not forgotten, however. In May, 1864, when he saw Lincoln again, someone started to introduce him but Lincoln said, "We don't need an introduction. This is the colonel who in the Fall of 1861 tried to induce me to remove McClellan from command of the Army. At one time I thought I should have to arrest him for a traitorous conspiracy." And after a pause he said to Colonel Hawkins, "Poor George, you knew him better than any of us. I did all I could for him, but he could do nothing for himself."

Someone asked Secretary of War Stanton why it was that Colonel Hawkins was mustered out without being promoted, and the answer was: "I remember him very well. He had the faculty of discovering fools and traitors in advance of the rest of us and was not discreet enough to keep his discoveries to himself." The promotion, however, came in 1866 when by brevet Colonel Hawkins was raised to the rank of brigadier general.

Those who knew him only in later years called him always the "General," but any old-timer who addressed him as "Colonel" gave him real pleasure. And if he were showing a guest through the Memorial he would point to a copy of the Brady-Story portrait of Lincoln hanging in the study, with the words: "A grand old man. That looks just like him, the best portrait of him that exists. He looked just that way the day he invited me to toast and tea."

His autographs of Lincoln were among the most treasured in his collection, particularly the one reading: "Gen. McClellan, please see Col. Hawkins who comes from Gen. Wool. A. Lincoln."

It was a joy to go through his volumes of letters with the General. He would tell all sorts of stories and make running comments on everything he touched. One day we found a photograph of Brigham Young among his mementos. I asked why he had preserved it. "I think any one who could manage forty wives at once was a pretty big man, don't you?" Another time we came upon the picture again and the General exclaimed, "Oh, here's your friend, Bigamy Young!" (As a matter of fact the picture had been sent him by one of the Zouaves who had visited Salt Lake City, and the General had kept it because he was pleased by the man's remembrance.)

He liked to call to mind the turbulent days when he was American Art Commissioner at the Paris Exposition in 1889, and the various artists with whom he became

acquainted at that time. He would sometimes run through the letters of those whose works had to be refused, each of whom had hoped that his works of art might be accepted. "Poor devils," he would say, "I did feel so sorry for many of them—but what could we do?" And in regard to Whistler and the unpleasantness so carefully recorded in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, he remarked offhand, "Whistler just cooked up all that row with me, for publicity."

The General liked best of all to review his book-collecting days and to call to mind the persons he had known in a bookish way. "When I set out to buy my first Gering imprint," he told me, "I went into a bookseller's shop in Paris. We went into a little back room for a chat. I asked him about the possibility of getting a Gering. 'Very difficult,' the bookseller said, and he would not know where to go to look for one. They were scarce even at that time. And while we were talking a French collector came in, charming man; I can't recall his name, but we talked all the afternoon. I asked him. And he said the same. Yet I persevered and you see I have the important ones. I aimed to get the milestones of his career, for he was at work the longest of any of the early printers, and these books show changes in his types and style. It took me years, lots of them, and money too—but I think it was worth it."

He liked two classes of persons: the very highest type of society, truly cultured and therefore most truly simple; and secondly, simple-hearted country folk who, though

perhaps of restricted outlook and untraveled, preserved the sturdy traits characteristic of his own New England forebears.

In fact he liked simplicity in all things, from folks to architecture. In giving his directions for the erection of the Memorial he stipulated that every line should meet every other at right angles, no curves, no ornaments, no rosettes. The cornice on the central portion of the John Carter Brown Library building disturbed him greatly. "If there is anything in spiritualism," he said one day as we crossed the campus together, "and I ever come back to earth in some disembodied form I shall get a chisel and climb up there and knock that gingerbread work all off. The newspapers will say the Germans did it, but you will know who is responsible." And he chuckled gleefully.

The General hated dogma. He refused to accept the belief in immortality because he found "no proof," and this lack of faith he would lament, as if he were without the consolation granted other men. His own break with dogma and his scrutiny of biblical fact and fiction had originally been so far in advance of his contemporaries that he never seemed to realize that the churchmen of the present day had in any sense caught up with his own liberal interpretations.

He had an unfortunate horror of being cheated and in that respect was always on the defensive. But he could sometimes laugh even when the joke was on himself and involved a loss of pence. I remember one incident in

particular. He had ordered 150 sheets of heavy manila foolscap to be used as inventory sheets, each to be punched with two holes at the top that they might be bound together as desired. The paper arrived. Then came 300 large metal rings made like keyrings. We had use for hardly more then 20. Not knowing whether the surplus was due to his mistake or to the packer's, I meditated. Then I wrote him of the arrival of 150 inventory sheets, two holes each, and 300 metal rings—was this as he had ordered? By return mail came a card:

> Three hundred rings means one hundred and fifty sheets of two holes each. This is according to our understanding I believe and correct. Am I right? R. C. H.

This was followed the next day by a note:

> MY DEAR MISS STILLWELL,
>
> This morning at 2 o'clock came to me a vision of the rings—300 for 150 sheets! We must have a cabinet made for this exhibition to be placed in an especially prepared room, with explanation in large letters.
>
> After, in due order, must come an application to a court for the appointment of a guardian. I see no other course.
>
> Yours faithfully,
>
> RUSH C. HAWKINS

And the next time he came to Providence he said apropos of our noble supply of rings, "It was 2:00 A.M. when the idea struck. I laughed so hard I sat right up in bed and shook. Exhibit A—300 holes, 300 rings!"

His desire frequently was not unlike that of Diogenes, and the "search" caused him, I think, much real anguish

of spirit. He was born he would say, "without hope, faith, or fear." No wonder then that he had moments of gloom.

Some inexorable Fate must have bound him to the state for which he professed dislike. Rhode Island he thought little better than a den of thieves. Yet his Hawkins grandfather, his own wife, her cousin John Nicholas Brown, whom he considered a most lovable man, and the trustees and the curator to whom he finally entrusted his treasures were all of Rhode Island origin. In all these persons he had implicit trust, to a degree almost pathetic.

"When I go," he said one day, "I will leave you surrounded by gentlemen and I expect that they will elect their own kind. But some day someone may come along who wants your position and may try to get it. So be careful. Surround yourself by an impenetrable wall. Don't leave any loopholes. Do what is right and you can fight the Devil—or any one else! . . . . I want no additions to be made. The collections are to remain just as they are. The only thing that is free to grow is the mind of the curator! When you have finished the special work I've mapped out, in five or ten years I should say—and if you find time while doing the needful here—then you are free for your writing. I want your position to be like an endowed chair, for study, writing, bibliography, research, whatever in the opinion of the trustees does not interfere with the duties incident and essential to the care of the building and its collections. . . . . In all my visits to the Memorial I have never heard loud voices nor boister-

ous laughter. I want it kept just that way—quiet, serene, and beautiful. It is first of all a memorial to a woman of noble character. It is secondarily a collection of art treasures. Let absolute integrity and honor be your watchwords. These are my last words to you." There was a pause. Then he added with a delightful little chuckle, "If you don't do as you should and it is a possible thing, I'll come back and make you." He was destined to come several times before his death, but he never repeated his charge. That matter he considered settled and for all time.

"Among the finest persons I have ever known," he remarked another time, "were my wife and John Nicholas Brown, both so modest and kind. I remember one stormy Sunday in winter. John and I were out for a walk and we went into Butler Hospital. There were about thirty men in a room only twice as large as this. They were not insane, melancholics, each with his grievance but all right on every other topic. Some were playing checkers or chess, reading, talking, and the air was so blue with smoke you could cut it. After we came out the boy said, 'General Hawkins, don't you think it a shame that those men have to live like that?'

"At other times we would go into the old Providence library, to see Foster, you know. The library was in an old mercantile building, dark, dirty, stuffy, everything a library should not be. And when we came away John would say to me, 'Don't you think it a shame'—that was a great phrase of his as a boy—'Don't you think it a shame

that a fine man like Mr. Foster has to work in a place like that?' And I would say, 'Yes, John, I think it is.'

"It was about the year 1897 when he was in Cannes that he wrote to the trustees of the Library, a very simple letter it was, saying that if they would erect a building he would bear the expense and he sent them checks for more than two hundred thousand dollars."

To the institutions in whose work the General was interested he himself gave liberal support. The General had a very humane side to his nature, especially in his love and compassion for four-footed animals. His book on his animal friends, which bears the laconic title *Better than Men*, is most fascinating reading. In it he tells of the various dogs who had been his comrades since his boyhood days in Vermont; of an alligator whom he for a while deprived of its "bathing accommodations"; of the intelligent crow who lived in the library at Toddington Manor, England, where he used so often to visit. The General had very decided ideas about diet. He would eat game, but not meat, and he one time startled a hostess who offered him meat by the query, "Madam, do you think I would eat my brother?"

In his later years he became strongly addicted to rice pudding. He even advocated it strongly and used to tell me at intervals that it was all I needed "for maintenance and enjoyment. Rice pudding—and just a little milk, three times a day." And rice pudding obviously had an excellent effect upon his constitution. Up to the time of his last visit to the Memorial, two weeks before his death,

the portrait by Gari Melchers was, as always, an excellent likeness. Sometimes if the General were a trifle tired he would stoop a bit, or if he were quite fatigued his color would not be so good. But ordinarily he was quite as erect and rosy as the portrait represents. "I have felt like that a hundred times," he would say, "when I have sat with an old book in my hand trying to think out its identity." Instead of flattering the General's age, the portrait if anything lacks a little in virility, for in moments of pleasure or excitement his old-time dash would come back in force.

Mr. Dilnot in his *New America* speaks of the General as a person who conveyed something of himself in his looks—"spare and gaunt, with a long face, a fighter's jaw, a delicate uprearing forehead, with a glint of humor in eyes and mouth, and the eagle nose of the man contemptuous of fear or favor." In bearing, Mr. Dilnot likened him to the Duke of Wellington, the "Iron Duke" as he was called. All of which is quite true. Many persons even found him to be ironclad throughout. Mr. Pollard, on the other hand, has likened him in some respects to Walter Savage Landor. To still others he seemed at heart not so unlike a little boy, and a lovable one at that.

The present sketch of the General was originally written at the request of the Memorial's Trustees. It is also, in a sense, a commission from the General himself. "If you ever write anything about me after I am gone," he would say, "tell the truth! Paint me as I am, without flattery, without malice. Don't write a string of dates!

I don't want a list of the things I did—with the emphasis on the '*when*' I did them. Paint me as I am."

That is what I have tried to do, to paint him as I saw him. The fact that many of these incidents have a humorous turn does not mean that they are told in flippant spirit. They are told because they are so like the General; because it is little stories such as these that his friends and acquaintances now cherish in memory of a grand old man —who in his ninetieth year met life, and then death, undaunted.