

## **Jesse Bowman Young**

(1844-1914)

*Central Pennsylvania Conference Methodist Preacher*

Jesse Bowman Young was born at Berwick PA on July 5, 1844. His father, Rev. Jared Harrison Young (1810-1855), was a Methodist minister of German descent. His mother, Sarah Bowman (1817-1877), was of German and Scotch-Irish descent and part of a prominent family line of Methodist clergy that included her first cousin Bishop Thomas Bowman (1817-1914).

At the outbreak of the war Jesse was attending Williamsport Dickinson Seminary – but he did not return to school in the fall of 1861, as he was planning to go into the army as soon as he could gain his widowed mother’s consent to spare her only son. This he secured when offered the opportunity of accompanying his uncle General Samuel M. Bowman, then a major in the Fourth Illinois Cavalry. He served as private secretary and orderly to General Bowman from November 13, 1861, to June 1, 1862 – without pay and without enlistment or muster in, on account of his deficient age and size.

In the summer of 1862 he returned to Berwick and assisted in securing recruits for the Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, and was commissioned Second Lieutenant in that regiment on October 4, 1862. In early June, 1863, he became an Assistant Provost Marshall. In that capacity he shared in the Battle of Gettysburg – being the only member of his regiment on the field, by reason of the Eighty-fourth having been detached just prior to the battle to guard the wagon trains.

On December 23, 1864, he was mustered out with his regiment and under that date in his diary thus aptly summed up his army life: “Today, with the accumulated experience, discipline and education of three years in the army, I leave the service. I have learned more than I would have done in college.”

In 1866 he graduated from Williamsport Dickinson Seminary, and in the fall of that year entered Lafayette College with the intention of becoming a civil engineer. In a short time, however, the traditions and inherited traits of his Methodist ancestry asserted themselves and he decided to go into the ministry, graduating from Dickinson College in 1868. It happened that his first service as a circuit rider was at York Springs (1868-71) in the territory adjacent to Gettysburg, and his first settled charge (1871-74) was in the town of Gettysburg itself. There in the Methodist parsonage, which bore in its upper story a shell which had entered the house during the battle, he wrote his noted lecture “Echoes from Round Top: The Story of a Great Battle” – which he delivered more than a thousand times. It was there he began the study of that battle that culminated in his 1913 book *The Battle of Gettysburg*.

Jesse Bowman Young went on to a distinguished career as the pastor of some of the Methodism's larger churches in three different conferences, and as one of the editors of the denomination's newspaper, *The Christian Advocate*. He is the author of the following books in the Susquehanna Conference archives collection: *Our Lord and Master* (1903), *The Hungry Christ* (1904), *What a Boy Saw in the Army* (1904), *Today: An Age of Opportunity* (1909), *Helps for the Quiet Hour* (1909), *The Battle of Gettysburg* (1913), and *The Money Mania: An Appeal to the Young People* (n.d.).

In keeping with the intent of this volume of *The Chronicle*, to relate the personal stories of our United Methodist ancestors directly related to the events at Gettysburg, we refer readers interested in more detail to his two Civil War books, *What a Boy Saw in the Army* and *The Battle of Gettysburg*.

### **A Gettysburg Perspective**

*The following section, with minor editing for continuity, is taken from the Introduction to J.B. Young's 1913 The Battle of Gettysburg and gives his personal reasons for researching and writing about the events recorded in his books. -ed.*

The man who at this remove from the events in question ventures upon a fresh survey of the campaign and battle of Gettysburg, particularly in view of the body of literature already bearing on that theme, owes to himself and the public a representation of the sufficing reasons which may be alleged to justify the enterprise.

Accordingly, my motives in the preparation of this work, and an intimation of the special features which distinguish it, may herewith be rehearsed.

- (1) Although but a stripling, I was an officer in the battle. While serving as First Lieutenant, Company B, Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania Infantry, I was detached from my regiment, at the opening of the campaign, two days after we had left or winter rendezvous at Falmouth, and assigned to duty at the headquarters of that great soldier, Brig. Gen. Andrew A. Humphreys, Third Army Corps. In this capacity I took part in the campaign, my duties on the march and in the battle giving me unusual opportunities, in view of my youth, to be in personal touch with the great movement.
- (2) For a dozen years after the war I resided almost continuously in the Cumberland Valley, Pennsylvania, and in Adams County adjoining, of which Gettysburg is the county seat, for three years of time in Gettysburg itself; my duties as a circuit rider leading me in due time, week by week, all over the roads traversed by the two armies which fought on that field. I thus became in a singular way familiar with every village, thoroughfare, and mountain pass connected in any way with the campaign, from the Potomac to the Susquehanna and throughout the intervening territory. During those years the different landscapes, along with the incidents and

movements in question, wove themselves into panoramic visions in my brain so vividly that they have become an indelible part of my experience. The air was then vibrant with reminiscences of the battle; every crossroad and orchard and farmhouse, every man, woman and child, had a story to tell concerning the marching of the two militant hosts to and from the place of encounter, the tragic phases of the fight, and the later scenes in the hospitals – these, in their cumulative impressions, interfibering with my own experiences and observations, helped to make it imperative that I should in due time organize at least some of the data into a narrative.

- (3) During my residence in Gettysburg I came to know by personal contact and daily study every foot of the great battlefield, and almost literally the location of every organization on either side which took part in the engagement. I knew the veteran guides who had made it their vocation to go over the field every day, gathering up fresh impressions and reminiscences from survivors returning to visit the place; and I was furthermore advantaged by intimate friendship with the men who organized the Battlefield Memorial Association, out of whose prescient plans came the formation of the National Cemetery, and then the Military Park. In the midst of these scenes, and prompted by these unusual associations and stimuli, I prepared a lecture on the engagement, “The Story of a Great Battle,” which was delivered hundreds of times. Some twenty years later, in the early nineties, I went over my material, old and new, and incorporated it afresh in three chapters of my volume, *What a Boy Saw in the Army*. These tasks – although the byproducts of a busy life – served to keep Gettysburg constantly in mind, so that from year to year all new data which came to light in the form of reminiscences, personal experiences, and military criticisms from leading officers were instinctively seized upon and assimilated.
- (4) A further event which deepened my interest in the battle was the commemoration prepared by Pennsylvania in remembrance of her soldier sons, and embodied in the magnificent memorial erected by that Commonwealth on the field in September, 1910. In advance of that celebration I was attracted to study afresh the record made in the campaign by Pennsylvania officers and men, and to locate and define the work of each individual organization furnished by the Commonwealth. These studies proved so fructifying to my own mind, and awakened such interest on the part of some who read them, that I was gradually led to undertake the broader range of inquiry and the comprehensive plans which have at last eventuated in this completed form.
- (5) In pursuing this enterprise my recent residence of four years in Jacksonville, Florida, gave me access to a fresh body of information concerning the men and movements of the Army of Northern Virginia, information wholly new to the great mass of the reading public and known only to expert students here and there in the land – such as the

*Confederate Military History* compiled a few years ago under the editorial supervision of the late Maj. Gen. Clement A. Evans of Atlanta, a similar enterprise in half a dozen large volumes pertaining to the troops of North Carolina, and many other works rich in Confederate memorabilia.

- (6) Necessarily the portions of the *Official Records* dealing with the Gettysburg campaign – namely Parts I, II, and III, in what is styled Volume XXVII, each “Part” being an octavo volume of more than a thousand pages – have been read and reread again and again. No student can consult these volumes without feeling afresh the debt he owes to the skillful, alert, and accomplished men who for years carried forward to completion this colossal enterprise. The effort has been made to scan, analyze, and organize, so far as possible, all the information in print bearing on the subject at hand. It may be taken as a matter of course that no well-informed man would undertake to write elaborately of this battle without having at hand, for at least occasional consultation, the great work of the Comte de Paris, *The History of the Civil War in America*, translated with masterly skill by Col. John P. Nicholson, for many years at the head of the Gettysburg Park Commission, himself an officer in the battle, who was at the end of the war thrice brevetted for gallantry.

It remains only to add that this volume has been prepared in view of the semi-centennial of the battle – July 1-3, 1913 – with the hope that it may be found to contain a valuable body of information, a fresh treatment of some phases of the campaign not hitherto fully utilized, and a worthy contribution to the literature of the Great Battle.

For skillful labor in preparing this manuscript for the publishers, in verifying names and other data, and for valuable suggestions in the case, I am indebted to my son, Jared Wilson Young. It chanced that he was born in Gettysburg years after the battle, in a parsonage whose shattered upper wall bore an unexploded shell which lodged therein during the cannonade. That fact in after-time may have helped to interest him in the various phases of the battle.

### **The Battle Is At Hand**

*The following section, with minor editing (including changing from the third person to the first person), is taken from Chapter 17 of J.B. Young's What a Boy Saw in the Army and gives his personal thoughts and reminiscences as a teenage soldier outside Gettysburg sensing that a big battle is at hand. -ed.*

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of June my regiment, the Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania, was assigned to duty with the wagon trains, to act as their guard and convoy, miles away in the rear. It so happened that I, detached from the regiment, shared in the engagement because I was on duty at division headquarters. That night everyone in the scattered army corps of the bivouacking hosts felt the pressure of suspense,

perplexity, and uncertainty, and they asked with anxious hearts, "What will the morrow bring forth?"

Early on the morning of Wednesday, July 1, Humphrey's division of the Third Corps marched from Bridgeport to Emmitsburg, a few miles distant, in a northwest direction, where they were ordered to throw up earthworks and make a line of entrenchments that would serve for protection in case of an attack. It was still uncertain where Lee might be, and in the march feelers were thrown out in all directions to avoid surprise.

The regiments were deployed in their various positions, which had been chosen with care in view of the possibility that an engagement might occur at the very point where they were digging and entrenching themselves, when suddenly there was heard to the northward an answer to the question which had been asked for a week or more by everybody in the Army of the Potomac: "Where is the rebel army? What is Lee going to do? What is he aiming at?"

A decisive answer to this series of perplexing questions was now heard booming through the air from the hills to the north, each cannon shot saying: "Here is the Army of Northern Virginia. We are arrayed for battle. You have been looking for us; now we report our whereabouts. We are at Gettysburg, equipped for fight. Come and meet us, if you dare!"

Every man in the command heard the sounds of the opening battle with quickened pulse and with bated breath. He knew it meant a summons for him shortly to hurry to the field, and he felt, furthermore, that the struggle would be one of the fiercest ever fought in the annals of war. If ever the Army of the Potomac was to put on its mettle, and felt it had to do its utmost in behalf of the flag and land it loved, it was in view of this conflict now commencing at Gettysburg.

General Humphreys, listening to the cannonade, which soon became hot and quick and was reinforced by the sounds of musketry, at once said: "That means an engagement. General Reynolds has with him the First and Eleventh Corps and is out on a scout, but he has clearly run into the advance of Lee's army, and the decisive battle may be on at this hour. We must be ready to march at an instant's warning. And yet we must keep our preparations here, so that if we are taken in flank, or if we have to retreat from Gettysburg, where that firing is, I suppose, we may not suffer from an attack on the road."

The morning waned away, and the division still stayed at Emmitsburg, busy with the spade, alert with its pickets, watching the roads entering town from the west, and waiting for orders and for news. Everyone wondered: "What is the issue of the fight? Who is winning the day? Is this a skirmish between a couple of divisions, or is it a regular battle? And will it prove to be the prelude to the great engagement which has been inevitable since Lee crossed the Potomac?"

About noon a few frightened refugees arrived from near the town of Gettysburg with all sorts of frightful tales to relate. "An awful battle is going on

up yonder. General Lee has his army all there and is driving our men. We were glad enough to get away.” This was the dismal tale that was told with many embellishments and additions by the alarmed people who had fled from the scene.

So the morning passed, the battle in the distance growing hotter and fiercer as fresh troops were apparently led into the fight on either side. General Sickles, the corps commander, restive and eager in spirit as he listened to the cannonade, and his men, like hounds held in by the leash with the prey in open sight, were chafing and impatient for permission to march to the field; yet his orders were to hold and fortify Emmitsburg, lest it might be seized by the advancing Confederates and occupied by them to threaten our line of communications.

About 3 o’clock an officer was seen urging his horse at full speed toward the troops, coming from the direction of the firing. He halted at General Sickles’ headquarters and delivered his message:

“General Howard sent me to you, General Sickles, with the suggestion that you come at once to Gettysburg. A hot battle has been raging there since this morning. At 10 o’clock General Reynolds was shot dead by a rebel sharpshooter. Howard got there in time to take charge of the field, but he is hard pressed. Only two corps, the Eleventh and the First, are on the field. Our men were holding their ground when I left, but fresh troops were arriving on the rebel side, and reinforcements are needed at once. Your men will have to march about ten or eleven miles to get there. General Howard simply makes a *suggestion*; he hardly feels justified in giving you an *order* to come. But he has sent the same message to Slocum, down at Two Taverns east of Gettysburg; and he hopes he will respond.”

General Sickles, always eager for a fight, needed but a suggestion in order to prompt him to march. Birney was not far away, at the head of the First Division, and he was ordered to lead off. Two brigades were left behind to guard the position for the time, and an officer was dispatched to General Meade, whose headquarters were at Taneytown, ten miles eastward, with news of the movement and the reason for it. And off the Third Corps started on the march for the fight, Sickles galloping eagerly ahead with his staff in order to survey the field and to be able to locate his troops intelligently when they should arrive.

General Humphrey’s division was ordered to take a roundabout course by a road two miles distant from the main route, lying to the west of it, and somewhat rough and untraveled. Soon after leaving Emmitsburg the general began to receive news of disaster and trouble that had overtaken our troops in Gettysburg. Fugitives now and then appeared with stirring stories of defeat, which soon became too one-sided to make it possible for them not to have some solid basis of fact. “Reynolds is killed! Our men are whipped! The rebels are there in overwhelming force! The day is lost!” These were the occasional rumors that beset the advancing division.

Lieutenant Colonel Hayden, inspector general of Sickles' staff, had been sent back by General Sickles to guide the division to its place in the line at Gettysburg. He was confident that he had been ordered to bring them to Gettysburg from the west, by way of the Black Horse Tavern, on the Fairfield road, three miles west of Gettysburg. But as General Humphreys and his men marched swiftly along, they were continually warned to look out for danger in that direction. At one point in the march a citizen of the vicinity said in alarm: "You are getting into dangerous quarters! The rebel army is advancing from that direction! That part of the country is overrun with Confederates! The woods are full of them! Look out!"

General Humphreys knew he must be approaching the enemy's lines, and he sent word to the buglers to utter no sound and directed that as little noise as possible be made by the men in watching. In accordance with these orders canteens were strapped up close, the artillery went with caution, the horsemen rode with care, and everyone marched as though stepping on eggs.

Further on the way toward Gettysburg, about nightfall, a staff officer of Howard met the column and expressed surprise that they were being led through the byroad and in a direction that would bring them to a point west of Gettysburg: "None of our troops, General Humphreys, are anywhere in that vicinity. That region is full of Confederates. You are liable at any moment to receive an attack on your left flank if you keep on much further. Our men have been driven pell-mell through the town. Gettysburg itself is held by the rebels, and our forces have fallen back a full mile and a half from the point where the battle began this morning. You are going into a dangerous region. We are all stationed on Cemetery Hill, to the south of town. There the rebels may attack us at any time, but you are going right into their jaws if you keep on in that direction."

Colonel Hayden replied to this warning: "My orders from General Sickles are to bring this division by way of the Black Horse Tavern, on the Fairfield road, and until those orders are countermanded we shall keep right on – rebels or no rebels."

The night, meanwhile, closed in, and the sound of battle, which had come to an end about 4 o'clock, had been succeeded by occasional scattering fire, seemingly from skirmishers. The troops hurried their steps in order to reach their bivouac, wherever it might be, and get some rest before the work of the morrow. The general and his staff had reached the tavern. When they arrived in sight of it, and had ridden up to its long, inviting, old-fashioned porch to alight, Colonel Hayden said to General Humphreys, "Here is a good roof to sleep under tonight, and tomorrow morning we will march to Gettysburg."

It so happened that a wounded Union soldier on parole from another part of the army was at his home in the neighborhood. He was on the watch for our men, lest they might be drawn into an ambush. On catching sight of the advancing column of Humphreys, led by their general, he came out from his

hiding place and spoke with amazement to one of the staff. In a hushed voice, and trying to hide his anxiety, he said in a surprised and quizzical air, "Colonel, don't you know you're inside rebel lines?"

Colonel Hayden, with indignation and amazement, thought at first that a trick was being played upon him, and he retorted in his rough way, "Do you not know you can be shot for lying?" The man was silent for a moment, and then, seeing that he was misunderstood, and knowing that this was no time for any long harangue or elaborate explanation, he replied, "Well. Colonel, if you cannot smell the brimstone here, look yonder and you can see it a-burning!"

The officer and those who were with him took a hasty glance across the creek, and to their unutterable astonishment, they saw on the slopes of the hill the smoldering campfires of the rebels. Not a quarter of a mile away, across the creek and out the road, westward, was a party of Confederate pickets. And within five minutes after General Humphreys had been warned of the situation and made his preparations accordingly, twenty or thirty of Longstreet's [Confederate General James Longstreet] men arrived at the tavern and stopped there for the night. General Humphreys, with utmost self-possession, without any indication of anxiety or disturbance, sent his staff quietly back to the troops, where they stood expecting orders to go into camp for the night.

After marching over rough roads, and wading through a creek or two, the men were suddenly halted. They were resting for a moment, glad to get a breathing spell, and then a quiver of excitement passed through the ranks, and the "goose flesh" was made to run up and down everybody's spinal column in spasmodic and frequent currents by the news that was passed from man to man in a hushed and anxious voice: "About face, boys! We have to countermarch! We have run into rebels. Get out of this as quickly and as quietly as you can. Make no noise. We are in the rear of the Confederate army."

Need I say that these orders were gladly obeyed? That division was in the rear of the rebel line of battle at midnight, and four or five miles away from any other Union troops. They felt lonesome, and they allowed no grass to grow under their feet as they made swift and silent steps back to the road they were now directed to take. As rapidly as was consistent with the dignity of the Army of the Potomac and the reputation of the Third Army Corps, they made their way out of that hornets' nest. Why, even the horses seemed to catch the spirit of the occasion, and they went along as though their feet had been wrapped in cotton. Nobody even breathed hard, and like an army of ghosts that division glided through the forest and across the fields and through the creeks, intent now only on getting back inside the Union line of battle!

And when at last, about one in the morning, streaming with perspiration, nervously exhausted from the strain they had been under, the men arrived upon the hillside whereon they were to throw themselves for the remainder of the night,

no words can describe the feeling of relief with which one said to another, "Boys, I never want to stop at the Black Horse Tavern again."

Over the hills of southern Pennsylvania, on which portions of a great army had bivouacked, the day broke on the morning of July 2 clear and beautiful, with abundant promise of heat after the sun had a fair chance to climb up the sky. I, with my company, had been sleeping only three or four hours when we were aroused by orders to take position in the line of battle. After a hasty breakfast, we had opportunity to look about us to study the situation. The division found itself posted, with the other troops of the Third Corps, on ridges running north and south, with a peaceful interval between them and a peach orchard nearly a mile away in their front, to the west. Beyond the orchard, which was on another ridge, along which ran a public highway, were glimpses of forests. And still beyond, ten miles off, lay the blue and beautiful South Mountain range. Everybody expected that a battle would open at daybreak, but dawn and sunrise came. Now and then a shot would be heard in the woods beyond the peach orchard, but with that exception no fighting occurred. The time was occupied with silence – the stillness not of inactivity, helplessness or repose, but the awful silence of reconnoitering and preparing for battle – the hush that goes before the storm.

While the troops lay in line early in the morning, ready to spring to their feet at a moment's warning when the signal might be given, I saw a friend riding along the Taneytown road – Major Halstead, of General Doubleday's staff. Greeting my old friend, I asked for insight into the "military situation." We had a dreadful day of it," said the captain, summing up the experiences of the first day's battle. "The two corps that were engaged – the First and the Eleventh – were cut to pieces. We were in the battle from about 9 o'clock till four in the afternoon – for the first three or four hours yonder along that ridge to the northwest of town, which lies to our north two miles away. There Reynolds fell early in the fight, one of the ablest and most gallant officers in the Union army. If he had lived he would have been at the top before long. About noon we had to look out for our flank and rear, which were threatened by Confederates who came in from the north and east, from Carlisle and York, so that we were liable to be caught between two fires. After struggling there to the north of town for a while, we were beaten at every point by an overwhelming force and had to retreat to Cemetery Hill. The Confederates followed us through the town, which they occupied, capturing many prisoners, including many of our wounded who were left in the field. That, in brief, is the story of yesterday."

"Are our troops all here?" was my anxious question.

"Here come the Second Corps," said the major, "while we speak of them, up the Taneytown road, ready for battle. Hancock came yesterday afternoon and helped in the final arrangements for the battle that is to be fought here. His corps in part arrived last night, and this is the rest of it." And while we two conversed,

the eager, gallant men of the Second Corps, with their trefoil badge, with music and with banners, marched gaily by – ready for battle.

“The Twelfth Corps, under Slocum, came last night, and we are all anxiously looking for General Sedgwick and his glorious old Sixth Corps, who are on the march. If we are attacked before they arrive it may be a bad thing for us. They can hardly get here till noon, but they will do their best to reach us as early as possible, I’ll warrant you.”

“Where is our line of battle?” I pursued, anxious to locate myself in view of the topography of the region.

“This hill off to the left,” said Major Halstead, pointing southward, “is Round Top, and as I understand it that is to be the extreme left. Our line of battle runs from that point northward to the other hill you see this side of Gettysburg, called Cemetery Hill, and thence off to the east, terminating at Culp’s Hill, two miles or more from us off in that northeast direction. It is a splendid line of battle. The Army of the Potomac could not ask for a better position to defend.”

“Do you think Lee will attack us?” I said.

“He cannot help it. He durst not waste any time; he cannot back out now. He had a lucky day yesterday, and his men are in high feather over their victory. They think they can do anything after their triumph. Certainly he will attack us sometime today. I wonder why he has not begun the battle before this, but perhaps he has not all his troops in hand either. He may be waiting for his concentrating columns to reinforce those already here before making his attack. But be very sure he is going to attack us, and we will have a dreadful battle. This is the turning point. If Lee whips us here the Union is lost. If we win, Lee’s army ought to be demolished before it reaches Virginia again.”

The picture presented to my eye as the major uttered his closing sentence and rode away I can never forget. The morning was passing, and still the troops waited on the ground – seemingly idle, but really alert and watchful and intent.

Suddenly a woman and a couple of children appeared on the scene – frightened, pallid, crossing the fields between the lines and making their way through the Union troops. She asked for one of the Pennsylvania reserve regiments, and was directed toward it not far away. I watched the scene and saw a touching greeting exchange between one of the soldiers and the group of visitors – who proved to be the veteran’s wife and children whom he had not seen for a year, and who had come from a farm near by, on the battlefield itself. They were escaping from the scene of conflict, had a lunch for the soldier, and with tears and sobs which stirred the hearts of all the comrades, passed over the hill and out of sight down the Taneytown road.

Soon the division surgeon, Doctor Calhoun, rode up, arrayed with his green sash, to indicate the location of the hospital. “The wounded are to be brought over yonder to the tent erected near Rock Creek, in the valley beyond this

hill, across the Taneytown road.” And having given his orders and located his ambulance corps, away he went to see that his knives and saws were in order, and that the supply of chloroform and ether and liquor were ample for any possible demands that might arise during the battle.

Turning again toward the rear, I saw scores of cannon, battery after battery, parked on the hill a mile away to the east, with the ammunition train, packed full of various explosives ready for use, close beside. That was the part of the reserve artillery under General Hunt. Meanwhile, up and down the Taneytown road aides were rapidly riding with messages from the different officers in command – and in the distance clouds of dust arose, indicating that troops were still marching to their place in the line. By 9 o’clock nearly all the army was present for action except the Sixth Corps, which was hurrying with desperate speed to the field.

As the day wore away and the excitement of the first hours of preparation subsided, I began to experience a distressing measure of reaction and nervous exhaustion. I lay on the grass in a very sober mood – now running my eye along the gathering lines of men, now peering anxiously across the landscape to the westward – noting the woods behind which the Confederates were concentrating their forces, and wondering why the battle did not open. It was fortunate, indeed, for the Union army that an early attack was not made. If Stonewall Jackson had been alive, and had opened his guns on the left of the Union army, in the vicinity of Round Top at sunrise, as he would have been like to do, he would have found our line half formed and our army not all present and the soldiers exhausted with their fatiguing night marches. Instead of any such attack, however, the day wore away until nearly four in the afternoon before any real fighting occurred.

That last hour of waiting – how dreadful it was! Every man knew that a death struggle between two great armies was imminent. The next hour would summon all of them to face the storm of battle – and would doom thousands of them to wounds, maiming, death, or imprisonment. Quiet reigned all along that bristling line of battle, where the boys lay waiting for the orders to move forward or for the appearance of the attacking forces out beyond the peach orchard.

During this period of repose, I had some serious thoughts. Above all other meditations – thoughts of home, of loved ones far away, of the course of the battle – sounded in my soul the question: “What about the future? Suppose you are killed, what will become of you? In a few moments the tempest will break over this field and you will have to face it. You cannot now escape in any way from this emergency. Are you ready to meet God and face the issues of another world?”

I sat on the grass troubled and aghast at the outlook. I had been trained in a religious home, had been taught to be a Christian from childhood – but amid the roughness, the exposures, the grossness, and the dissipation of army life for nearly two years, many of these lessons and early impressions had grown dim; many of

these admonitory voices which I had been taught to heed at home had ceased to influence me. Now, in a desperate emergency, with the possibilities of death before me, my sins rose up in alarming array, and my neglected soul was smitten with a sense of its needy and suppliant condition. “O Lord, have mercy on me!” was the single cry of my broken heart as I sought to keep back the tears, maintain my composure, and hide the tumult which disturbed my breast.

Then I bethought myself of the Bible I carried, my mother’s parting gift, the book that I had neglected and slighted of late. Turning to it and catching at it as a drowning man at a straw, I opened it at random. The leaves parted at the 121<sup>st</sup> Psalm, and my eyes fell, as I glanced at the page, on these words: “The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul.”

The utterance seemed like a direct revelation from the skies. I felt as though there were some One who had taken knowledge of my destitute estate, my fears, my remorse, my sorrow, my anxiety – my cry for help. The words got hold of me, and I got hold of the words with a grip that has never ceased from that day to this. The vows made in that hour of danger and trouble were never forgotten, and while brooding on the passage so strangely applicable to my time of peril and want, my heart was lightened and at least a part of the burden was rolled away.

### **The Rest of the Story**

The dramatic re-commitment to Christ that Jesse Bowman Young made just before his unit was pressed into the fight at the Battle of Gettysburg proved solid enough to carry him through the rest of this life. He was admitted to the East Baltimore Conference in 1868 and became a charter member of the Central Pennsylvania Conference when that body was created by General Conference and organized later that same year. His official service record is as follows.

1868-71	York Springs
1871-74	Gettysburg
1874-77	Curwensville
1877-80	Carlisle
1880-83	Altoona Eighth Avenue
1883-85	agent, Dickinson College
1885-88	Harrisburg Grace
1888	transfer to St. Louis Conference
1888-92	Kansas City MO Grand Avenue
1892-00	editor, Central Christian Advocate
1900	transfer to Cincinnati Conference
1900-09	Cincinnati Walnut Hills
1909	transfer to Saint Johns River Conference [FL]
1909-13	Jacksonville Snyder Memorial
1913	transfer to North Indiana Conference
1913	retired

After the war, Jesse Bowman Young returned to Williamsport Dickson Seminary, from which he graduated in 1866. He graduated from Dickinson College in 1868, and immediately entered the traveling ministry. On December 22, 1870 he married Lucy Minshall Spottswood. Miss Spottswood was the daughter of noted Methodist clergyman Wilson Lee Spottswood, who at the time of their union was the president of Williamsport Dickinson Seminary – and the wedding took place in the Seminary Chapel. Jesse and Lucy were the parents of one son and four daughters.

The last public appearance of Jesse Bowman Young was at a patriotic service on the night of July 5, 1914, his birthday. Rounding out his three score years and ten, he delivered for the last time his lecture on Gettysburg, and a no more fitting ending to his sketch can be given than his own concluding words on that occasion, when in speaking of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, he said: "Here rest the defenders of the flag, but not here alone. Along the Potomac, the Cumberland and the James, underneath the palmetto and the pine, by the far away coast and beneath the blue waves of the sea, under decorated monuments, or in the unmarked trenches that furrow a thousand battlefields, sleep the Union dead. They have fought their last battle, made their last charge, gone on their last campaign. They rest secure from alarms; the enemy's bullets can never disturb their slumber; the frenzy of the strife will never stir their pulses; the last tattoo has sounded. Let them sleep on till the last great Reveille shall summon them to the final Roll Call of the Resurrection. Comrades of the armies of the dead, as we call up the scenes made resplendent in all history by your heroism and valor, we can feel again your shadowy presence with us on earth. We marched and messed and fought together. We shared the same shelter-tent, endured the same hardships, drank from the same canteen! Comrades, ye are not dead. In the pages of history, in the prosperity of the land you rescued from ruin, in the monuments that tell where your dust reposes, in the hearts of a grateful people, in the roll-book of the world's noblest heroes, ye shall live forever! Brave men, illustrious soldiers, loved Companions, Hail and Farewell!"

Jesse Bowman Young died July 30, 1914, and is buried in the Rose Hill Cemetery, Chicago IL.

