

**The Constitution: Atlanta, GA**  
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**“OLD HOCK’S” STORY**

Bill Arp Writes about the Good Old Englishman  
HOW HE SAILED TO AMERICA

Left His Sweetheart and Shipped as a Stowaway - Girl Found Him in America  
Soon Afterwords

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(Beginning is unrelated)

... always reminds me of a good old man, a comrade, Captain John Hockenhull, an Englishman by birth, but a Georgia rebel who used to recite poetry for us around the campfires in 1862 and 1863. We called him “Old Hock” and everybody loved him for he was a cockney and dropped the h’s where he should not, and vice versa. There is always a charm in broken English and to murder the king’s English is of no great offense. “Old Hock” knew a good deal of Tom Moore and Burns and Hood and Campbell and it was a treat to hear him say: “The ‘eart that is ‘umble might ‘ope for it ‘ere.”

He knew that other sweet ballad of Anne Crawford: *“Kathleen Mavourneen, the gray dawn is breaking. The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill.”* And he always said “The ‘orn of the ‘unter is ‘eard on the ‘ill.”

The “Exile of Erin,” which he called the “Hexile of Herin” was another of his favorites. He learned these poems from his sweetheart while he was an apprentice in London - an orphan boy bound for seven years to a hard master, a brewer, and his daily service was to carry the jars of malt from the cellar up a flight of stone steps to the floor above. He never had a kind word from his master, and one day he tripped and fell and broke a jar and was bitterly abused for it, and told that he had forfeited the £20 that he was to get when his term was out. He was then 18 and had yet three years to toil at his hard monotonous work. That night he poured out his heart to the girl he loved and declared he would run away and go to America on the

first sail vessel that left the port. That he would make some money here and send it to her if she would promise to come to him, and then they would marry and be so happy - and she promised. Within a week the opportunity came. He told one of the sailors his sad story and the sailor told the mate, and they took him aboard by night and hid him down in the hold of the vessel until the good ship was far out to sea. “Old Hock” told it all one cold night at Manassas and how sad and sweet was his last kiss, his last embrace, his last goodbye. He choked up sometimes and the tears glistened in his eyes, but it was a pretty story and Dickens could build upon it, and made a tender romance.

This was away back in the forties when our state was building the Western and Atlantic railroad and wanted laborers and had sent a man to New York to hire immigrants as they landed at Castle Garden. “Old Hock” did not have to wait a day, but was hired and shipped to Atlanta and from there to Allatoona, where he did his first work. He said he did not feel safe upon the ocean voyage or in New York harbor, for he feared he might in some way be caught as a fugitive and taken back, but when he got to Allatoona and saw the woods all around him and the high hills and deep ravines and mingled with the good kind-hearted men and women, he felt safe and free. “I never knew what freedom was before, and you Hamericans ‘av no hidea w’at a blessing it is. The good woman w’ere I boarded and her daughter were so kind and gentle to me that I would ‘av ‘ugged them if I dared, but I thought all of the time of the girl I had left behind me and it nerved me to good ‘onest

work and the contractor soon raised my wages, and in six months I 'ad a 'undred dollars in bank and got a good man to send it to another good man in New York, and he found the same captain I came hover with and he took it to my sweetheart, and she came back with him, and while I was every day looking for a letter she took me by surprise one morning and brought the letter with her, and we just fell into heach hother's harms like - like - like - major, hecuse me now, I must go and look hafter my 'oss."

He had named his fine mar Emma, so that he could call her Hemma, I reckon. But we made him finish the story afterwards and tell how one good friend volunteered to go after the license, and another after the preacher, and his landlady baked some cake and got up a hextra supper and they were married that night at her 'ouse, and all he remembers about what the preacher said was: "Whom God 'ath joined together, let no man put hasunder."

"Old Hock" was a patriot, a good, honest and true man. His neighbors at his home in Dawson County all loved and honored him, and there was not a man in his regiment (the Eleventh Georgia) more beloved by the men that he fed, for he was chosen their commissary early in the war, and you know it is so natural to love those who feed you well. When rations were short he would travel all night to secure supplies and the boys knew that if "Old Hock" couldn't get what they wanted, nobody could. But in course of time, the old man got sick and wanted to go home. Other officers had got furloughs, but he had never asked for one. He went to bed and sent for me and told me he was sick and if he didn't get a furlough he believed he would get sicker and perhaps die away from 'ome. I suspected that he was homesick, but he looked sick and I sent up his application. The army had been for some days sweltering in the hot summer's sun not far from Richmond. The application was referred to headquarters at Richmond, and I took it in to the proper official, who glanced at it and said: "Important movements are daily expected, and all furloughs to go home

are strictly prohibited. The best I can do is send the captain to Farmville for thirty days." There was an army hospital at Farmville, which was only 30 miles south of Richmond, where sick officers were sent to rest and be treated for their ailments. And so he endorsed upon it "Farmville," and in the next blank said "thirty days." Suddenly a thought came over me that I could not resist. I knew that "Old Hock's" postoffice in Georgia was named "Farmville." I stepped into the hotel and took a pen and quickly added "Ga." to the word. I knew that it was risky and rascally, but I did it, and took it to "Old Hock" and told him to get ready to leave next morning. How quickly he brightened up and how thankful he was to me. He went home on that pass and came back in due time, renewed and recovered. He said the conductor looked 'ard at him and at the pass, but let him go by the hospital and then he felt safe. I knew if I had told him what I had done, he couldn't face the music and tell a lie.

After the war his people sent him to the legislature, and my people sent me there too, and we rejoiced to get together again every night and rehearse the soul-stirring times that we had in old Virginia.

(Balance of column unrelated)