

received from Bill Emory, Charlottesville, Va,
June 2008. The remainder of the memoir,
if it exists, has not been traced.

A.G.

REMINISCENCES OF
GENERAL WILLIAM HEMSLEY EMORY

After an active career of fifty years in the service of the United States, forty-five of which have been spent in the military service, to find oneself placed on the retired list, with all the mental, if not the physical forces still in full activity, is a new sensation, not agreeable and very hard to impress on the mind as a reality.

Is it possible that the "plumed Troop" and the "Big War" have no longer occasion for my presence? that the calls for duty are no more to be made on me? that the long march, the dreary watch, the exciting skirmish, the glorious and eventful battle, the bivouac at night, the pursuit of the enemy, the review of Troops, the counting of the killed and wounded, the joyous embrace of the living victors, is all to be done hereafter without me? that I have nothing more to do with a Government which I have so long served and a country I have so long cherished, but to draw the monthly stipend which the Government has, in its wisdom, awarded to old soldiers who have served with fidelity a certain number of years? These are the thoughts that continually intrude themselves, and disturb my peace of mind and create the impression that the effect on the individual might be like that on the material world caused by suddenly stopping the rotation of the earth on its axis. To avoid this apprehension, and create a diversion, it has occurred to me to attempt to live my life over again, at least in imagination, by writing a truthful account of it commencing with my earliest recollections. While it occupies and diverts my mind, it will amuse my