

General Tyree Harris Bell's farewell address to his soldiers, copied from the original and published in the Visalia Times at the time of his death.

“Headquarters Bell’s Brigade, Ma., 1865

Soldiers: We must part. The relations heretofore existing between us must now terminate. Although we have failed to accomplish the great object for which you took up arms, still you will return to your homes and loved ones with the consciousness of duty performed. The story of your long and gallant struggle for liberty and independence will fill the brightest pages of your country’s history.

Soldiers, I am proud to be your commander; proud of the reputation you have won on so many bloody fields of battle, and proud of the firmness, consistency and devotion you have displayed in the closing scene of this dark and fearful drama. In future ages and in other lands your names will be the synonym of all that is chivalrous, noble, and true. Historians will recount with pleasure your deeds of noble daring, and poets will sing in lofty strains the prowess of your arms. In the camp, on the march and on the field of battle you have ever done your duty, and your danger, toils and privations will never be forgotten by your grateful and admiring commander.

Soldiers, you will return to your homes and the bosoms of your families. Preserve untarnished the brilliant reputation you have so nobly won. Discharge as faithfully the duties of citizens as you have those of soldiers, and all my yet be well. In your future prosperity and welfare I will ever feel and deep and abiding interest. For your many acts of kindness and devotion to me personally I will ever cherish the liveliest sentiments of gratitude.

And now, farewell, May He ‘who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb’ ever have you in His holy keeping and guide and protect you through future years.

T.H. Bell, Brigadier-General”