1981

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Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2845

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Fog On Kennesaw · David Bottoms

We pitch our tent on Kennesaw Mountain, pull the hemp rope tight, set the steel stakes, lean our pick and shovels against the trees like the rifles of Joe Johnston’s army. On the south side of the mountain, we are hidden from the park rangers, clothed in the brush like the ghosts of Loring’s rebels.

Nothing has changed here but the century. These same neutral stars saw rebels shoot rocks from cannons. Trees along these slopes and fields hold rifle balls in their healed-over bark.

At sunrise we will patrol Little Kennesaw for Minie balls and bayonets, scour the woods where McPherson drove his Yankees into the eyeballs of French’s cannons. But tonight we have found something seeping up through the leaf-cover, the pine straw, something drifting across old earthworks, maneuvering on Kennesaw.