

An Iowa Woman in Wartime

By MRS. M. A. ROGERS

This comprises the third and concluding part of the Civil War recollections of Mrs. Marjorie Ann (Graham) Rogers. Dr. and Mrs. Rogers removed to Boston following the war, where she was associated with the New England Hospital for Women and Children. She returned to Iowa upon the death of her husband in 1885 and for several years made her home in Des Moines where she served as matron of the Benedict Home, Cottage Hospital, founded the Christian Home for Self-Supporting Women in 1889, later to become the Business Women's Club, and was also instrumental in the establishment of the Home for the Aged.

PART III

I made a note of all I saw and heard and was able to be of service in this respect sometimes, going about as I did through the county. My business was with the women generally as the men did not care to talk with me but treated me with respect. One woman said to me, "I would just like to help you in this work but my husband does not approve of it so I am denied the pleasure it would be to me, but I have a bundle of old linen for you." The dear heart! I knew where her sympathy was but it must be suppressed and I knew who the husband sympathized with too without being told. Another, when asked to contribute, said, "No indeed, you will get nothing here. You can just go on." In this case I did not wait to use any persuasive arguments but said goodbye as pleasantly as I could under the circumstances, but felt a little bitterness in my heart.

Another day I called at a very comfortable farm house and made my business known. "Wal," said the wife of the farmer, "my man is not at home. I am glad he is not as he might give you some hams, we have plenty, but I am glad he is not here, and as for me I have no sympathy in your work. I know you are all right and I do not wish to hurt your feelings, this is your work and you believe you are doing your duty, but I cannot see it mine." I talked with her some time but to no avail as she grew excited and refused the smallest favor, and this man was not allowed to do what his conscience told him. Enthusiasm does not abate for we are working for our soldiers

while they are fighting for us, for home and mother and native land.

We were notified there would be a State Sanitary Fair held in Dubuque sometime in the future and we were invited with all the other counties to have a booth and bring our goods there. We were still sending our supplies to Chicago and preparing for this Fair which would not come off for several months, but there was so much to be done to be prepared for any emergency that might come to us.

We were very happily and joyfully surprised one morning early to have "father" walk in unannounced, as we were not expecting him just yet, and the "boy," well he was a full grown man. I did not have to alter the suit as it was none too large, and such a black man and such white teeth. He had a finely shaped head and it showed well as his hair was very short; he had an expressive face, very pleasant and intelligent, he was quick to comprehend and learned easily. There was nothing repulsive to the most fastidious in his appearance and manners; he was all politeness and deference. The children were slow at first to make his acquaintance, but soon became accustomed to him and they were the best of friends. The poor old dog, he could not understand why the man should be of the same color as himself. We called him (the dog) a copperhead for awhile, but Joe wanted the privilege of giving him his food and by kindness hoped to overcome his prejudice, which he did in time. The dear old fellow had forgotten his kind master but with coaxing he was persuaded to place his fore feet on the Doctor's chest and when he got his breath, he knew the Doctor and his joy knew no bounds. It was pathetic to see the dumb creature's maneuvers, round and round the room, upsetting chairs and running against the children and then on the Doctor's lap again and examining him all over, and so we were all very happy. The only drawback was the thought that it would be but for a few days, as times were ominous with great expectations of great conflicts in the near future, and every soldier would be needed at his post. Doctor assured us that his visit must be short.

We had many invitations to dine with our friends but accepted one only with my sister; we wished to spend all the

time possible with each other. The children could hardly spare their father out of their sight. He was obliged to go up to the farm, took the boys with him so they might enjoy the ride and the visit together. Doctor gave us many excellent hints about our sanitary work and met the officers several times.

We thought he looked so nice in his blue uniform. The boys admired the brass buttons especially and as we had never seen a surgeon in uniform before, he occasionally wore his green sash. We had so admired the other officers who had been home, Col. Connell, Major Clark, Capt. Stoddard and others who looked so grand and walked so majestically through the town and we were so proud of them, and now father had come and we were proud of him. He soon left us again. The parting came as before; we were sorry and yet glad we could be so much more reconciled. He had a great experience and knew his duty, had learned the art of war to some extent, was anxious to be with his regiment and was ready to look after their interest in time of trouble, for it must come to them as well as others. And so he left us again. No one accompanied him to the train except Joe, as it left in the night. Now Joe had parted with his best friend. Doctor wrote me after going to Vicksburg that he would liberate one slave at least, if possible, and when he found this man his mind was made up. He would ask for a furlough, as he was entitled to one, and bring the boy. He had some trouble, but could bring him by calling him his bodyguard to which he was entitled, but he did not breathe freely until he had Joe on free soil.

Our dear friend and helper, Mrs. Dodd, was failing rapidly; her physician wished to try the electric battery but said she was too weak to take a full shock, but if some of her friends would volunteer to allow the current to pass through them to her she might receive enough to be benefited. Mrs. Bradford and I went for this purpose as long as the doctor required our services, but Mrs. Dodds' work was done. She left us, her husband, her dear, devoted stepdaughter who was all that a child could be. The church to which she was strongly attached and the sanitary work—all, all must lose one of its most ardent, useful workers and friends. She was not a soldier's wife or

mother, but a soldier never had a better or truer friend, and it was her devotion to her country's cause that caused her death.

Our president was working too hard also and we had our fears that he too would sacrifice his life for his country's good. He allowed no supplies to be packed without his inspection, the best only was sent. The calls became more frequent, and we were urged to do our best. We were willing workers, though sometimes found it hard to get what we needed as the times were hard. Cloth which was used to make night shirts for hospital use was very high and we were often compelled to take our own sheets to make these necessary articles. Our own supplies were diminishing, yet we kept giving; we could go without but our sick boys must be made comfortable if possible. Calico was forty cents per yard, yet we bought it and made sacques for the convalescent and comfortable dressing gowns for the sick.

About eleven o'clock one night I was awakened by a very bright light in my room, pulled up the blind and discovered a large flour mill on fire. I could compare the scene to nothing better than a hail storm of fire. Burning shingles were being carried beyond us for blocks, the wind was very high, almost a tornado. I called Joe and said I feared our roof was on fire; I had called all the children and raised the south upper window and cried, "Fire!"

The mill was northwest of us and the wind in the same direction; just beyond our house was a hotel, two blocks perhaps. The first person I saw was a man in his night shirt and a stovepipe hat his only covering, standing at the highest point with the fire shining in his face, the dark sky behind him, and the burning shingles all about him—it was a picture for an artist, it was instantaneous photography. He was the only man in town who wore such a hat, and so I knew who he was. Even the stay-at-home men (were they able to indulge in such a luxury) would not have thought it appropriate in war time (but he was a widower). The next moment I was down to see how the man on the roof was doing. He found the fire had caught in several places. He had not thought of his shoes so he was dodging live coals as we handed him pails

of water and wet carpet. His shoes were finally given to him and he said, "Missus, my feet am tuff, am feared of my head." Like the white man, barefooted with a stovepipe hat on, I concluded his feet were "tuff" too, but he feared his head. I believe this is characteristic of man everywhere at all times of danger or haste, white as well as black.

Joe went from the house to the barn and wood yard all night, putting out fires, watching everything with the little boys and the old dog following. I gave them a lunch frequently and required the boys to rest occasionally, but our faithful black man would not leave the grounds a minute for fear a fire might appear in some new spot. Hundreds were at work all night the same way to save their homes. It was a fearful night, but no other buildings were consumed; the morning found us all worn out with our weary night's work. Men patrolled the streets watching the homes, especially those where there were women and children only. There were many such in our little city now without husband or father to protect the loved ones; they must be cared for, and were on all occasions. Tama county did nobly for her soldiers' families, widows and orphans; none were allowed to suffer; the county had become responsible for their care.

When we were in church one Sabbath morning, a messenger called my brother to the door. I was terrified, as well as many others. As he was the postmaster and one of the pioneers of the county and extensively known, he seemed to be trusted with all the bad news and the first to hear it—all my telegrams were sent to him and I wished him to read them first. We all knew something had happened. The minister gave out the hymn, but no one could sing; it seemed as if we must get up and follow my brother out; our nerves were all unstrung, we were faint and trembling. Our dear old minister tried to pray, his voice trembling; perhaps the time was two minutes but it seemed much longer to many of us until my brother returned. I was afraid to hear him speak. He did not sit down when he reached his pew and Mr. Woodward said, "Brother Graham, have you a communication?" With my hand on my heart I watched his face; he looked rather amused, not very grave or solemn as he could if required. He said that it would

be necessary to disturb the services as several of the ladies would be needed to assist in caring for a carload of contrabands who were at this moment needing a good, generous dinner as well as food to last forty hours at least. He explained the facts to us:

Colonel C. had found there were so many colored people coming over into Illinois, he ordered the trains to carry them or a part of them so as to make room for others. He was on furlough and would care for two carloads. He lived west of us but left one car at Tama City and sent this message to Judge Graham, who responded as quickly as possible by calling for volunteers to go home and prepare their Sunday dinners and as much more food as possible to be ready by one o'clock. A committee was appointed to receive the contributions and deliver them to the cold, hungry negroes who must be made to feel they were among friends and welcome to this land of liberty, our own beautiful Iowa. The brother sat down a moment and the minister said, "You have heard the message and the request, who will volunteer?" Every woman in that congregation rose to her feet and all were in tears. A prayer was offered but was scarcely audible; the congregation was dismissed with this injunction, "Brethren and sisters, an opportunity has come to all of us, let us do our duty, it will not end today. We must seek wisdom from the Father who has laid this responsibility upon us. You are dismissed, God bless and help you."

We went directly to Mr. Graham's office and he selected committees from each church; our ladies would provide this day's rations. We went home and went to work while he visited the other churches, telling them our plans for this day so they might not be disturbed and could make their own arrangements after services. The ladies told me afterwards they could not even remember the text. A gentleman was selected from each church to visit the contrabands and arrange to have a committee of ladies care for the supplies.

They had all been fed in Tama City that morning, but it was a new station with only two or three families living there; they did all they could to make the poor creatures comfortable. By one o'clock we had our clothesbasket filled.

We boiled potatoes, cooked meat, sent tea and sugar, and jugs of milk, bread and butter, plates, knives and spoons, towels and soap, for they must remain in the car for several days till there could be comfortable places provided for them. They were parts of several families, only one entire family of parents and children, large and small, the majority of the crowd being women and children destitute of one decent comfortable garment. I did not see them in their crowded condition in the car. My brother had appointed his committee and left me out to look after the needed supplies.

After leaving the car, the men turned out as one man to find shelter and comfortable homes for these homeless, helpless ones thrown upon our mercy without our knowledge or consent. This work was not of our seeking, but the responsibility would have to be met; we could not throw it off if we would and would not if we could. This was just a beginning of the end of what was to follow (this was before the emancipation of the slaves). They were free when they left that car and they realized it. Before they trembled for fear the next train would carry them back. Their pleadings were pathetic; they were slow to believe. They had been deceived all their lives and did not know whom to trust.

By the help of willing hands and sympathizing hearts the work was soon accomplished. Four houses were found, one near Tama City, two between Toledo and Tama and another three blocks from us. This was for the father, mother and children, the oldest of the lot and the most interesting, two grown-up girls and two good sized boys. The family left in Tama was a married daughter. They were genuine Africans. These families were to be provided with stoves and fuel, beds and bedding, shoes and stockings. Very little furniture was sufficient for their use. We found the ladies all ready to respond to our calls for help. I was given the oversight of this particular family, so I did not have any responsibility outside, and found they were all I could do justice to. The mother had one more added to her already large family soon after they were settled. We had provided a little basket for the baby, a larger one for the mother with a new comfort on top made of bright colors. We thought it pretty, but when

the old "new" mother saw it, she said "white ladies can't piece and sew quilts like colored ladies." The comfort was tied, the first she had ever seen, but confessed it was "just tolerable." I called to see the newborn, free baby and said to the father, "Uncle Anthony, I never saw a little colored baby before, will you let me name him?"

He said, "Lord bress you Missus, you ought to name de chile if you wants to, you see but I promised the Lor' I would call de chile Abraham Lincoln if he would bring me out of slavery and have this chile born free, and so Missus, I hab to keep my promise to de Lor'."

I said, "This is all right, that is the name I was going to give him. But what would you have called him if he had been a girl?"

"Pears like I would have called it Lincoln anyhow." But the poor baby only survived a few weeks. Either the change of climate or the fact of its being born free, or perhaps the dignity of the long name was responsible; the father nor ourselves could solve the question. They mourned for the child as we would for ours. A neat little coffin soon held all that was earthly of this little free-born, colored baby. The poor old father reasoned out this affliction to his own satisfaction: "He was afeared the chile would be proud an' not own his ole mammy who was borned a slave and would think hisself better nor his brudders, so God took him fore he knowed it," and so decided "God knowed best" and was reconciled. But the mother could not see why her freeborn baby should die. After it was dressed in a long, white frock, with pretty flowers all over it in the coffin, she too thought it ready for heaven. She "seed lots of nigger babies die and put in the hole, but nebber seed sech a purty baby before, all dressed to go to heaven with the flowers in its hand shore," and so she too was glad God took it. The circumstances were peculiar—the child had been visited and made a pet of all its short life, it was something so new and strange to us all.

I was called about fifteen miles from home to organize an auxiliary. I found the ladies waiting for me; we finished our business and had a very encouraging and pleasant meeting. I

was to spend the night with a brother. I found him sick, suffering with pain in his chest and limbs; we spent most of the night with him in the sick room. In the morning the doctor decided he had varioloid or a mild form of smallpox. He thought it was not dangerous and I need have no fear of contagion. I was very anxious about my children and friends, but must go to them. As time passed, my eldest daughter was engaged to teach a private school in a new town on the Northwestern R.R. and had taken the position. Frank was on a farm helping with the fall work; Joe and Sara were still with me. I was taken violently sick and Sara said I had every symptom of the dreaded disease, but she could and would take care of me as she had nursed so many cases in the hospital and had had the disease herself. The young children were kept away from me and also my friends and neighbors. I was confined to my room only a few days. I had most excellent care from this faithful colored woman and it was only a slight attack, but the disease visited several colored families in a much worse form some time after.

I found a small house and fitted it up comfortably for Joe and Sara and they were very happy in their new quarters. They had never had a home of their own before, and soon there were added two wee black babies, a boy and a girl. I did not ask to name these as they were called for their parents. These little freeborn babies were great pets and wanted for nothing as Joe and Sara were respected by all who knew them. Joe was now able to support his little family and in a few years had purchased a little home of his own.

My First Experience in House Renting

As my family was now small, I was persuaded to rent some of my rooms to a family consisting of a man and wife and three children, two little boys and a beautiful little girl of two years. This child was given to this lady by a dying sister before her marriage to this man who had the little boys. They came to our town as strangers, were members of the M.E. church and of course made the acquaintance of the minister, who could find no house or rooms for them and wished me to accommodate them until they could do better. As they appeared very genteel and respectable, I consented.

They came in on Saturday night after we had retired. They had family worship; I told the children we need not be afraid as they were christians, even if they were strangers to us. They were all dressed and off to church early and in the morning we were to commence taking our meals with them. They took the rooms furnished and were to have the use of the cow for their meals. I soon found my woodpile was greatly reduced, and butter, eggs and meat were borrowed because there was nothing furnished to cook with. I was very much pleased with the lady but from the first saw she was very unhappy. Her husband treated her cruelly and her little girl never received a pleasant word. We boarded with them about four weeks when I became satisfied we could not live under the same roof any longer. His treatment of his wife and little child was intolerable and he did not provide sufficient food for his own family. I found I must give him notice to vacate the rooms. As he had made himself very conspicuous and prominent in the church, he had them for his friends. He was very indignant and refused to leave till he was obliged to. I told him I should have to report to the church some of his actions and bad words to me and his cruelty to his wife. He apologized and begged me to pardon him, said he would find a house the next week.

His wife and child must suffer on. I was sure she could not endure to see this motherless baby misused in this way much longer, and as we had talked the matter over several times before, she consented to have the child adopted. I knew of an excellent family, my old friends the Guilfords, who never had a child, and so this little girl was given to them as their own. The poor, broken-hearted aunt was thankful that this innocent little one was safe, though it nearly broke her heart to part with the child. She proved a blessing to the family whose love and devotion had been lavished upon her and who are now receiving their reward in their declining years as she loves and cares for them. I was glad for the sake of this child I had taken in this family, but financially my house letting was a failure and I never tried it again.

Since coming to Toledo I had felt so secure and safe surrounded by friends and neighbors, I had forgotten all my ex-

perience with the Indians during the first year of the war. We occasionally heard ugly rumors in regard to their depredations in the northwest part of the state, but I did not allow myself to become alarmed as the tribe in our county was quiet as far as we knew, but we never lost sight of their treachery so never trusted them. We knew their fear of the Sioux, but did not know that they might be induced by our common enemies to unite with them and work for the rebels. All this was thought of but we were powerless as there had been no demonstration yet. Whenever I heard an unusual noise in the night, I made myself believe it was a horse kept in a barn nearby standing on a board floor, but we were to have an Indian scare again.

I had been awakened about eleven o'clock by an unusual noise in the street, I did not rise but awaited developments. Very soon someone ran up my walk and knocked loudly at the door. Enquiring who was there, the answer came, "Joe." He said, "Get up quick and all come to the court house, the Indians have broke loose and are killing off the white folks on the other side of the river. Everybody is up there and they are preparing to care for the women and children, and have built great fires to let the Indians know they are up and ready for them. They have sent out all the soldiers that are home on furlough as scouts, and Major Clark has made a speech and Capt. Stoddard and Capt. Staley are giving orders. Everybody is alarmed and frightened to death nearly." He told all this in less time than I can possibly write it; he looked almost "white" with fear. As soon as I got a chance to speak, I asked where Sara was with her little three weeks old babies. "Oh, she is at home scared to death." I said, "Joe, go quick and bring them here," then wakened the children and helped them dress. It was not my first experience or theirs (the dear ones) of this kind.

Of course, we were all frightened and nervous. Frank was at home now and I had a little nephew visiting the children, which added another child to be cared for. While they were dressing I hung shawls over the windows and made the house look dark like my neighbors whose families were at the court house. I made up my mind we were just as safe here as anywhere, and those little babies must not be exposed or their

sick mother, and I must care for them with my own children.

By the time Joe came I had the matter settled. He was very much alarmed but I was firm and so he left us with many misgivings, saying he would call frequently and report. He was to knock three times softly, before I would open the door, and be very careful that no one saw him come (no Indians). I filled the teakettle and made Sara and myself a cup of strong tea and gave the children something nice for a lunch and kept all as cheerful as possible. I placed two large iron kettles and a wash boiler on the stove and filled all with water which was soon boiling; had a couple of dippers handy and so was ready to receive the foe when he came. I did not keep my ammunition "dry" but very hot all night. I gave Frank the sword and Fred the pistol which he could use, and told them they were the men of the family and they must be soldiers and defend their mother if necessary. I instructed them that if they were attacked, they were to go to the garden, if possible, as the corn and potatoes would shield or hide them, and so we waited and watched. The little babies fretted and the poor mother was certainly pale with fear.

Joe came as he had agreed to and reported all quiet so far, men on horseback were watching every corner and every street leading into town and he was patrolling our street by special request. He told me nearly every family were at the hotel and court house and the folks thought I ought to come, but no one thought to give me the alarm till this faithful, devoted black man heard the news, then flew as fast as his feet would carry him to let me know all he could learn, and kept me posted all night. He said that Mrs. Berge and Anna would not leave home either but were running bullets while the father and brothers kept watch outside.

I told Sara if the Indians came in at the door to pass the hot water to me, but wherever they entered I would be ready for them, and we kept the water boiling hot. We were fortunate in having the well in the woodhouse and I could renew our supply of wood and water without going outdoors, but the boys insisted on being my bodyguard and followed me with the sword and pistol, and I felt quite safe with two such brave little soldiers. It seemed as if the morning would never come,

I feared for the safety of my friends and that perhaps the danger was greater than I anticipated and I should have gone with the rest. As the hours passed I would look out cautiously and still see the bonfires so knew the danger was not over.

Joe gave the signal quite often and I would open the door very cautiously, fearing an Indian might be lurking in some of the bushes near; would give Joe a lunch and caution him to keep awake. This state of excitement kept us up all night. The poor mother would lie down with her babies, but not to sleep. The boys became weary carrying their weapons of defense and I persuaded them to lie down too, only on the floor though. I told them the Lord had cared for us when there was not a human being to hear our cry for help, had we needed such help, and we could and did ask the same divine help and received it at all times of danger. Joe said the people uptown felt I was very foolish to run such a risk with all the little children I had with me in the house, but I thought it as safe and more comfortable for them right here and so remained.

As the morning began to break, some of the bravest soldiers were selected to reconnoiter and cautiously approach the reservation and bring the news into camp. The night had been a most fearful one, full of anxiety and dread, and no one dared leave for home, not knowing if they had a home left. Many came in from out of town, as men were sent out to give the alarm.

The scouts returned after a very dangerous ride and reported that all seemed quiet at the reservation, but as far as they could learn there had been some threatening speeches made to white men who were frightened and brought exaggerated reports to town. Since the people did not have the utmost confidence in Indians anywhere found, and especially at this particular time in our history when the trouble might come to us as to others who had suffered such untold agonies, it needed only a word spoken at the wrong time or in the wrong place to alarm the almost helpless town. However, just at this time there were several officers and soldiers at home on furlough, and the people felt a little safer.

The dreadful night passed and everybody was glad to see the sun rise as usual, and thankful they still lived, hastened to

their homes to rest. It was a restless, miserable day; people could not settle down to business; hardly dared lie down to rest they felt so uncertain about the future and dreaded the approaching night again. My good brother was away from home and so missed the fun, as he called it, on returning in the morning. On enquiring for me, his wife said that I was so foolish I would not come up where anybody would have looked after me, but insisted on remaining at home. He said he would go right down and tell me I had more sense than the rest of them and that I did just right (they had not the former experience I had). He did not get a chance to call till nearly dark. He praised me for the courage I showed, but finally said, "Sister, I think you had better come up and bring the children and stay with us tonight, there is so much excitement all over town." He said "loads of people are coming into town to remain over night, the news has spread for miles around." I told him I was not afraid, but he insisted as he said he would feel better if we were there, and so I could be seen for one whole week with my little children going over to be near those who loved us. We slept with my sister's little family, and how glad and happy I was in the love and friendship of these precious ones, whose love never failed me in the lonely life I was living.

As time passed, quiet was restored in a measure and business resumed, but an eye was kept on the Indians and the mayor allowed no liquor to be sold to them. The danger was in their becoming friendly with the Sioux again. For many days whenever I would meet people in the street, gentlemen especially, they would rebuke me for being so foolish on that particular night, and some said that I was the only woman who did not come to the hotel for protection. However, I heard afterwards there were several women at home alone, the husband going out to learn the news and forgetting to come back. One, a prominent lawyer, gave his wife an adze and told her she had better take the baby upstairs, and as the Indians came up, she could scalp them. The sheriff (an old soldier) had a prisoner at the house and as there was no jail, he handcuffed and tied the man to himself and when the alarm came, he asked his wife (a little delicate woman and

he a giant of a man) to hold the prisoner while he went out in the town to help fight the Indians. Sensible woman that she was, she objected so he said he was not afraid of the Indians anyhow and lay down and went to sleep. Some very funny stories were told of the bravery of the soldiers and officers at home during this Indian scare.

Our work for the soldiers became harder as we had less and less to do with. The material we needed cost so much and we had been under such a strain so long to keep up the supplies, that we felt discouraged at times, but whenever a demand or request came for certain articles, we always found some way to get them. The Lord helped us, and we would go on cheerfully and thankfully and do the best we could. Our supply of fruit, preserved and dried, our pickles, catsup, sauerkraut, butter and beans were always found in abundance.

Our soldiers, sick and wounded, were being discharged and sent home quite frequently. They went out to serve their country in all the strength and vigor of their manhood, brave, loyal and true, but the coming back—was it possible such a change could have taken place? Were these the strong, healthy, happy men who left all that was dear to them in life without their protection to struggle and suffer and die alone? Some had come back poor, thin and pale, scarred and bruised, lame and sick and discouraged. These grand, noble men, wrecks of their former selves, life always in the future to be a burden, with wounds that would never heal, diseases that never could be cured! But now they were at home among friends and never murmured or complained; they had done their duty and were satisfied. Many, very many never came home even to die.

We were greatly alarmed for one of our neighbors, a dear, sweet, patient, frail, little mother of three children when the sad news of the death of her husband on the battlefield came to us. I was commissioned to bear the sad message to her. She lived out of town and I had some trouble to get a conveyance as the horses had all been sold for the use of the army. I finally succeeded and took Freddy with me (it was our last ride together). As we neared the house, she saw us, came out, opened the gate and said, "You have come to stay

all day and must drive in. I am so glad as I have seemed to expect you or some of the ladies, have looked for you but did not know why. I have been so busy preparing a parcel for the commission and making jelly, I could not seem to work fast enough." She insisted on having our horse taken to the barn. The little boys unhitched and I managed to tell Freddy not to mention the news to the twelve year old son, her only help on her little farm except as the neighbors assisted in keeping it up. After we had been seated a moment, she said, "Oh, I had such a lovely letter from my husband; he said our army had had another victory and he hoped the war would soon end and the 'boys would come marching home.'" She was so happy and hopeful, even cheerful, how could I, how should I break the terrible news to her and break her heart, for it surely would. She had done all the talking till now and as she looked at me, she seemed to see something in my face and said, "Has there come any news for me since the last mail?"

"Yes, here is a telegram."

"Have you read it? No? Oh, read it for me."

I said that we had very sad news from the army; many of our boys were killed and wounded and your husband has died for his country too, as this despatch tells you. She did not speak or shed a tear, but stared at me as if I was not telling the truth. I never experienced anything like it in all the suffering I had seen. She fainted; the neighbors were called and I remained all day. Her kind neighbors never left her. She never rallied from the shock entirely, but became conscious and realized the situation, and said, "I want to see my mother and then die." The mother came in answer to a telegram and remained until she died. Nothing could keep her, she wanted to die and God let her die, and I was glad she could.

Sickness and death was all about us, a deacon in our church was taken, then our old friend, the minister, then our doctor Bunce, whom my husband had asked to look after his family. Then Dr. Hunter, a very promising young physician who had but recently located in our little city and was greatly interested in our sanitary work, died after a short illness, regretted,

loved and respected by all. A little boy, the age of little Fred, who was a fine singer and had attended the war meetings with our boys, took a severe cold being caught out late at night in a heavy rain storm, and was now lying very low. The family being one of my near neighbors, I spent as much of my time as possible with the mother. It seemed as if Freddy could not do enough for Charley. Whenever it was possible, he was allowed to sit by Charley, fanning him or reading to him. He lived several months after the attack but was never able to go out again. The little soldier boy always ready to sing the war songs and wishing he was old enough to fight the rebels, he too died for his country.

When my husband left home, he gave each of the children some money to spend as they pleased. Little Fred had never decided what to do with his and still had it when a minister came to give a lecture in behalf of the freedmen. As we came out of the church, Freddy, as was his custom, took my arm and said, "Mother, I am going to buy bibles for the colored people tomorrow and give them to this man so they can have them at once," and I commended him for his decision. He selected the bibles, sent them, and said, "I will write to father and tell him about it." Here is a copy of the letter which I still have, but there is nothing in the letter about the money:

1864—My Dear Father:—I wish I could see you. When will the war be over. I hope you will catch Jeff Davis and hang him; Jo Johnson too, hang him. Has your regiment been in a skirmish? Have you any pony? If I had one of your ponies, I would take mother a riding, hope you will bring it home to me to ride after the cows.

From your dear

Freddy.

Our little friend and neighbor, Charlie Herrick, at last was called very suddenly to die and leave us all. He had endeared himself to those who had seen his patience and solicitude for his mother, but he was reconciled and willing to die, only wanting to live to see the war end and the North victorious. It seemed to be Freddy's duty to help toll the bell with Willie Woodward. While doing this sad task, he said to Willie, "Perhaps the bell will toll for you or me next time." He told me what he had said and it seemed to trouble me very much.

He had seemed depressed ever since our ride and saw the sorrow of the little boy who had lost his father in the battle of Lookout Mountain. He knew his own father was there and we had not heard from him for sometime. After Charlie died, Freddy grew worse, was weak and lanquid. He insisted on going out to help celebrate the victory and caught a hard cold from exposure and overdoing. He would take his little drum out in the yard and sing his war songs over till exhausted, when he would come in and lie on the couch and say, "Oh, mother, I want to see father. I wish I was a soldier, I cannot wait to be a man, but I do not want to leave you. I do hope I never shall hear my father is killed as poor Charlie's was; he cried so that I cried too, I could not stand it. I believed that I would die, but then I wanted to live and take care of you, mother dear."

These conversations alarmed me, and I called a physician. He was almost a stranger in our little city, but was the only one I could get. He examined Freddy and said there was nothing serious the matter. I could not send him to school or allow him to go from home; he was growing weaker, losing his interest in everything. I tried to rouse him. One day I said to him, "I see a threshing machine a little ways out, don't you want to walk out there and see them thresh? It would make you think of the old home on the farm." He seemed pleased and started as I watched his slow movements. He sat on the fence awhile and looked at the men, came back looking pale and tired, and said his throat was sore. He walked about the yard, visited the barn and the chickens, talked to the old cow, petted the dog, ate no supper and asked if he could sleep with me.

Could it be that my precious little boy would be the next? He slept with me, but before morning he became delirious with a burning fever, crying to be taken home to see mother and calling for his father. Oh, how I wanted Freddy's father! I had suffered loneliness such as only a soldier's wife could suffer, but nothing to be compared to this, his little boy dying and he far away! I had tried to comfort others in like circumstances, but I refused to be comforted myself, and now I saw that I had been a miserable comforter. The greatest

trial of my life had come to me. Our children had been spared us and had been such a comfort and blessing always, but I had none to spare and now my precious child must die and no father near who might possibly save him. I could not reach my husband through telegraphing, only through the commission at Chicago. It was after the battle of Lookout Mountain. It was several days before I received an answer—it was this: "The Doctor is very sick in the hospital at Chattanooga, it would not be safe to give him the message." I thought my cup was full.

My dear brother and his kind wife (more than sister) came to me and never left me alone for an hour. Oh, the kindness of friends and neighbors at that time of great sorrow is still remembered with great tenderness, it was wonderful. I felt so helpless and inefficient and gave up to my sorrow, for I had never known sorrow like this before. Freddy's sufferings were intensified by his crying for home and mother and he would frequently talk to his father, which would break our hearts. He suffered on three weeks, then the doctor said he was better and would recover. That night he seemed to know me and asked me to read to him. I read a few verses, then he said, "Read the twenty-third Psalm." I read it and said, "Freddy, is the Lord your shepherd?" and he said, "yes." He told me he wanted me to sleep with him and not have anybody sit up. The kind friends all left us for the first time. I lay down by his side, holding his hand. I fell asleep for a moment when I felt his hand move. I found it was covered with a cold perspiration. I arose quickly and gave him some wine. He called for water, but said, "Mother, you must not go after it," and called Frank loudly. I saw the change and knew the end was near. I called the children and while they were coming, he threw both arms around my neck and said, "Goodbye mother, goodbye." I said, "Freddy, are you going to leave me?" He said, "Yes, I am going home. Turn me over, my face to the east." As I turned him, he said, "That is good," and was very quiet, but I saw his lips move and listened. I heard these words, "If I should die before it's done, Oh God, accept me through thy son."

It was all over, not a struggle. He died just as I laid him when I turned him over, except he had tried to place his

hand under his cheek as he always did when sleeping. The children and I were alone for the first time with our dead. He desired to be alone with us that night and so he left us, the dearest child a mother ever had. My precious one was gone and how soon I might hear that my husband had followed I could not tell, but the commission assured me they would keep me posted. I finally received a letter through the commission—he was convalescing and out of danger, which was a great comfort and relief. His heart was nearly broken at the death of this dear child.

I had more sickness and sorrow in the family. My little baby girl was the next to succumb to the fever and for twenty days her life hung by a thread. We gave up all hope, yet God spared her to us in his great mercy and restored her to health after an illness of several months. The other children each had a slight attack and it was three months before our friends would leave us alone. I felt as if every kindness I had shown a friend was now returned a hundred fold. My brother in the eastern part of the county came and took all the family to his house, where we spent several weeks. We needed the change and the rest, but the going home was so sad. We missed the dear, little, busy man, he did not come to meet us; he was gone never to return, God had taken him in.

It was now January and the weather was so very severe the children could hardly attend school, but insisted on going every pleasant day, all except Anna—she was not strong enough to attend any more until spring. She needed the tenderest care.

Sherman was marching to the sea. My husband was left in charge of the hospital at Chattanooga and I could now communicate with him directly, which was a great satisfaction. His letters were sad but comforting. I could do but little for others these days. My dear niece spent the most of her time with me. We could work together for the commission at home, but we were doing what was very useful.

We were working for the Fair to be held in Chicago in the early spring, as was decided at our State Fair in Dubuque. Illinois was to unite with Iowa in making this Fair a great success, and so we worked with all our energies for this

object. On one of the coldest days of the winter I received a telegram that my husband would be in Cincinnati on a certain day and wished me to meet him there as he was on his way to meet Sherman's army which was on the coast. He had the care of five hundred convalescent soldiers. In order to be there at the appointed time, I must leave immediately. The older children were at school and had taken a lunch as it was too cold to come home to dinner; I would not have time to go and see them. My niece would keep house and I felt very anxious to go (my only regret was leaving the children, especially Anna) as I had not seen my husband but once during the war, and now he was going farther away and the future was all uncertain. It might be our last meeting.

I must consult with my brother as I did in all my business matters. He objected on account of the intense cold and my feeble state of health, thought I could not endure the long, dangerous trip, but I prevailed upon him to consent. He accompanied me to the train (two miles) and it was the hardest and coldest part of the journey. I regretted not seeing the children, I knew they would be heartbroken. I was very comfortable except when I thought of them. We would arrive in Chicago just before daylight. My brother had put me in the care of the conductor, who showed me every courtesy possible.

The car was crowded, principally with soldiers going to the front. The conductor gave me a seat alone and said he would see that I was not crowded. About 12 o'clock he came to me and said that the ladies would have to occupy the next car as soldiers were coming on at the next station. I arose as quickly as possible to go with him, had my wraps and hand-bag only; he helped me across and gave me a long settee near the stove. As soon as I was seated, I missed my purse containing eighty dollars and my ticket. I told the conductor and as the car had not received any passengers, he took his lantern and went directly to my seat. It was still unoccupied. My purse was red plush and the same color as the seat cushion. We looked everywhere and finally found it wedged in at the end of the seat. I felt very fortunate and very thankful. This was my first experience on this trip. How that

purse got there is a mystery to this day, unless it was taken from my bag when I was asleep and secreted there. It was enough to cause me to keep awake the rest of the night.

When we reached Chicago, it was very dark. I ordered the hack man to take me to a certain depot as I wished to take a certain railroad to Cincinnati, just as my husband had instructed me in his despatch. He took me to the depot and showed me the ticket office. I told the agent where I was going and the road I was instructed to take and asked if this was the right office. He said, "Yes," so I paid him eleven dollars for my fare and went aboard the train, feeling quite relieved that I had gotten through and out of Chicago alive. There were so many reports of the wickedness of that city in war time that it was considered a dangerous point. I rested till daylight, then thought I would look at my ticket when to my dismay, I found I was not on the road for which I had asked a ticket and would not arrive in Cincinnati at the appointed time. I showed it to an old gentleman near me and he said, "Chicago is full of rascals. That hackman was working for this road and was well paid for it, also the agent. But you are not too late to change when we arrive at just buy another ticket and take the train you expected to and you will arrive in time. It is a faster train than this and you will be all right." The conductor looked at my ticket and I told him my story. He said, "Just hold onto this ticket and on your return ask that your money be refunded." This was experience number two.

I did as I was instructed and got through and found my husband waiting for me. We heard the next morning that the very train I started on was wrecked, so I had another cause for thankfulness. The Doctor had just arrived that day and was ordered to rest the men a few days as they were weak and could not bear the fatigue of a very long trip. The poor fellows looked so pale and weary but were all clean and appeared cheerful but restless, they wanted to go on; said they were needed and were all ambitious to do their part; did not feel discouraged and were sure of victory at last. They called out all my sympathy, yet how I admired them, loyal and brave after all they had suffered. Here were officers and

privates, finer looking men I never saw, though pale and poor, and still suffering from unhealed wounds. I can never forget them. We left for Pittsburgh in a few days where they would rest again, then go on to Washington. Here I met several ladies who had come to meet their husbands as I had; was introduced to the officers of General Meghar's staff, of which my husband was a member, ranking as Medical Officer. They were fine looking men, but I thought my husband with his new uniform was about the best looking man I saw.

They had orders to join Sherman at Goldsborough, and when they moved again, I must leave him. I could not go on to Washington as he greatly desired me to, as my children needed me. The meeting and the parting was now over, it was a sad one, as our country was far from having a peaceful aspect at this time and the future was so uncertain. I had been riding several hours before I felt like looking about to see who were my neighbors. The cars were crowded but I saw a soldier sitting alone, looking so sad and weary, I crossed over and took a seat by his side, told him I was lonesome, had not spoken a word to anyone today and asked if I might visit with him awhile. He seemed to brighten up and was very polite and cordial and said nothing would give him more pleasure. Two other soldiers sat in front of him.

I said, "you are not going on to Washington; going home, I hope." "Yes, we are of no more use, we hoped to go on with the boys, but the surgeon discharged us," and the tears came into his eyes as he repeated "we are of no use to our country anymore. We hoped to get stronger after our resting at Pittsburgh. The doctor only took us on because we were unwilling to give up, but we must it seems."

"But surely you are glad to go home where mother and wife and children will all nurse you and perhaps should it be necessary, you can go back, for you seem to be willing."

"Oh, more than willing, we are anxious to see the end and want to do our part."

Here these pale, emaciated, weak, wounded, scarred, suffering soldiers, who loved their wives and children and parents but loved their country more, were ready to suffer more if required, but I feared their work was done for life

as I could not see how they could ever recover from the dreadful unhealed wounds. Their faces were scarred and they feared their friends would not know them or love them they were so disfigured. I comforted them all I could by saying they would be loved more than ever. One said, "I had just married a lovely young girl when I enlisted. She will not know me and how can she love me? I wanted to die for my country."

My experience all these years of the war with those that were afflicted and suffering mentally, had been with women, not men who had experienced all the horrors of a battlefield, been sick and far from home and loving hands to help care for them and administer to their wants, and now recovering were ready to return out of pure love for country and good government to fight again for the Flag. I could not comprehend such loyalty, it was almost divine; I felt like bowing my knee to them as superior beings. I had no words to express my admiration, so said nothing.

I stepped across to my seat and brought my lunch basket and told them they must share its contents with me. I said my husband had ordered it and there was enough for them all. One man said, "We have crackers and cheese." I said, "perhaps that is what I have too, but we will see." As I uncovered my basket, one of the men said, "May I ask your name?" I said, "My name is Rogers."

"Are you Doctor Rogers' wife? I saw you with him as he put us on the cars and gave us our lunch. He would not let us come without it though we will arrive home before night. And you are his wife. We have heard him speak of his family so often and when in the hospital, he would come in and say, 'Boys, three cheers for Iowa, another box of good things has come for you; now cheer up for I know the folks that filled it.' He was so good to all of us and now we are going to eat with you, his wife." He said all this in a breath while I was taking out and dividing the lunch. I found I had plenty for all and gave them a liberal supply, which they enjoyed. When we got through, I brought them some water and said, "Now we will give three cheers for Dr. Rogers for this good dinner," and so we did. We were oblivious to everything and

everybody around us. I was determined to leave them as happy as I could. They left the car before night after a cordial handshake and thanks for cheering them up. They looked better and happier, and I was the happiest of all. This was the pleasantest incident of my long journey.

As soon as I arrived in Chicago, I got an officer and told him about my ticket and he went to the office with me, staying near the door until I had made the request. I talked to the agent a few moments and when he refused to refund the money paid for the ticket the officer who was near enough to hear what he said stepped up and asked him if he was ready to refund the money, which he did without another word. Then I got aboard a train for home, glad and thankful to get out of Chicago again. I arrived home safely, found my little family all comfortable. Their father sent them some very nice things which delighted them, but they could hardly forgive me for not saying goodbye before leaving them—it hurt me as much as them. I found Anna would soon be able to go to school again and she was very happy.

And now my dear niece who had been such a comfort and blessing to me was going to Washington where her husband was permanently located. This made us all feel lonely and sad as she had been with us during the sickness and death of Freddy and the sickness that followed. How we would miss her! She wrote frequently of her new home and surroundings and said, "Auntie, I am glad you do not live here, you would soon work yourself to death."

Now another affliction had come to us. Our good, faithful, almost human friend, old Dash the dog, had to be shot. We did not know whether it was old age or he had been poisoned, but he was sick. I sent for Joe (still my right hand man), but Joe said he could not shoot him, but would go uptown and get a soldier as there were several home on furlough. To think old Dash had to be killed by a soldier! Frank objected and said he would chloroform Dash, but as he was out of reach under the house he had to be shot. Now we were without his protection. He had always been faithful and true and deserved a decent burial, which he got from Frank and Joe and his friends. No one could tell how we missed this poor creature.

We felt as if we were more afflicted than others, but all had their own sorrows, all they could bear, and could they be written, mine would seem light in comparison. What would be the next great event? The very air seemed laden with death; it was suspense and anxiety and longing yet dreading to hear the news from day to day. The great armies were drawing nearer; we tried to be prepared for anything that might occur, but oh, how little we thought what the next despatch would bring.

The children had all gone to school a lovely April morning when an old gentleman came in. I saw by his usually cheerful face that something of great importance had occurred. I offered him an easy chair but he burst into tears and said, "Have you heard the news?" I said, "Is the Doctor killed?" for I thought of him first. "No, Lincoln has been assassinated and is dying." I did not make any reply. I was dumb with fear and astonishment, we could not talk about it. This was all we knew—no particulars—nothing official but reliable from a friend in Washington. This was trouble indeed, no wonder everything looked like an eclipse of the sun, our light and hope was gone. Who but Lincoln could lead and direct the great war, the great armies concentrating for victory or defeat? Our old friend weeping like a child rose and left me alone. I wandered listlessly about, could not realize the awfulness of the situation. What would be the result if he should die? Who could kill that good man and at such a time as this? It almost seemed as if God had forsaken us and that our cause was lost. The sorrow and sadness that the death of our beloved Lincoln caused cannot be written; no pen can tell it, only those who lived in those dreadful days can appreciate the pain we suffered. The whole land was in mourning, emblems of which were seen everywhere loyal men were found. The copperheads were ashamed even to show themselves in public when the loyal North was all mourning for their beloved president.

This terrible shock had hardly passed when I received a letter with a black border, addressed, "To the widow of Dr. S. C. Rogers, surgeon 30th Iowa." The letter was for me (there was no mistake in the direction). My brother brought it from

the office and read it to me. It was from a brother-in-law in Michigan, who held a government office there and was posted with all the movements of the army, telling me the news of my husband's death had just reached him. He would go right on to the front and communicate with me. Before I heard from him again I received a copy of the *Newbern News*, a small paper containing this notice, and a long letter from the Doctor's chaplain in the *Chicago Tribune*, a copy of this paper also having been sent to me:

We were exceedingly pained to learn that on Saturday Dr. Rogers attached to the Army of the Tennessee, while on his way from Goldsboro to Raleigh with about twenty-five men (assistants) for the purpose of ministering to the relief of the sick and wounded soldiers, was attacked by about twenty guerillas at a point about 15 miles from Goldsboro. Dr. Rogers was killed on the spot, eighteen of his men escaped. Our informant states upon the authority of a contraband that five of the number were hung on the spot. The sooner the only preventative, (death by the rope) is applied the better for such lawlessness.—*Newbern News*

The following is the letter from Rev. Jeremiah Porter of the foul murder of Dr. C. S. Rogers and his orderly and of six others of the hospital corps:

Newbern, N.C., Apr. 18, 1865 — Editor Chicago Tribune:—A terrible fact has just come to our knowledge from Goldsboro, the murder of Dr. S. C. Rogers, surgeon 30th Iowa, and his orderly. Dr. Rogers was in charge of the hospital of the 13th Army Corps at Goldsboro. When Sherman left on Monday, the 10th, he passed that day in transferring the sick to the cars for Morehead City, to which place I accompanied him. There were 500 in number, half of whom were shipped on the "Hospital Northern Light." Having sent back the sick Dr. Rogers started with his hospital stores and corps of twenty-five men to overtake the army, after proceeding about ten miles they were met by a band of 200 guerillas. The company had but seven guns and but little ammunition, and decided that flight was their only hope, supposing if they surrendered, they would all be murdered. Dr. Rogers on horseback and his orderly in his buggy with his supplies were shot dead, as the colored men by the way report. Eighteen of the men escaped safely to Goldsboro; the negroes report that six of our men were hung on the spot the same night.

Dr. Rogers was a devout christian, with all who have known him with christian sympathies have taken sweet council. He was the suffering soldiers' true friend. His orderly was also an earnest christian, their hearts seemed knit together in benevolent love. For the past two years the Doctor has been the faithful friend of my wife and myself. How little did we think when parting with him eight days ago, we should see his face no more, as little as that we should yesterday be shocked with the assassination of our magnanimous president. How long, oh Lord, how long before these calamities will be o'erpast.

Sincerely Yours,
Jeremiah Porter
Chaplain 1st Ill. Light Art.

I was considered a widow and my children orphans; we had friends without number to sympathize with us; we suffered as much in those eight days as if all this was real and true. On the ninth day in the morning, a gentleman called at the house telling me the reports were false, the Doctor and his orderly and all the men had escaped to Goldsboro. They were fired upon but none killed as reported. The same day I received a despatch from the Doctor, then a letter telling me of his thrilling adventure and escape. They were attacked on a corduroy bridge or road, across a swamp; they could not turn about but as the guerillas were meeting them, they had to go back, leaving their ambulance and teams in the road. The Doctor always rode on horseback so could easily turn; he told his orderly to unhitch the other horse and if possible escape. Leaving everything, he ordered the men to cross the swamp and take to the woods that was near. Doctor lost his fine, expensive, new uniform that I had admired so much, and all our letters and pictures with all his camp supplies, which he regretted most of all. But he was spared and remained to the close of the war and was discharged with a good record and "came marching home" with the other boys. The great rebellion was suppressed and peace restored by an overruling providence and through the wisdom and strength of the grandest army of men the world ever saw. And as the war ended, my story must end with good will for all. . .

The sanitary supplies we had on hand were sent to the

Orphans Home in Davenport, and as we needed no more Fairs, our things were disposed of as best we could at home. My work for the soldiers' orphans continued all the next year. At the close of this year a dear little baby boy (William Sherman) was given us, but we made an idol of him and God took him from evil to come in mercy. At the end of two years another little one came to our home, a little girl, she seemed to fill the place of those taken to a great degree and God spared her to us. She was the dearest blessing God ever gave a mother, and now as wife and mother, makes another home blessed and happy as do the rest of my precious children that God has spared to me these many years. So with my children and children's children, I can truly say, God has blessed me and made my last days my best days.

The Voting Machine

The voting machine used in the city election is not such a non-political marvel after all. It encourages laziness on the part of the indifferent voter, permits candidates for the petty offices to ride through under a strong leader and destroys the chances of those who may occupy an obscure position on the machine.

The ideal machine would be that which required a voter to find the name of every candidate singly and would not encourage him to vote a "ticket." The machine now used is nearly as good a tool for the politician as the old fashioned ballot.—*The Waterloo Evening Courier*, March 31, 1910.

Newspapers and the Historian

One of the common sayings which are not true is "There's nothing so dead as yesterday's newspaper." In the hands of the modern historian a newspaper file is a mine of living ore. Only from it is he enabled to tell history with verity, to reconstruct the past for the benefit of the present.

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