

"Where law ends tyranny begins."

Unafraid they flung to the breezes their slogans of loyalty. Banner devices that reflected the spirit of freedom were common property. A thousand Iowa Newspaper organs were attuned with fine unanimity to noble sentiments. In the daily record of events there was evidenced a wholesome American spirit. Out of such materials and in such fashion there was made a worthy state fitted into the pattern of an enduring federal union.

The printer-editors did their part. All honor to their memory.

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## Wilson's Creek... a Young Girl Remembers

This article is taken from a letter by Nancy Charlotte Emmaline Matchett, who, as a young girl, lived with her family near Wilson's Creek at the time of the Civil War battle. She wrote a letter to a newspaper in which someone she referred to as Knon had evidently printed a factual account of the famous Battle of Wilson's Creek, and tried to correct a misstatement the writer had made. This was written approximately 25 years after the battle, so it is based on memory.

Though the following account may not prove a pleasant experience for our readers, it is printed because it presents a valid picture of the all too common, but seldom discussed horrors of war.

I lived in one mile and a half of that battle when it was fought. My father was a prisoner on the battlefield during the fight. Knon makes a great mistake when he sees the dead was all buried before the night. I know that the Union soldiers lay on the battlefield without being buried for two weeks after the battle.

There was a company of [Union] men sent back after the battle with a flag of truce to bury the dead and was taken prisoner. Some of the citizens said they would help to bury them. The Rebel officers gave orders that the first men they found burrying them would be shot.

My father was right over the battlefield and seen the men laying and rotting in the hot sun. Some of them had bloated up twice their size and turned black. When they was took up their hair would drop off and you could tell wherever they had taken one [dead soldier] up in lots of places long into the winter. I was over the field myself and sen with my own eyes

some places where it looked like all their hair had felled off and lay in a pile where it had been laying ever since their bodies had been taken up.

Some had been eaten up by hogs or something for there was arm and leg bones scattered around over the woods and skull bones put up on stakes along the road. One Rebel soldier whose mother lived close to Wilson's Creek told his mother that he never put such a night over his head as he did the night after the battle. He said that they made him go around and shoot the wounded that was left on the field.

When the [Union] army retreated, we were left at the mercy of the Rebels. Then the Union people had to suffer. It was then that the bushwackers did most of the meanness around Wilson's Creek. They kept my father for over a week after the battle, then they made him take an oath never to take up arms against the southern army and let him come home.

When the battle commenced, we were in the house having breakfast. The boom of the first cannons upset the coffee pot and the cups. It was not long until we seen a company of men coming around the corner of the field. Some was bare footed and some was bare headed. They stopped by the house long enough to tell us that the Union army had surrounded their whole army and they had been cut off and was hunting safe quarters.

By this time, the battle had become one continual roar. As near as I can describe, it sounded like a big hail storm; the cannon thunder and the small arms like hail stones falling on the roof of the house. We could hear the officers giving orders above the noise of the battle. When they had stopped fighting, there was about 500 retreated out through close to where we lived. We could see them.

Mother sent me and one of my sisters to one of the neighbors where they had passed by to learn how the battle went. There we learned that the Union army had been wiped out and had retreated back. The next day, the Rebel soldiers came around bragging about their great victory and said they had come very near to putting an end to the war.

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