

An Iowa Woman in Wartime

By MRS. M. A. ROGERS

"Mother" Rogers became widely known for her public and charitable work in Iowa during the Civil War. Residing with her four small children on a farm in Tama County, later moving to Toledo and Marshalltown while her husband, Dr. Samuel C. Rogers, served as assistant surgeon of the Thirtieth Iowa Infantry, she later described her early experiences with the Sanitary Commission and the hardships and sufferings endured by many soldiers' families during the war. Her recollections originally appeared in the *Grand Army Advocate* in 1894. Mrs. Rogers died at the home of a daughter in Grinnell May 15, 1895.

As I have often been asked to tell my own experiences during those terrible Civil War years, I find it will require some courage after so many years have passed, so at the age of seventy and with very little experience as a story teller, I commence with many misgivings.

When my husband was young, he taught school in Kentucky. It was there he became an abolitionist and was obliged to return north as were many other teachers, as they were all suspected of sympathizing with the slaves. He kept posted on all political questions and watched the signs of the times, so when the conflict came, he was ready. He was a physician. We had generally lived in town but several years before the war had owned a farm in Tama county, twelve miles north of Toledo, the county seat, and after building a comfortable house, breaking the prairie and fencing it, we moved on our farm, as lovely a spot as could be found in Iowa. We came in the spring with a good supply of garden and flower seeds, were soon ready to sow and plant and beautify our lovely home.

There were six of us—four children, the eldest, a girl thirteen, then two boys eight and ten, and baby Anna. These dear children will share with me in my story, and also the faithful dog. We were on this farm three years. The two years before the war were very happy ones for us all. The first year of the war, and our third year on the farm, was full of mental suffering and anxiety. Our nearest neighbor was a mile from us, but by going across the prairie we could cut off a

part of the distance. We could only see the roof of their house as it was down near a large creek. The nearest neighbor on the west was three miles away, so we were not within sound of human voice. However, up to this time we had lived in peace with ourselves and all the world, but this was not to last.

My husband was the doctor for the surrounding country, no other nearer than six or twelve miles. He was township treasurer, and was appointed postmaster under Lincoln. He was also a member of the Board of Supervisors. We received mail twice a week and the carrier stayed with us all night if the darkness or a storm overtook him, and from him we learned a good deal of what was going on. Our mail days brought all the neighbors to the house or postoffice.

About this time there began to be a feeling of terrible anxiety in regard to the political situation and upon the fall of Fort Sumter, every loyal man was ready to go to the defense of his country and flag. Every loyal woman too was ready to do her part. My husband sent his name to Governor Kirkwood at once, and in reply the governor inquired who were the supervisors of Tama County. When he learned that Dr. Rogers was a member of that board, he said it was their duty to enlist and equip the volunteers and get them ready for immediate service.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Here my experience as a soldier's wife commences, though my husband did not go to the seat of war at this first call. He was in government employ for nearly all the first year. His work called him from home most of the time—holding war meetings throughout the county, getting the volunteers off, and looking after and providing for the families of many. He was often called to meet and confer with Governor Kirkwood and was often absent several days at a time. It was understood he would be given a surgeon's position as soon as his work at home was accomplished. All this year's work was gratuitous but cheerfully performed.

Of course the farm had to be neglected and the family left alone. A hired man whose family lived near came and helped a day or two at a time, but we could not depend on him at

all times. Consequently the whole responsibility rested with myself and the children; they were my only assistance and companions for most of this year, and it was wonderful what enthusiasm and helpfulness those four dear children manifested all the time. They seemed enthused with the spirit of the times. Young as they were, my little thirteen year old girl was my little housekeeper while I worked with the boys, who could accomplish much more if I only sat down and looked at them and talked with them; and the baby would run all day from one to the other cheering us with her glad prattle, the only one that did not feel the sadness that was in each heart though unspoken. Do as well as we might, much was neglected; it was impossible to get farm help. Days that the Doctor could be at home he worked till late in the night, and in some cases I have taken him a lunch at midnight in order that he might preserve the hay or grain for our future use. He accomplished all that was possible when at home as he was liable to be called away at any time. Every mail brought us exciting news and every passer-by had something new to tell.

THE SHADOWY SIOUX

Reports began to reach us now that the Sioux Indians were being tampered with by the rebels, and a tribe of Indians living in our county were at enmity with the Sioux. They had heard reports and were terrorized. An Indian trail ran along our fence on the east, leading to the creek where there was a ford and then on north for miles and miles. Our Indians hunted and fished in this neighborhood and often came to the house to "swap" something, so we were not afraid of them. They never came one at a time, but several in company; now we would occasionally see an Indian prowling along the creek alone who seemed to have no object. We were alarmed as we had been entirely alone for several days.

We had just finished dinner one day when a tall, ugly looking Indian opened the door very suddenly and without ceremony seated himself near the stove. With an "ugh, ugh," he pointed at the table and said, "Give Indian bread." We were trembling inwardly, but I felt that he must not know it. I loaded a tray and filled it again before he was satisfied. When

he was through, I pointed to the door and said, "Puckachee," but he looked as if he did not understand. I repeated the command a little more forcibly and at the supreme moment the dog sprang on a lounge by my side. Just here I tried to have the children leave the room (it was sabbath afternoon and we were all together in the house), but they all said, "No, mother, we will not leave you."

The dog was a large, black, powerful creature we had raised with the children, and he often showed himself almost human. As I was telling you, he had jumped on the lounge and had come and put his head under my arm. I took hold of a strong strap about his neck and said softly, "Dash, sic." At the same moment I again told the Indian to leave, pointing to the dog, who by this time I could hardly hold; he was growling and showing his teeth to good advantage. This started the fellow and with a savage "ugh" he left. He no doubt was a Sioux spy.

Several days later we saw another Indian approaching the house from another direction and dressed differently; the first had a red blanket, this a white one. He came up to the back yard, and I called the dog to the door where I held him by the collar as before, and could hardly restrain him this time from making an attack. He growled and struggled, I urging him on, yet coaxing and restraining him. He really seemed to understand the situation and so did the Indian who seemed only too glad to get away. He was probably another spy, as every day now we heard reports of trouble with the Indians in the northern part of Iowa and Nebraska.

As we lived near the trail and since there was enmity between the Musquakies and Sioux, I apprehended danger all the time, knowing our perfectly helpless condition. I spent many sleepless nights and resorted to the only subterfuge I could think of. My husband kept a supply of medicines on hand and knowing Indians liked whiskey as well as their white brother, I concluded that would please them and give us a chance of our lives, especially if there should be a good dose of morphine in it, so I had it in readiness to mix at all times. I had many other plans, especially for the safety of the chil-

dren, but thought the whiskey and morphine would be the most effectual. Oh, the suspense!

We got a report that a large band of these savages were encamped in the Cedar valley, so I lived in mortal dread all the time. I had directed the children what to do so that if possible, one or more might be saved. A neighbor came up to the door one night, just at dusk, and said his folks wanted the children and me to come right down as we were alone, and there were three men of them and each had a gun, and the Indians were sure to come, very likely this night. So I took the children and not daring to go across the prairie (which would have been much nearer) for the grass was high and we feared there might be an Indian lurking on every side, we trudged along as fast as we could. I urged the children who could run to do so and leave the baby and myself to follow, but they would not leave me. The faithful dog preceded us and examined the path all along. We generally left him in charge of the farm, but I did not propose to have him made into soup for an Indian feast.

The good neighbors were thoroughly alarmed at the reports and were determined to give any intruders a hot reception if they came. The father and mother kindly gave me their only spare room and bed. I made the children as comfortable as possible, and sat on a chair with my head on their bed. They soon slept.

The sons slept upstairs, and the good old father kept watch. About 12 o'clock he heard a noise outside which I heard at the same time. We listened intently, my heart beating louder and louder till I thought I could not endure the strain another moment. The noise resembled the patting of moccasined feet on the hard ground. I did not waken the children; I thought they might as well be massacred as to be scared to death.

I softly entered the next room where the sick mother with the little children in bed had not wakened. The husband had climbed the stairs to be sure the boys were awake and had their guns ready. He held a whispered conference with them and directed them to open fire from the chamber windows should we be attacked from below. One of the sons had enlisted and was waiting orders. He was "spoiling for a fight."

One window opened on hinges outwardly; he pushed it softly and saw a moving mass below. It was very dark—it had been raining and now there was a dense fog and the objects below were white. He came back and reported. The father said it must be the Sioux as they wore white blankets.

Well, as long as there were no demonstrations outside, we were ordered to keep quiet. But oh, the poor sick mother who was prostrate from the idea of soon parting with her boy! It was most pitiful to hear her stifled cries and groans and wishing we might all die together. No effort of ours seemed to comfort her. "Poor comforters ye are, all of you," might truly be said of us when we were all trembling and shivering with excitement. And so the longed-for morning came at last, and what was the surprise of the whole family when we found a large flock of geese had taken shelter close to the house.

The fact that the disturbance was caused by these innocent, harmless creatures did not have a quieting effect as the men said the geese never came near the house unless there were wolves or Indians prowling along the creek. They were afraid of both, but they were never known to come so near before, generally stopping at the barn. We were sure there must have been a cause, and it was decided the soldier boy and brother, armed with their rifles, should reconnoiter.

I prepared and took breakfast with the family, made the mother as comfortable as I could, then felt I must go home (if I had one left) as our horses and cattle needed our care. The sons were sent along the creek as scouts and were directed to ride to our house and see if everything was quiet. I waited until they returned, then took my little family and the dog, who had been a faithful but disturbed watcher all night. I hardly had strength to perform the little journey, but our hearts were full of gratitude to our Heavenly Father for his preserving care of ourselves and our home during another night.

IMPLICIT TRUST

Our first duty and pleasure was to acknowledge this by reading our Bible and holding a little prayer meeting as was always our custom on every special occasion, and we had many now days. Each child took part in these exercises as we had

so much to pray about and tell and ask God to hear and help us. They were precious little meetings, and whenever I was obliged to leave the children alone for a few hours (I was often called to see the sick in my husband's absence), I found they would have the little meetings in case a great storm came on or they were afraid from any cause. They knew where to go for help and protection on occasions of this kind.

While alone one day two Indians called; they demanded feed for their ponies and bread for themselves. They ate everything in the house that was cooked. When they got through, the boys asked them for pay, but with an ugly "ugh, ugh" they said "no money but you brave little white Indians," and rode off. The youngest boy Freddy told me when I came home that while they were eating, he went to his room and asked God to take care of them and He did—He did not let the Indians hurt them. Here was perfect faith, and it lasted all through his short life, for he died for his country when eleven years old. He did his work faithfully and well and then died.

ALL SOLDIERS INCLUDING THE DOG

This day was a very uncomfortable one, but we all kept busy and watched and hoped for the husband father to come before the night came to us again. He had been to Iowa City to see the Governor the week before, so we hoped he would not need to go this time, and so he came, to our great relief and joy. He had more time at home now as there had been several companies of soldiers sent, but soon there was another call. He often took the boys with him if the war meeting was near enough to return home that night, as they were both good singers and there were no new war songs yet. The doctor was a fine singer and he and the boys sometimes did all the singing. The boys caught the spirit of the times and would go through the program of the meeting at home, singing "The Star Spangled Banner" and "America." Doctor said he would often sing "Coronation" and always the "Doxology."

We raised sugar cane and had several large boilers for making sorghum. These boilers turned upside down made good drums and the boys practiced on them, and Fred soon became an expert, while Frank and the girls did the singing and marching. They were all enlisted and uniformed, also the

dog was made to walk in solemn silence behind, but occasionally when the procession was too slow he would bound ahead, when there would be a general stampede and the little army demoralized for the day. This was repeated as long as the pleasant weather lasted. It was almost their only recreation.

The Doctor's work for the soldiers did not call him from home nearly as much now, but there was the grain to be hauled away to market. The nearest or best market was Cedar Rapids, sixty miles from home, taking two days and a night to make the trip, leaving us alone again. On one occasion as he neared home, he overtook a well dressed man and asked him to ride. It was raining and quite chilly and the man had no overcoat on, with only a cane in his hand, no grip or umbrella. He seemed very weary, was rather round shouldered, and kept his coat buttoned tightly. His clothing was of the best material, but soiled from travel. He was very reticent, indeed would not talk at all, but came in to rest accepting our invitation to do so. As his clothing was very damp, he was offered a dry coat but refused.

While I was preparing the supper, he fell asleep, his head dropping and I discovered a package of papers across his back. I called my husband to see that I had discovered what caused the deformity. He said, "He is a spy, and I will arrest him," but alas, he had no authority and was twelve miles from an officer. It was nearly dark and Doctor thought he might persuade the man to remain overnight, when he would have to go to Toledo and back before morning. But after the fellow got a good warm supper, he could not be induced to stay and went out in the darkness. Several days, or perhaps two weeks after this, we were alone again, as another company was to be filled out for the governor had need of them, and depressing news had reached us this very day to the effect that the north was being overrun with southern spies. A few were captured, but they were too shrewd and found too many sympathizing copperheads in loyal Iowa even to be afraid. They were very bold and even impertinent.

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR

I soon had another experience, about sunset, one lovely autumn day. The mail had brought discouraging, depressing

reports, and it had its influence on me at least. We were sitting in the yard, the children entertaining me with their fun and frolic. The hired man had gone home promising that he might return. On looking in the direction that my husband would come, hoping to see him, I was surprised to see a man walking rapidly toward the house. He passed the garden and when he came to the yard, he crawled under the fence in his haste, not waiting to reach the gate opposite the door. He stepped up to me and said, "Madam, I have some very excellent receipts to sell. I would be glad if you would take them and allow me to stay overnight as I am very tired." He said all this before I had recovered from my surprise at his sudden appearance. I said, "No, I do not need your receipts, and we are not situated to keep travelers," but said he, "I am so very tired, and I can go no farther," and he looked it.

I said, "Well, you will have to sleep with the hired man if you remain." He gladly consented, to my disgust and terror for I felt sure I knew his object, and that he was another spy, and I was helpless. I gave him a chair, but he asked permission to go out in the back yard and remove his shoes. He did so. I offered him supper, but he said, "Bread and milk only, madam, if you please." While I was preparing the table, I noticed he removed his shoes, shook them thoroughly and dusted them with a handkerchief; turned his stockings, shook them and hung them on the bench to dry and air; then washed his feet (I sent out towel and soap) and wiped them on the handkerchief, washed it out and hung it on the edge of the bench also; took off his coat, turned or folded it together, shook and brushed it with his hand, rolled it up and proceeded to take a good wash, head and all. He used the towel this time.

When he finished his toilet, he came in, placed his shoes or laced boots, and very nice ones, against the wall and spread his socks over them. They were white and of fine material. He was dressed like a gentleman and appeared as such. He sat down barefooted to eat his supper. I added to the bread and milk, butter and sauce. He ate everything placed before him. After rising from the table, he noticed a map of Iowa on the wall. He took the lamp from the table and examined the map

very closely and made notes several times, walked back and forth across the room excitedly, then said, "I would like to retire." He had not spoken a word since coming in. I made an attempt to be sociable but was only answered with a nod or shaking the head.

My state of mind was not very tranquil by this time. I asked him to leave the lamp at the head of the stairs for the man (who never came). After all was quiet I went softly with a beating heart and got the lamp, fearing he might set the house on fire. As fortune would have it, I could bolt the chamber door on my side, so I fastened him upstairs. We were all nervous.

I went to the door and called to the man (who was a mile away) to get the stable ready for the horses when the Doctor came, so he would have nothing to do but put the horses in, and said further, "You can sleep on the lounge in the kitchen as there is a stranger here. Come in pretty soon." In a little while I went out the front door and came stamping in, closing the door with a bang, man-like, and called in the dog, who knew something was wrong. I made the boys a bed in my room and put the girls in my own bed.

The smaller ones were soon asleep, but the eldest boy and my own little woman girl were as far from sleeping as I was and we were finally too nervous to even lie down, so we sat up and comforted each other as best we could through the miserable night that was so long and lonely. Our guest did not sleep either. We could hear him pacing the floor above us most of the night. The dog would go from one to the other all night long, as much as to say, "I will take care of you."

The children wearied at last from watching and fell asleep on a chair, and could not be induced to go to bed. As I knew the man would soon come down, I placed a coat, vest and pants belonging to the Doctor on a chair near one door in the room through which he must pass, on another chair an overcoat and hat, and on the lounge some quilts and a pillow. I opened the front and back doors and also the barn door which could be easily seen, hoping he would see the indications and conclude there were men about.

I unbolted the door and when I heard him coming down

the stairs, I was ready to faint, but tried to be brave, and made a show of folding the quilts on the lounge, where I had made a bed for the man (who never came). The good, faithful dog was by my side in a moment for he too heard the steps on the stairs. As the stranger opened the door and saw my companion, who gave a low growl, he passed out quickly and said, "I will walk on to the next house for breakfast." He did not condescend to say good morning, goodbye or thank you, and I was only too glad to see him leave to even utter a word. The dog followed him out at a distance and sat down in the road to see that he did not return. He came in looking pleased, as much as to say, "I too am glad he is gone."

The children had a large flock of pigeons that had left their perch and were scattered along on the fence, and as he approached them, he struck the fence a vigorous blow with his cane, which seemed to be an indication of what was passing in his mind—that he would like to annihilate not only the innocent doves but the whole north.

I was watching him from the window and saw his frantic gesticulations with his cane, as far as I could see him. The dear children still slept, and being weary from watching all night, I lay down by my little girl and let them all sleep as long as they could.

I soon made preparations for breakfast as I was too nervous to sleep. I waited for the children to ask about the stranger. The older ones wished their father had been at home and while the man slept, father would have had an officer on hand if it took him all night to do so, but little Fred said that he just believed it was Jeff Davis and he would like to hang him to a "sour apple tree." He said he knew where there was a good one down by the creek.

A UNION DEMOCRAT

It was mail day, and in the afternoon our neighbor, Mr. Hull, came for his papers. He asked if I had kept a well-dressed, gentlemanly-looking fellow the night before, and I told him that I had. I then inquired if he had given the gentleman breakfast, but Mr. Hull said the fellow would not wait for them to finish milking, demanding breakfast immediately, and he knew the man to be a spy when he said

to Mr. Hull, "You are a democrat and they all help me." Mr. Hull told the man that he was a democrat but a loyal man and no copperhead or Benedict Arnold who would betray his country, nor would he feed one if he was starving, and ordered the man to leave. The man did not come our way again, but how did he know Mr. Hull was a democrat? The copperheads had informed him and kept the southern army posted all the time.

EMISSARIES AND INDIANS

We saw no more Indians but knew the danger was not past, and our Musquakies were in mortal dread all the time. The Sioux were their worst enemies, though in former years they had been friendly and hunted and fished together every year, but in some way and at some time about two years before the war a Musquakie had killed a Sioux and they feared revenge. But this was not the cause of alarm to the white settlers of northern Iowa and Nebraska. It was a much more serious affair and consummated in the dreadful massacre at Spirit Lake, where seven hundred white people, men, women and children were killed, and thousands driven from their homes, and this the work of the southern emissaries. We had cause for alarm when their spies, Indians and white men, were encouraged to kill innocent women and children, the copperheads of the north as well as the rebels in the south. They were our worst enemies and later on I had my own experience with them too.

The volunteers were being sent on to the front as fast as possible. My husband often accompanied them to the cars, taking his own team in some cases as the first going out had to be carried in wagons to Marengo. That was the nearest railroad point, but eventually the cars crept up to Tama City on the North Western, fourteen miles from our home.

THE FAINT MOTHER HEART

Two young men had volunteered willingly, freely, loyally and joyfully, but when the time came for the beloved boys to leave home, how the hearts of fathers and especially mothers grew sick and faint as the hour came for parting. My dear neighbor whose son was to leave soon was prostrate. She had come west with her family and the youngest boy, now five

years old, was the first white child born in Tama County. She had lost one son two years before with consumption and now could not consent to letting her eldest son go. Her husband came after me to spend the day, but I did not feel equal to meeting her. However, I said, "Mr. Felter, I must take the children with me if I go," and he said, "Oh, yes, bring them all, the more the better, and let the old dog come too. You know our dogs never quarrel." So I packed up food I had prepared—roasted chicken, biscuits and jelly, including some very fine tea—and used an approaching storm as an excuse for going. I found the dear mother much more calm and quiet than I had expected, and after being persuaded to rest, she was able to relish some of the food and the tea that I had brought.

The storm was not as severe as we had anticipated, and before I left for home, she said to me, "I am so glad the storm drove you to come to see me. I feel so much better. The storm of bitterness and selfishness has cleared from my mind, and I can say 'God's will be done' and I have committed my boy to him." So we parted for this time.

Hers was a peculiar case, and the circumstances such that her children were all the world to her. She was patriotic and loyal, but died of "mother love." I have heard of people dying of broken hearts and from overwork, and I have actually seen just such cases, and of "mothers loving their children to death." This was her case.

OUR DOG IS MISSING

The autumn weather was lovely, and we had gathered wild fruit in abundance—crab apples, grapes and plums. The neighbors taught me how to preserve the wild fruit in sorghum, and it was very good and wholesome. I made pickles of all kinds and took care of the ripe vegetables. The dear boys had lost their drums they had enjoyed so much, but a discarded dishpan did good service for a time. Our good old dog was missing one morning after breakfast and no amount of calling or hunting, or scraping a plate with his dinner brought him. The children were nearly frantic; their companion and faithful servant was gone.

I confess I too was nervous, thinking of the Indians again,

knowing their partiality to dog soup and bothered by the aggravating thought that our good old dog could possibly come to such an ignominious death. Then too should this be a fact, the Indians were surely having a feast and dance somewhere, how near no one knew. The post office had been moved and we did not see or hear news from the outside world as before, so then would some the ever present harassing thought of the massacre at Spirit Lake three years before and that the Indian scouts or spies, as we called them, might have a grudge against us or this poor dog. So the day passed, not very pleasant or comfortable. We had supper but no one seemed to have any appetite though we had everything good, plenty of good cream and sweet butter and all the fruit and good meat we could possibly use. I took extra trouble to prepare a nice supper as the children were so distressed.

The calling was kept up and the dinner and supper plates were emptied at the usual time and a vigorous scraping continued, as my little housekeeper said that had never failed to bring Dash before and she had faith yet to think we would see him with a prairie chicken or a rabbit very soon. How I dreaded the approaching darkness, but I did not tell the children my fears or apprehensions. Soon I heard a shout that brought me to my senses. The dog was found; we could see his black head in a slough quite a distance from the house where a spring had been dug so the boys could water the horses and not be obliged to go to the creek when their father was gone.

Why did he not come to the house in answer to the children's call all day? My own foolish thought was that the Indians had nearly killed him or fastened him there to call us out. While all this was passing through my mind and before I knew what to do, the dear, fearless, sensible boys were there and the girls followed. Frank came running back and said Dash could not walk as his foot and leg was dreadfully swollen and that he may have been bitten by a rattlesnake or shot. I hastened back hoping it was a snake bite and not from a bullet or poisonous arrow.

I took a cloth and string and came to the little crowd who were all sympathy for the poor suffering creature. He really

looked sick—Freddy said “pale.” His eyes were sunken and he showed how he had suffered and also his joy to think we had come to his relief. He allowed me to examine his foot and when I saw the blue clay on it and the place where he had held it all day, I decided it was a snake bite, so made a poultice of the clay and bound it on the foot. The boys helped him along, offering to carry his foot, but this he resented and followed slowly. The boys would sit down and he would lie down and rest awhile. If they attempted to leave him, it was pathetic to hear his moans, so they patiently took his gait, and I brought a quantity of the clay for fresh poultices, which I changed all night. I offered him some whiskey as I knew it was an antidote, but he positively refused it like the good temperance dog he was.

The morning came and “still we lived” and the dog was able to follow the boys again at their work and play. They were never idle—working or playing, reading or sewing, for the boys could sew nearly as well as the girls. They each had pieced a quilt, and as I look backward into the long years, I think of those dear boys and believe their innocent, fun-loving happy days ended here. We were all together then; none had gone out from our home.

These boys were not at all alike. Frank was quiet, sober, earnest, thoughtful, peace-loving and peace-making and loved to play but waited for Fred to lead and where Fred went, he could go, but often restrained his little daring brother's impulses to do dangerous things and perform wonderful feats. They were never separated, if there was work for only one, the other must help; what one could not do, the other generally could, or thought he could; and they were so glad and happy all the day long. They depended on each other, each having their own virtues and faults also, but I do not remember them. Life soon became real to them and they were to assume responsibilities and cares all too much for their years. They were often out late with their father, Frank doing the singing and Fred the drumming, when a drum could be borrowed, and so they made the best of their time when not at work.

About this time we were greatly annoyed by prairie wolves

and as others were killing them with poison, why not try what we could do? I consulted with the boys and they thought it would be grand to catch a wolf while father was gone. I prepared some fresh meat filling it well with strychnine. The boys could hardly wait for morning to come. When the first streak of light came in our windows, we were up and dressed. I told the boys to go on but they thought it best for all to go together so that all would share the fun, as we were quite confident there would be some. The dog had a mortal dread of a wolf and could never be coaxed or persuaded to attack one. He preceded the little procession. We soon saw our bait was gone, and the fresh tracks in the snow were sure indications (to us) that we would find a wolf or several of the vicious destructive thieves.

Dash, the dog, had run down in a little slough and gave a frightened bark of alarm. We hastened to the rescue armed with a broom and sticks and a hoe, not knowing but we might have a fight. As we came in sight of the dog, he ran to meet us, then back to near the spot where he had discovered his greatest enemy, the only creature he was afraid of, stiff, cold and helpless. We had to coax him to come near it. As he saw us smooth the beautiful fur, he seemed to think, "I will not be such a coward," then expressed as much joy as the rest of us. It was the largest wolf I had ever seen and I had seen many in Illinois years before. The boys called it "mother's wolf," and as soon as their morning work was done, they had to take the news to our neighbors. Then the young man who helped us in all our emergencies came up and skinned the great creature.

The supervisors were in session, and he said, "I will take it down this afternoon and get the bounty." I thought he cared more to show it to the Doctor than he did for the bounty, but I got the bounty and Doctor got the hide, which was properly cured and was the beginning of a very elegant lap robe several years later.

Soon after this event our bright, busy, little drummer boy was taken with a chill one cold morning, then fever and headache and other sure indications of measles, so the marching and music and all play was at an end for the present. The child was very sick; the house generally so bright and sunny

was now darkened and hushed; it seemed as if everything stood still outside as well as indoors. When well, he was everywhere; every creature knew his voice and came at his call; all were his pets.

The measles were of a very dangerous form and did not make their appearance on the surface as his father desired and hoped they would, but the frequent warm baths finally had the desired effect. He was cared for constantly by us all; each wished to do something for the dear little Fred. After he began to rally, he improved rapidly. The other children realized they too would probably be in his position very soon, and the eldest daughter, my little housekeeper, was busy from morning till night. She did all the cooking. I found her looking over the children's clothing and I said, "Ora, what are you doing?" She said, "Why mother, I am just getting everyone's things separated so you will not have any trouble when we are sick. I have made cookies enough to last a week and have cleaned the pantry so you will not have so much to do." Oh, the dear unselfish child was a womanly girl, always ready to do for others. She is now a very happy wife and mother with the same virtues.

Doctor and Frank were very busy; every moment now was precious. Frank was his only help, but could be trusted with everything. Little Anna was my assistant nurse and would entertain her little sick brother for hours and was very helpful to me. As Fred began to improve, the others all came down at once. The elder ones, who were the healthier, were not very sick, but we had the same difficulty with Anna that we did with Fred in bringing out the rash, but God spared them all to us while others died.

Doctor was called again to Iowa City to confer with the Governor. I had a brother living in Toledo, also a widowed sister whose only son was a soldier and Doctor always stopped with one of these families when in town. He took dinner with my brother on his way to the cars at Iuka (now Tama City) and left his horse there. In his absence my brother's wife was taken dangerously ill. They had been down to meet every train for the last twenty-four hours, hoping he would arrive. When he came in the evening, he found her conscious but dying. She

asked for me. Doctor hastened home, riding twelve miles on horseback—it was nearly twelve o'clock when he arrived. I listened to the sad news but did not see how I could leave the dear children, who had not yet been outside the door, except Fred.

I said that if Mrs. Guilford could only come and stay with them, I would feel safe, as the man stayed all the time now to do the chores. Doctor said that he would take the team and go after her. He did so and like the dear old friend she had ever shown herself to be, she came right along and before daylight we were on our way back to Toledo. It was a very sad ride, and we arrived too late to meet the dear one alive; she died at twelve o'clock, leaving five children, the eldest sixteen, the youngest a baby.

The funeral was held in the afternoon, and we bade them a sad goodbye and hastened to our own dear ones whom we had left in excellent care. The man was very kind and did all he could for this dear old lady, who quite often would walk two miles to make us a little visit, her coming always a great pleasure to us all. She remained several days till the children were all out of danger.

While they were still in bed, a man came to buy a load of potatoes. He had heard the new song "John Brown" and came in and sang for the children, who never tired of it. It was very soon learned and we could all sing it. My oldest girl had been taught to sing and was quite a musician. She learned to play the piano and had opened a concert given by her teacher when she was seven years old. The three years on the farm had compelled vocal music only, so she taught and drilled the children until we really could have a very respectable choir or concert, especially when father was present to sing bass.

They all expected me to sing them to sleep, and this was the time my singing was appreciated. I sang "John Brown" too; it was not difficult and the words were understood (were not Italian) and the sentiment was in keeping with the times and aroused our sympathy not only for "John Brown" but for his family and especially for those he wished so much to help. He did what he could in the work God had assigned him

in the great drama that was soon to be enacted. It helped to arouse the patriotism, and show us the great danger we were in from the encounter, which would surely come. And it is now more than thirty years since this event.

FATHER GOES TOO

The trunk was packed, each one adding some little thing that father would like. The cows and calves were sold, the children's pets going from them every day; the happy days were slipping away also; every day brought some new trouble. The chickens and turkeys were sold, except what we had reserved for ourselves; the best cow was to go with us; the wagons and machinery were under shelter; the loose timber was carried to the attic; an abundance of wood was left and everything put in good order for the young family who were soon to take possession. The grain was sold, leaving only enough for next year's seed. Every day brought friends and neighbors to purchase something we had to sell that they needed, or to say goodbye to us all.

Mrs. Guilford was again asked to come and stay with us till we moved. Her time was her own as she lived with a dear son and his kind wife who made her life pleasant and happy. She could go and come when she chose to and we were very glad she could come to us, especially at this very time. She was a comfort and a blessing. The family was very patriotic and the only reason this dear old friend had for not enlisting was because she was a woman and too old.

All arrangements were now completed, the work and farm in good shape. We were expecting a man to come for the horses as they were to be sold for the army. The Doctor received a telegram from the Governor to report immediately. He was sorry not to have us moved and settled in Toledo before he left, but the call was imperative and not unexpected, and I think he was glad the waiting and the anxiety were now at an end, and his patriotism and loyalty were now aroused anew. He was needed; there was another kind of work for him to do. He did not hesitate or regret the going, only the parting with the family. We all tried to be brave, each suppressing his own sorrow to comfort the others. We had all dreaded this hour and had prayed and prepared for it, and

God gave us strength and a good degree of cheerfulness when it came.

The goodbyes were said and as Mrs. Guilford had come to stay with the children, I accompanied my husband to see him off, taking little Fred, as he was the strongest and best able to go. We were fourteen miles from the station (Iuka). We called on the friends in Toledo a few moments. The dear children who had just lost their mother a few weeks before felt very sad at this parting with their uncle. My dear brother was greatly affected, his heart not yet healed from his late affliction. He accompanied us to the train.

And so we parted, the Doctor to go to his country's call, we to our lonely, saddened homes. We could not stop as we would have been glad to do, for we had a long, lonely, cold ride to reach home before night. Fred insisted on being the man as father had told him he must be and take care of mother. He tucked the robes about me and took the lines to drive home, the little nine year old man. He drove several miles when I discovered he was shivering, so I insisted on driving a little while. I rolled him in a large blanket I had brought for the purpose, and had him lie down on the hay; it was a large farm wagon, our only carriage. He soon fell asleep and as the horses were anxious to get home to their warm stables and supper, I sat by the child and just held the lines, the horses did the rest. There was no danger of meeting teams that time of night for it was now dark and so cold I almost became stupid myself, and had to make an effort to keep awake. I assured myself frequently that Freddy was warm and not frozen, would speak to him and rouse him up for a moment.

We arrived home safely, however, and found the man had kindly come up to do the chores and take care of the horses. I was too cold to eat or even go near the fire for some time, and did not get quite warm the whole evening. I gave Fred a warm foot bath and some quinine, and he seemed as well as usual in the morning. It was twelve o'clock before I felt like retiring and as was my custom to look outdoors to see if everything was quiet, I did so this night. I found the dog sitting on the porch; he had left his warm bed and seemed to think there was something wrong as the light was still

burning and I was up. I let him come in. He went all around the rooms where the children were sleeping, then in my room where Mrs. Guilford was asleep. I had sat down and was watching him. He finally came to me and laid his head in my lap and looked up into my face, but not a glad look on his expressive face. I broke down entirely and I believe we cried together, he with his head in my lap and my arm about his neck, my dumb friend.

I bade him lie down on his blanket, but before doing so he walked into my room, examined the chair where the Doctor always hung his clothing, then the rack where he hung his overcoat and hat. They were all gone. Then he dropped his head, looked at me and lay down. He knew something very unusual was going on outdoors and in this happy family.

The fifteen years of our married life passed before me as a beautiful panorama. My husband was all devotion to his family. Our children had been spared us, and we had seen very little trouble, but now he was gone. I was to have all the care and responsibility of the family. He had a little private talk with each of the children before he left and had told each one "to be good and take care of mamma." He had patted the old dog and told him to take care of all of us. When my turn came, I said, "Doctor, how can I let you go?" He said, "You must be brave; you have the children; I have neither you nor the children."

I felt that it was more than I could bear and that giving a son could be nothing to this, but then I thought of my dear widowed sister giving her only son and a brother giving his. Oh! did anyone ever suffer as I did this night? Where was all my patriotism, my loyalty, my love of country? It was all gone; it had gone out with the light and joy of our home and was going farther and farther from me. Then I thought of all the other mothers I had seen. Could they have suffered as I was suffering now? It was indescribable; it must be endured to be realized. I had tried to comfort others—how cold and unfeeling my poor words must have sounded. I felt so inefficient, so weak, not equal to all that would be required of me. I prayed for strength and was comforted, but the struggle lasted all night, and it seemed to me the children never were so dear

to me as now; it was such a comfort to think I had them. But then my thoughts were of other homes where the loved ones were going from home and mother every day, and my prayers now were for them in their sorrow, which I could now appreciate.

The men we were expecting came for the horses. The boys had lost their favorite pets. It was pathetic to see them and hear their regrets. Everything was gone now but what we needed, and very soon our dear home would be abandoned, and the future—what was that to be? Very depressing news had reached us—we had lost a battle.

Our last sabbath on the farm had come. We were going to walk to church when a kind neighbor called for us. He had a large wagon with two seats, so he said, "Bring your buffalo robe and my wife can sit with you and the children with me." We gladly did so, heard a good sermon, and met the good neighbors for the last time in the little schoolhouse. We had let the dog come along, and while we were in church, he had pulled my buffalo robe out on the ground and was lying on it, so I had to go out and get it from him. He stayed close by till he saw me get in the wagon and sit on it.

The next day we left the farm, never to be our home again, but we were glad to be near our friends and be able to help others, as this had not been our privilege the past year. We found our house quite convenient and very comfortable, but not new and clean as our prairie home had been. We had left our dear home and kind friends behind; we would miss them, especially dear Mother Guilford who had proved herself "a friend in need" many times, but we will hear from this kind family again. We had not come among strangers—a dear sister and brother, other relatives and many friends lived in Toledo, and two other brothers in the country. Each of these were postmasters as well as the brother in town. One of these had a son in the army and the other a nephew, an orphan boy living in the family. They had all gone out at the first call, as well as the two sisters' sons.

The dear sister living here had welcomed me cordially, saying, "Oh, sister, I am so glad you have come. I need you so much; you will be such a comfort to me." With a pain in my

heart I said that I would try to be. Her only son, who was the only support of herself and his young sister, had answered his Country's call and so another soldier's mother was robbed of her boy, her only one and she a widow in her feebleness. She was never happier than when administering to the wants of others and now found all the work she was able to do in giving the soldiers' wives and children her special attention.

Professor Dillman of the high school was one of the first to enlist and had left a wife and two little boys. He went out never to return; he was captain of a company and was killed early in the strife. As Mrs. Dillman was now to be my children's teacher, I called on her. I was told not to mention her husband's name as she could not bear it—it was too sacred, her sorrow too deep for expression. However, day after day she was doing her work faithfully and was always ready to assist wherever she was needed. This is a short sketch of one soldier's wife; where are the rest? Who will tell of all they endured? Who can write it? Who appreciates their work for their families, their soldier boys, their country, their homes; who saw their tears, who heard their agonizing prayers? Only God.

My work up to this time had been entirely or almost so in my own family, but now my opportunity had come. I was so thankful to be near friends and relatives once more, and as much as we loved our prairie home we almost shuddered to think how we had suffered from fear and apprehension of danger the past year, but now if sick, we could call a neighbor, and I felt so safe in regard to the children. I could see them until they nearly reached the schoolhouse. My little mother-girl was very proud to introduce her brothers, and baby sister who had never attended school before was now seven years old and as happy as the day was long. They all loved their teacher and became interested in their work.

We never forgot the dear absent one, or his last message to each. We remembered he was alone, had neither wife nor children. I had the children to comfort me, while he was surrounded by suffering and death on every side. We could only pray for him. He was appointed assistant surgeon to the 30th Iowa, the only surgeon from our county. He often met soldiers from Iowa, and if they lived in Toledo, would always

send a message to his friends. His letters came very frequently and were read and read again to friends and neighbors. We had a dear, old minister living or boarding (as he had never married) near us who was a special friend of the family. He was confined to his room and a great sufferer from cancer in the nose. I would slip away and read an hour or two to him. He looked for those letters and knew I would bring and read them. I never disappointed him.

I found a little time each day to spend with the dear children who had so recently lost their mother, and help the young daughter and sister in the care of the younger children and make everything as pleasant as possible for the coming in of the tired father. How nobly this young, inexperienced girl performed her duty and tried to fill a mother's place to these little ones. This dear, favorite brother needed comforting too. I had no time to think of myself.

The ladies had been at work for the last year, in a small way, preparing parcels and boxes for our soldiers. I received word from the Doctor not to send any more to St. Louis as the boys did not get them. These complaints came very often, but we kept at work, hoping for a better way to reach our sick. Finally Governor Kirkwood sent out circulars, calling a convention to meet in Des Moines to decide whether our supplies be sent to St. Louis or Chicago. Illinois had decided in favor of Chicago.

Previous to this call we had organized a Sanitary Commission. Mr. John Shanklin was the president and a most excellent officer, very patriotic and wishing to do all that was possible for the soldier boys. He had been opposed to our shipping goods to St. Louis all the time, so was very glad when the Governor made this call. Our headquarters were over a store, a large, unfinished room. The president called a meeting and appointed four delegates to attend this convention, which was to meet the following week. The Methodist minister, the Presbyterian minister's wife and two others were chosen.

I was one of the party. A married niece whose husband was in Washington was engaged to keep house for the children and all arrangements were completed. It was a chilly afternoon. We rode to Iuka in a hack, then took the train for Mar-

shalltown and here a coach and four horses were required to take eight passengers across the country to Des Moines. The roads were very bad and we had to travel slowly. Six passengers were inside and two on the driver's seat. We left about dark, and our experience could not be appreciated except by those who have taken a similar ride thirty years ago across an uncultivated prairie, but we were a jolly company and no one was allowed to be found napping. We arrived in Des Moines just at daylight, and were met by a committee who took us to the Savery (not the magnificent Savery of today). Here we had a nice breakfast, which we sadly needed, then were assigned to private families where we were to be entertained. Mrs. Dodd and myself were very kindly and cordially received by Mrs. Judge Nourse, where we remained until the close of the convention.

The convention opened at ten o'clock that morning. While we were resting and waiting, Senator Harlan called to inquire how we stood in regard to the disposal of our sanitary supplies. We told him we came uninstructed but knew that our president and our whole commission were decidedly in favor of Chicago as headquarters for our supplies. He agreed with the Governor and was glad to hear we did. He was there to see that Iowa had justice done her brave defenders and that they, and not the rebels, got what was sent to them by friends and the state. He did his work nobly, noble man that he is.

This convention was the first one in Iowa where men and women met to discuss such an important matter, and a woman was made permanent chairman, Mrs. M. J. Livermore. She filled the position very gracefully and acceptably. Mrs. Annie Wittenmyer represented St. Louis and was very anxious all supplies be sent there.

The delegates were assigned seats and the afternoon session was a warm one lasting till late at night. All the next day was consumed, but we were gaining ground and we considered we had nearly gained our point. The evening session decided in our favor, and a few unimportant matters were being discussed; neither side would yield. Ex-Governor Stone's seat was directly back of mine, and I said to him, "Can we not concede this much without compromising our dignity, and

finish up and go home?" "Let me think a minute," he said, and as some one had the floor, he had time to look the question over. Presently he said, "Yes, it can be done," and wanted me to ask the chairman if we could not afford to do this, but as I was no talker, I could not do it. Soon I saw him making his way out. He rose in all his dignity and represented the question as a very trifling one, compared to what we had gained, and made it appear as if we were very magnanimous in yielding this point or conceding to their wishes. The question seemed so unimportant to me that I have forgotten what it was.

This ended the discussion, the convention closed and after a lunch at a restaurant, we bade adieu to our kind entertainers and started for home about 12 o'clock at night across the prairie. There were no graded or culverted roads as now. We had a heavy load and made progress slowly, but we were a jolly party and had so much to be thankful for that we were very happy. We had met many very pleasant people and had enjoyed the discussions, obtaining much information and many new ideas in regard to our sanitary work in the future. Now it appeared so strange to us all that our supplies were ever sent south for distribution, but no one was to blame. Illinois did the same; it was the best they could do. Everything was an experiment.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

Gold Mining Company

. . . A. Levi, C. W. Arthur, J. W. Hull, Ernest Crepin, and Dr. Tom O. Edwards, have resolved themselves into a corporation, known as the "Dubuque Gold Mining Company." From the Articles of Incorporation we learn that their object is to obtain gold in the gold region of Pike's Peak, and that their capital is \$20,800. The place of doing business is Dubuque, and is to be done by five directors, who are elected annually. The directors are to elect an executive committee and a superintendent, whose business is to attend to locating mineral lots, and operating practically in the vicinity of Pike's Peak—*The Dubuque Herald*, February 1, 1860.

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