CHAPTER XVI

REMINISCENCES OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES IN CRAWFORD COUNTY

The following reminiscences were told the writer by Mrs. J. M. Harshaw a few years previous to her death. Mrs. Harshaw was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Whitfield Bourne and it is about them that she related this story:

My father's early life was spent in Kentucky, but fearing tuberculosis and thinking that his health would be benefitted by change of climate, he left there and went farther west, liking Arkansas climate he decided to settle in this part of the country. Wishing to be in the open air as much as possible, and owning a large number of slaves he acted as his own overseer. Having a large number of persons for whom to provide he bought his provisions at wholesale at New Orleans, that city being the market place for a large expanse of territory.

At the beginning of the war he had much provisions on hand and in order to save it from being stolen, much of it was hidden about the place, the darkeys assisting in burying a great deal of it, but while leaving my father's place, they never disclosed the hiding places, also much was stored in a house near the homeplace.

Rumors flew thick and fast that the Federals were marching toward Van Buren, time passed and as they did not appear, we began to think that it was only a rumor, but we were soon to learn differently.

One day I was out playing with some of the little darkeys, and a darkey about 16 years old was grazing a horse near by; while we were playing we heard shots, but did not pay much attention to them, as there were several pickets stationed above our house. Hearing a horse running I looked up and saw one of them pass bent almost double on his horse, with it going full speed; in a short time another passed in the same way and then a third, by this time we were much frightened and ran as hard as we could to the house, about the same time

the darkey boy came running also, very much frightened, crying "Oh, Miss Madaline! the Dutch are coming hide me."

There were several kegs of sugar and some eatables in an outside room so my mother called the darkeys and had them carried into the house. Very soon she saw my father coming from the direction of Dripping Springs with his horse trotting very fast, which was unusual, so she felt there was some cause for alarm, and he confirmed the report that the Federals were really coming. The mare he rode was a very fine one, so he put her in an old blacksmith shop and locked the door.

Very soon a battle line was drawn up, the Federals above the house and the Confederates below, placing the house right in the range, if there was a fight, but it proved only a ruse by the Confederates to allow their artillery time to get away.

When the line was broken, the Federal troops did not keep to the road but came directly through our place, bringing their cannon with them, and tearing down fences as they came. They camped in our yard and part of the camp was directly over where a barrel of molasses and some sugar were buried but they never suspicioned there was anything there; but the soldiers broke open the smoke house and began taking out the provisions.

The officer in command, who was a fine looking man, told my mother that the troops had received instructions not to molest the family room but to destroy all other things, telling her to call the negroes and have the things placed in her room. When the things were all in, the room was so full that one could scarcely turn around.

My father was arrested and made to walk all or part of the way to town. As he always rode it was very hard on him, the officer in command going with him. While the officer was away the soldiers did break into the room and had a great many things out, when he appeared and made them put the things back. A guard was then stationed about the house for protection.

Up to this time I had spent most of my time at play. I studied a little but was only called upon once in a while

to assist in the house work, but from this time on I had to do my part as the darkeys soon left.

My father had a great many hogs running at large through the woods, consequently we had plenty of meat. When the hogs were killed, I with the rest of the children had to carry much of the meat into the woods where it was hidden up in the trees. One day my father had all the meat out on scaffolding sunning, when a company of soldiers were seen coming up the road in almost a run, their bayonets shining in the sun as they came up the hill. As soon as they were seen, father called us all and put us removing the meat out of sight, which of course caused a good deal of commotion as every one was running here and there.

The troops were stopped and the officer in command of the company, who proved to be a perfect gentleman, came forward and inquired of my father the cause of all the running about, were they hiding someone? He told them no, they were hiding meat.

It was very warm that day and the soldiers were hot and tired from their forced march and the officer remarked: "I have been sent on another fool's errand. You were reported by a woman, who said she had heard a great deal of "secesh" talk at your house." My father said "yes, I know the woman. There were a number of women at my house yesterday and they may have been talking, but she did not hear anything, as she could be seen for some distance before she reached the house, and they all knew the kind of woman she was." The officer then told his men to turn and march back to town.

This woman was a half breed and on the Union side. She traveled between Van Buren and Fayetteville selling apples and other things. I was afraid of her as I could be. My father and mother always treated her well as she was a dangerous person. The day before the troops came out, she came down the road driving a team of oxen, the oxen were very warm and seeing a pool of water they made for it and went in as far as the deepest part, the woman tried every way to get them out, finally wading into the pool, but they would not move for her, so my

father and mother went to her assistance. He waded in and after a time succeeded in getting them out. My mother brought the woman to the house and gave her dry clothes to put on, but they were never returned. She then went on into Van Buren and reported them to the provo-marshal. Knowing her as he did, if he had been a gentleman, he would have paid no attention to the report.

My father had much corn hidden away in different parts of his place and some stored in a building near the house. The Federals officers in Van Buren learned of it and sent wagons to be filled. When the men arrived they told my father they had come for the corn. He showed them where it was, standing by while they loaded the wagons. One of the men remarked "that he might have known that he could not keep anything hidden from a yankee." My father replied that he had more hidden and if the Yankees could find it they were welcome to it. My father talking that way frightened me very much and I went into the house and told my mother; after they had left she said to my father: "the officers may send again for the corn and if you do not show them where it is the soldiers will kill you." But they never came again.

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When General Blount made his raid in to Van Buren on that memorable Sunday morning, December 28th, 1862 and the bluecoats swarmed over the town, there were five steamboats lying at or near the wharf, loaded with corn to be transported down the river. They were the Rose Douglas, Frederick Notrobe, Key West, Violet and Ben Carson, the latter being a flat bottom boat succeeded in getting away. That night the others were burned. Still burning the Rose Douglas and the Frederick Notrobe floated down the river about opposite the foot of Drennen street and sunk. The Violet was tied to a sweet gum tree, at what would now be the foot of Sycamore street, but at that time there was a large field between Bois de Arc, or what is now second street where the railroad is and the river and there, was partly burned.

One can imagine the feelings the citizens had when

the town was illuminated by the burning boats as they floated down the river. Mrs. Fanny Ogden, who as a girl lived at the corner of Vine and Bois de Arc which was near where the boat was burned, says she remembers getting dishes, plated silver dish holder and other things off the boat to play with.

One lady said as she came into town the next morning she could smell the burning corn some distance down the river road. At the same time several buildings containing government corn were burned.

There seems to be diversity of opinion as to who set the boats on fire. Some say the Confederates and some say the Federals. Which side did it, it was known in time to remove some of the articles, as an extension dining table, taken from either the Rose Douglass or the Frederick Notrobe, is now in the Guild room of Trinity Episcopal church where it has been for several years.

The writer heard the following incidents related by Mrs. A. J. Ward: When the War between the States began Mr. A. J. Ward was in the mercantile business at Van Buren consequently he stored in his cellar a supply of sugar, coffee, candles and other provisions. This cellar had an outside entrance and one leading from the front hall downstairs. The trap door to the outside entrance was removed and the opening boarded up, and the passage was filled with dirt and rocks until it was even with the ground, The house stood about 100 feet inside of the picket line, the barn stood just inside of the line on Sycamore street and was used by the pickets for shelter while on duty. They often came to the house on a pretense of buying food, but in reality to spy around and see where things were kept.

At this time General Bowen was in command. One night the pickets dug into the ground and found the opening,went through the cellar and up the stairs. Mrs. Ward's bedroom door opened just at the side of the cellar door. The picket closed it making Mrs. Ward a prisoner and placing one of their number to guard the door so that no one could leave the room. They then proceeded to

remove much that was in the cellar, sugar, candles and so forth.

The next morning Mrs. Ward, on a pretext of needing something, sent the children around the house and they discovered the opening where the soldiers had entered. Mrs. Ward then went up to Colonel Bowen's office to enter a complaint, but was told that he was moving his family into town, that was, Dr. Thurston's family, he afterwards married Miss Thurston. At the office they promised to have the matter investigated, and did return a few things but some of them did not come from her cellar, as they were not of the same brand, showing that other houses had been entered.

A few days afterwards Mrs. Ward was calling at Mrs. Thurston's home when during the conversation she remarked that General Bowen had given her some loaf sugar and how glad she was to get it, as it had been some time since she had had any. Mrs.Ward said, right then she knew that it was some of her sugar as there had been no provision wagons or steamboats up for several weeks previous, but did not dare say so.

One night a company of the 13th Kansas regiment of which Colonel Bowen was in command, was drawn up in a line of battle below the house. As a Mrs. Mason and Mrs. Ward expected to watch all night the lights were all extinguished, so they could the better watch the movements of the soldiers.

Mrs. Mason had gone upstairs to put on a dark dress so they could more easily move about without being seen and had hardly gotten upstairs when she called down that there was a man up there, just as Mrs. Ward had gotten up there her daughter called there was a man down there. As she started down the man slipped past her. After two or three such experiences she met him face to face and inquired of him what he was doing there. He said, "Madame I will not hurt any of your family." She told him to leave there which he did, slipping away in the dark. It was believed he was either a deserter or a spy of some kind trying to hide in the house, as when first seen he was coming out of a closet in Mrs. Mason's room.

Had he been found here it might have proven a very serious matter to Mrs. Ward and her family.

One day during the fall of 1864 Mrs. Ward received notice to report at the office of Captain Louden of the Federal forces. Captain Louden having lived at Greenwood knew Mrs. Ward, he being a particular friend of her brother-in-law Mr. J. A. Eno, previous to his death. When she arrived she was told that the retiring 13th Kansas troops under Colonel Bowen were planning to burn the town on their evacuation that night. Captain Louden very kindly offered to send her and her children to a place of safety. She declined as her husband was somewhere on the way home. Mrs. Ward returned home and gathered her most valuable possessions tying them with some clothing up in a sheet. A small push cart was brought up to the back porch, so as to be in readiness for any emergency, deciding if the worst came to the worst she would place the bundle in the cart and with her children go down under the river bank, her home being very near the Arkansas river.

As darkness came on, the smallest buildings in different parts of the town were fired, then the barns; one can imagine the feelings of the citizens as they saw their property being destroyed and not knowing where it would end and others expecting theirs to be fired any moment.

During the latter part of the evening a great shouting was heard which struck terror to the hearts of the people, but succor was at hand in the coming of the 18th Iowa, commanded by Colonel Morie. The shouting was that of the troops as they came over Pickett Hill and saw the fires. Colonel Morie and some of his officers had arrived in Van Buren during the afternoon, leaving his command to camp for the night on the banks of Frog Bayou. Learning of the plan to burn Van Buren he sent a courier to his command to come in at once.

Mr. Ward who was traveling under their protection from Little Rock, said they were all settled to spend the night, when all at once there was great commotion in camp and every indication of breaking camp preparatory

to marching, which was done on double quick time. Mr. Ward arrived home about eleven o'clock at night, when the noise caused by putting his trunk on the porch was heard the family thought it was the troops coming to burn the house, but their anxiety was turned to joy at the sight of the husband and father and to know the town was saved.

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Capture of Col. Bowen

The following was told to George Wood by Capt. J. C. Wright and by him sent to "The Confederate Veteran."

From Capt. J. C. Wright of the 34th Arkansas Infantry and Lieutenant W. J. Pevehouse, both noted characters and brave officers in the sixties were obtained the following accounts of two important events which occurred in this county in 1884 namely the capture of Col. Thomas Bowen and the killing of Captain Wheeler, both of the 13th Kansas.

Concerning the capture of Col. Bowen, Captain Wright said:

"The Federals had had possession of Van Buren and the surrounding country for quite a while and had completely devastated the county, in many instances being cruel and barbarous in the treatment of helpless southern women and children. Several of the boys had slipped in home and were mixing with the bluecoats occasionally. Two Confederates, John Norwood and Bill Carey, who had recently surrendered with the distinct understanding that they were to be treated as prisoners of war, had been tried by drum-head court-martial and were at Fort Smith sentenced to be shot.

"A crowd of us got together and decided that if we could capture Colonel Bowen, commander of the 13th Kansas, stationed at Van Buren, we might secure the exchange of Norwood and Carey or at least a commutation of the death penalty. Colonel Bowen was very much a ladies' man and had become smitten with the charms of Miss Maggie, the accomplished and charming daughter of Dr. Richard Thurston. Dr. Thurston was out south; but his family, consisting of his wife, daughter

and one or two faithful negroes occupied the old fashioned southern home of the Doctor's, about one mile from the corporate limits of the town. Bowen was a frequent visitor at the Thurston home and in order to make sure of his own safety during the visits he had his outpost stationed at the Thurston yard gate and as a further precaution it was his practice to take an orderly with him.

"On the night of July 21st I took eleven men—J. H. Marlar, Nelse Tingler, little Sol Wagner, Cune Covington, Bill Black, Nick Wacks, John Huggins, Young Hight, Walk Foster, John Brodie and George Williams—through the mountains to a point five or six hundred yards north of the Thurston home. We arrived there just before daylight, dismounted, and secreted ourselves in a blackjack thicket on top of the hill overlooking the Thurston home. The country was full of Federals, and so we put sentinels out on the public road, which ran east of us some two hundred yards. About nine o'clock on the morning of July 22nd, 1864 Colonel Bowen accompanied by his orderly rode up to the Thurston home, dismounted and went in. I sent four men down on the west side of the Thurston field, which was north of us and between us and the house. I took some of the other boys and went through the field throwing down the fence to facilitate our escape. Black and his party reached the house a little ahead of us and had held up the orderly and captured Bowen. When I rode up they were bringing Bowen out of the house and he was put on Black's mare, while Black rode Bowen's horse and he was a good one too. Mrs. Thurston and Miss Maggie begged piteously for Bowen not to be taken away. Mrs. Thurston did not recognize me although I had known the family for years. I hurriedly told her that I had recently seen her husband, Dr. Thurston, down in Hempstead county and that he was well.

"Giving the command to double-quick, away we went with the commandant of the Van Buren post. We took him out on Frog Bayou to the old Howard place about fifteen miles north of Van Buren and there held a conference as what to do with him, as we realized how diffi-

cult it would be for us to keep him. Things were pretty hot around there then, and we were shot at almost every time we turned a bend in the road or looked around the corner of the house. Some of the boys wanted to kill him, but I knew that would never do. After quite a parley, we made him promise to be less cruel and barbarous in his treatment of the helpless southern women and children and to do all in his power to save the lives of Norwood and Carey. With this understanding I paroled him and sent Bill Black down as far as the Winfrey place with him. From there he returned to Van Buren alone. Bowen also agreed to give us $300 in Uncle Sam's money, and a few days thereafter I sent my wife (we lived about twenty-five miles north of Van Buren in the Frog Bayou mountains) down after it. Pevehouse and some of the boys, fearing that some scoundrel would take it away from her shadowed her all the way to Van Buren and back. Bowen gave her $100 in greenbacks and $100 in Missouri state warrants. We used the greenbacks all right but could do nothing with the state warrants.

"It is due Bowen to say that he did make the lives of our women and children less burdensome, but that his efforts to save Norwood and Carey were unavailing. They were shot. Afterwards Bowen married Miss Thurston and under reconstruction rule was supreme judge of Arkansas and later went to Colorado."

The Doctor Thurston home stood where the King school now stands, but faced the main road. Colonel Bowen died several years ago at Pueblo, Colorado, and in less than a year was followed by his wife.

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Killing of Captain Beeler

Lieutenant W. J. Pevehouse gave this account of the killing of Captain Beeler of the 13th Kansas.

"On the night of August 18th, 1864 Capt. J. C. Wright, Bill Black, Jim Marlar, Lum Basham, Jack Cottrell and I went to the old Rankin place northwest of Chester, hoping to be able to spend the night without molestation. No one lived at the place at that time. The house was

a double-roomed house with a wide open entry between the rooms. We turned our horses out in an old field to graze while we slept. The night was warm, and a drizzling rain was falling. Wright and Black lay down in the entry, while the rest of the boys stretched out on the floor in the rooms. About nine o'clock Wright heard some one say in a low tone: 'O John, O John.' He aroused the others, and we awoke to find the house and ourselves surrounded by about sixty-five men under command of Captain Beeler. We knew our capture meant death, for our hides were at a premium in those days; so each one set himself to fight his way out.

"Wright, Marlar and Black went on the east side of the house and the others on the west side. We went under full fire from the enemy. I ran into about twenty-five of them at the corner of an old smokehouse. They fired, but overshot me. I wheeled and was thrown in front of the blazing pistols of Captain Beeler who had one in each hand and was using them very skillfully. I snapped both barrels of my shotgun, but it failed to fire, as the caps had gotten wet. By that time he had hit me twice, one in each thigh, pretty high up. I was knocked down by the impact of the balls and from loss of blood and fell into a little draw. I tried to pull myself up by a little sappling and partially succeeded. Beeler was within six feet of me; using both pistols and cursing with every breath. I steadied myself by the little bush and turned my old Remington six-shooter loose. I was so close to him that I saw fire strike his stomach. He changed his tune, and said 'O, Lord,' and fell.

"I dragged myself off into the bushes and lay there the rest of the night nearly famished for water. I put my hat out, hoping to catch a little from the light rain still falling, but failed. I was bleeding freely. A short time previous one of our men was shot and bled to death from a severed artery. Fearing that would be my fate, I tore my handkerchief into shreds and stuffed it into the wounds, hoping to check the flow of blood. I dragged myself around there for nearly two days, without food or water, not knowing whether any of the boys had

escaped or not. Occosionally I heard horses' feet but yet could not tell whether they were ridden by friend or foe. By Saturday morning I was very sore, and my limbs were swollen and black. I realized that without assistance I would surely die so I made a desperate effort to reach Captain Wright's house. I dragged myself to the roadside where I saw the tracks made by the horses I had heard passing. I knew they were our horses, because the shoes had but six nails while the Yankees used eight, but I did not know who were riding them. I found about a pint of water in a hog wallow. It did not have ice in it, but it was good. I got hold of some old dead limbs and improvised a pair of crutches, with the aid of which, I managed to make my way to Wright's house Saturday evening. The boys were all there, not one of them hurt, and they gave me a hearty welcome. They washed and dressed my wounds, the best they could, put me on a piece of ladder used as a litter and carried me to a spring back in the mountains, where I stayed without shelter for three weeks, at the end of which time I was able to mount my horse and go at it again. As a treatment I used nothing but salt and cold water. I went south that fall, rejoined my command and surrendered with it down in Texas."

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Reminiscenses Told By T. B. Swearingen

I was born in Crawford county Arkansas, May 22, 1856; consequently was five years of age, when the war began. Notwithstanding my tender age at that time, I distinctly remember the most important events that occured from the beginning to the end of that struggle, also, many incidents that took place during the preceding year. I recalled hearing my father and others discussing political questions during the presidential campaign of 1860.

Breckenridge, Douglass and Lincoln were very familiar names during those times. Also, the terms secession, union, abolition and states rights, having been so much discussion within my hearing the terms were permanently fixed in my mind.

The vote of this community was divided between Breckenridge and Douglass, Lincoln having not a supporter. A small turnout of the old Whig party who could not conscientiously support anyone of the other three candidates, cast their votes for Bell and Everette. My father being opposed to secession was an ardent supporter of S. A. Douglass.

There were quite a number of secessionists in the community, among them being two men, John Reed and Rowlan Burnette, both avowed secessionists, but, strange as it may seem the former died while serving in the capacity of teamster for the Federal government, the latter serving the last two years of the war in the United States army.

Those who held out for the union did not dispute the right of a state to withdraw from the union provided such was the wish of a majority of the electors. So when the convention passed the ordinance of secession, those who opposed such, submitted to the majority and most of them cast their lots with the Southern Confederacy, my father being one of that number.

From this time on, and for sometime previous war was the principal subject of discussion, wherever two or more men came together that was invariably the subject of the conversation and it seemed that a majority of the men were rather eager for war, claiming that the north was trespassing upon their rights, as was guaranteed by the Federal Constitution.

In the spring of 1861, when the call was made for volunteers to defend our homes, practically every young man of the community, tendered his services to the cause of the Southern Confederacy.

My elder brother, Robert, who was at that time a youth of 17 years, was very eager to enlist, but being under military age, he could not do so, without the consent of his parents. Father readily consented, but mother most strenuously objected, and it was only after a week or more of continuous begging and pleading that she yielded.

I well remember seeing him following her about,

while she was engaged in her household work, begging her to let him go. Finally he succeeded in his purpose. So late in the afternoon of May 10, 1861, he left home for Van Buren, father accompanying him, where he enlisted in Capt. H. Thomas Brown's company on May 12. Those of this community who enlisted in the same company as I remember their names were: Dock Forrester, John Hartgraves, Frank Whitehead, Matt Shannon, Arnold Tier and my brother. There were others whose names I can not at this time recall.

After the company was equipped it was ordered to proceed to Benton county, arriving at Lee's creek, on the way, about the 26th of the month. The citizens of this community having been apprised several days before hand, of their coming, got together and prepared a feast for the company before taking its departure for the front.

Every family contributed something nice and good for the occasion and conveyed it, together with dishes, table linens, etc., to the postoffice, the place selected for the occasion, where it was served on May 28. The weather being fine and warm the tables were erected in Uncle Tomie Dodson's yard in the shade of the large elm trees that were there at that time; the table being sufficient height for the soldiers to stand while eating. Covers were spread for the entire company.

While the women were engaged in arranging the table and getting other things in order, the soldiers were being drilled by marching up and down the road and when dinner was announced, they marched in regular order, to the table. All being in uniform, I thought it the grandest spectacle that had ever greeted my eyes. Their uniforms consisted of grey trousers and other shirts, felt hats, one side of the brim turned up, with a ostrich feather pinned to it.

At about 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon, they marched northward over the Boston mountains, to the top of which they bivouaced for the night. Father went along and spent the night in camp with Bobby as we called him. I well remember hearing mother crying while on the way home from the dinner, she could hardly stand the thought

of her boy going away to face the bullets of an enemy.

The next day the company marched on toward Benton county and upon arriving there went into camp, which was afterwards known as Camp Walker, where they remained until some time in the early part of August. While at Camp Walker, Bobby wrote several letters to mother, one of which I now have in my possession.

Some time in the early part of August the company had orders to march northward into Missouri. On the 10th of the month while marching on toward Springfield they met a large force of northern troops under command of General Lyon. Both sides throwing themselves into battle array, a fierce battle ensued, known by the Confederates as the Battle of Oak Hill, by the Federals as Wilson's creek.

The fight was being hotly contested when General Lyon fell mortally wounded. At that occurrence the troops under his command, becoming panic stricken, fled in disorder to Springfield. I have often heard my brother tell of picking up guns, pistols, boots, shoes, hats and caps, along the route the Unionists ran, they discarded every thing that had a tendency to hinder a rapid movement.

About the second or third day after the battle, one of the neighbor men came galloping up to our gate, apparently under great excitement, exclaiming: "There has been a fight up in Missouri and all of Brown's company were killed except four or five." Upon this information, mother feeling sure that her boy was among the slain, began hollowing and crying, got his picture over which she wept until an hour or so later, when she learned from another source that Bobby was not hurt, then she shouted.

While the first report was somewhat exaggerated yet, Brown's company suffered terribly, perhaps more than any other company of the regiment, Captain Brown, himself being one of the number killed.

After the lapse of a few weeks, those of the company who were not killed returned home, where they received a warm welcome. A short time after this the company was disbanded.

After the company was disbanded following the battle of Oak Hill, Bobby remained at home until some time in the following February when he re-enlisted.

The next thing of importance to take place, was the battle of Elk Horn, or Pea Ridge, fought on March 7 and 8, 1862. Brother Bob was present at that fight, but never fired a shot, the regiment to which he belonged having been held in reserve.

After this battle, was the beginning of the fear of the Federals by the people of this section of the country. Great excitement prevailed; many of the citizens left their homes and made their way to Texas.

Our home being located on the main highway leading from southwest Missouri through northwest Arkansas to Van Buren and Fort Smith, thence to Texas, the main bodies of the armies and practically all the refugees from western Missouri and northwest Arkansas passed by our home. For several days following the battle of Elk Horn, at no time, day or night, were wagons out of sight or hearing—people from Missouri and north Arkansas—running from the 'Feds' as the northern troops were called.

They were traveling in various fashions; some with wagons and teams, some with one horse carts and others with their belongings strapped upon the backs of mules and horses, the owner walking and leading the animals; some had small children riding on top of the pack.

The Confederate army marched along this highway in going and coming from Elk Horn.

I recollect that while the army was passing going north, I was ill, able to be out of bed only for a few minutes at a time, but being desirous of seeing the soldiers, every few minutes I'd venture to the door to see them. They marched with such regularity of step, that it caused a dizziness of my head, so I could look at them only a few minutes without a rest. It required the greater part of the day for the army to pass our home.

A few days after the battle, and as the southern army came back, I was playing out in the rear of the house, when upon coming into the house, a most distressing

scene greeted my eyes—the floor of one of the rooms was covered to capacity with sick and wounded soldiers, all groaning from pain.

They were brought there in ambulances, but becoming unable to travel farther, were left at our home. One of the number, William Wommack, by name, died there. The others recovered sufficiently to be carried to Van Buren.

From this time on, occasionally a report reached us that the Federals were coming, which never failed to create great excitement among the inhabitants. I, as well as some of the older people, thought that death and destruction followed in their wake. The name of the most ferocious wild beast had no greater terror for me than that of the Federal army.

The Federals did not reach this part of the country until some months later, so everything was comparatively quiet during the following summer and fall.

Some time in the year 1862, there was organized in this community an independent company with Benjamin Beale as captain, Frank Whitehead, first lieutenant. I do not remember the names of the other officers of the company. Some members of the company were Frank Oliver, 'Dim' Oliver, Tom Horte, Jack Shannon, Bill and Andy Sharpe, Eli, Rich and Dave Oliver, nephews of Frank and Dim, and later, Marian Oliver, son of Frank. There were many others, whose names I can not at this time recall. These men, later on, were known as bushwhackers.

About that time a little incident occurred that I shall never forget. One afternoon four or five of the men came to our home, bringing with them about a dozen chickens and three or four women to dress and cook them and other things for supper. At about 8 o'clock the young men came with young ladies, when they began dancing, which they kept going until 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. They selected our house for the occasion, on account of the rooms being more commodious than others in the neighborhood. Music being a necessary adjunct to a dance, three or four of the men went out in quest of a musician. Some of them knew a man by the name of William Dud-

ley, living six or eight miles north on Lee's creek, who played the violin quite well for that time.

Mr. Dudley being a union sympathizer, the men went to his home, arrested him, brought him to our house and placing a chair in one corner of the room, commanded him to sit down. He, being seated, someone handed him a violin, with instructions to proceed with the music. You may be sure that he lost no time in getting the fiddle tuned up ready for business. Up to this time, his captors had not intimated to him what they intended to do with him—he did not know but that they meant to hang him, as such proceedings were quite popular in those days.

He seemed to be so much relieved when he was told that they only wanted him to play the fiddle, he sat there and played for dear life until the dance ended; no doubt enjoying the strains more than ever before. After they were through with his services, they let him go, telling him to go home.

They had the late Colonel Yoes a prisoner at that time. Keeping him there until some time in the forenoon of the next day, he being wounded. Mother fixed a bed for him, upon which he lay until they took him away. I think he was shot about the hip, as he could not walk without assistance. I recall seeing two men, one on each side, assisting him out the yard gate.

About the year 1863, possibly 1864 there lived on the Boston mountain an old man named Rogers, father of the late Uncle Abe Rogers of our community, who was one of the few exceptions to all the mountain people being Unionists. He had one or two sons, Abe and I think James, in the Confederate service. The old gentleman was brutally murdered for no other cause than that he was a southern man.

His widow sometime after the murder related the circumstances in detail, to my mother. The story as she told it to my mother, was as follows:

"Six or eight of the mountain Feds came to our house, took Mr. Rogers out tied a rope about his neck tied the other end of the rope to a horse's tail and galloped away with him. I followed along behind and picked

up some of his teeth along the road; continuing my walk along the road, I came to his dead body lying in the road."

Of all the crimes committed by either side, during those times, this certainly deserves first place from a point of barbarity.

Those who have never experienced the trying times of war, where the country was continuously occupied by the two opposing armies for a period of four years, can not fully comprehend the meaning of the term "hard times" scarcity of the actual necessaries of life.

For the first two years of the war, the country was occupied by the Confederate army, while that army did not rob and plunder the people they subsisted off the country while they produced nothing, everything going out and nothing coming in.

From the latter half of 1863 'till the close of the war the country was continuously occupied by the Federals. They being in the country of their enemy did not hesitate to take the last particle of food stuff from the women and children, leaving them in a destitute condition, which was the case in our home upon several occasions.

All the men being gone, the work of providing food and clothing devolved upon the women and boys from ten to sixteen years of age.

All the women carded and spun and wove the cloth for clothing for themselves and children; the spinning wheel and loom were two popular pieces of furniture in every home.

The only horse in the neighborhood was a gray horse with a broken leg, belonging to our family. He being crippled, could be of no service to the armies so he was not molested. This old horse did the work for most all the neighbors. The boys planted small patches of corn which they cultivated by the aid of old Grey.

Often, after they had raised and gathered a small quantity of corn, the Feds would take the last ear of it. I remember one time in particular, mother had the crop of corn, consisting of eight or ten bushels, in the ear; stored upstairs, one of the rooms had a stairway leading up; the other had only a door in the floor and when we

had occasion to go up there we ascended by means of a ladder and when there was no further business up there the ladder was removed.

A bed always sat under the door of the stairs when there was no occasion for the use of the ladder. Upon one drizzly day, ten or fifteen Feds came there, stayed two or three hours pilfering about the place finally they decided to see if there was anything of value in the room above and having no other way of getting up there than to climb up through the door they stepped upon the bed with their muddy boots, climbed up and threw the corn down onto the bed, and several of them loading themselves with it carried it away leaving only a very small amount from which to make bread. One of the number seeming to possess more of the human principles than the others remarked, "I'll take corn from no women and children to feed to a government horse."

Having heard some of them plundering upstairs of the other rooms after they had gone I went up there to see what they had done. Upon reaching the head of the stairway the first thing I beheld was a flame of fire reaching almost to the ceiling above. There was a pile of cotton on the floor which mother had put there to be used in spinning and weaving into cloth to which they applied a lighted match. With great excitement I ran down stairs shouting "The house is on fire." The older members of the family ran up there with buckets of water with which they soon extinguished the blaze. Had it been a dry time the house would have burned down in spite of all their efforts to check the fire.

Telling Whitehead and others of his company of the incident, they remarked that if that house had burned Riddle's house would have gone up before night, meaning that they would have retaliated by burning their house. The Riddles were union people living about three miles from our home.

The leader of the band that attempted to burn our house was Capt. Harris of the 14th Kansas regiment, who later went to Franklin county, Ark., took several women whom they supposed to have considerable money secreted

about the premises and in order to force them to divulge the hiding place cut off their breasts. For this crime, Harris and several members of his company were arrested by the U. S. authorities, tried and the captain being convicted was sentenced to the penitentiary for a long term of years. The others escaped similar punishment by claiming that the part they took in the crime was done in obedience to orders of their captain. One of our neighbors was one of the number who was tried for complicity in the outrage and was acquitted. He was a good law abiding citizen after the war.

Early one morning just as our family had sat down to breakfast and began eating, a company of soldiers came by, several of them coming into the house. We had for breakfast that morning milk, bread and butter, the smaller children having the bread crumbled in the cups of milk, eating it with spoons having it only partly eaten when the soldiers came in. As the soldiers entered the room all the family left the table. To some it may seem unreasonable, but it is a fact nevertheless those men or hogs in human form went to that table and consumed every bite of food that was on it including the parts of cups of milk and bread that the children had left. At this time Johnny owned an old violin which he had gotten from some of his boy friends in a trade which he delighted in trying to play, the same parties picked it up, jerked the strings off, carried the bow away and pulling the hair out of one end, threw it down to the road where it was found later in the day.

Jim Reed a youth of about 16 years and brother Johnny gathered together a set of blacksmith tools including a bellows, fitted up a shop for the purpose of sharpening their plows when they became dull. They used a small shack near Mrs. Reed's home for a shop building. A few days after they had everything in order for business the Feds came by went into the shop and destroyed the bellows and everything else that was destructible.

I mention these little incidents merely to show the depravity in human nature and to demonstrate the con-

sequences that may be expected of an unrestrained people.

The principle source from which our meat supply came was from running down and butchering hogs that had became wild in the woods and fattened on the moss. Both women and boys searched the woods for such hogs. Occasionally some of the neighbors butchered a cow for beef, which was usually distributed among the different families. I remember at one time one of the neighbors owned an old black and white cow which she wished to have butchered for beef and there being none of the large boys present to do the work, Marvin Harte a girl 16 or 17 years of age, a sister to Tom Harte, put a rope about the cow's horns, tied her to a post, knocked her in the head with an axe, killing her. Two or three other women and some small boys went to work with knives and in a remarkable short time had the hide removed and the dead animal otherwise prepared for the dinner pot. Having the fresh meat how did we get the salt with which to season it? Most everyone knows that at each farm house there is a small building called a smoke house where meat is salted and hanged upon the joists to dry. Practically all these houses have dirt floors. For many years prior to this time fresh meat had been covered with salt and hung upon the joists and the salt in dissolving dripped, the water falling on to the floor and was absorbed by the dirt, therefore the dirt contained a quantity of salt.

The people made hoppers with boards in such form as to carry the water to a trough in the center of the hopper and pouring water on to the dirt, the salt was extracted in the form of brine, the brine was then put into kettles and boiled until the water was evaporated leaving the salt in the bottom of the kettles in the form of rock salt, it then was put into a vessel and pulverized with a hammer. A substitute for soda called potash was made in precisely the same manner except that wood ashes were used instead of dirt and it produced lye instead of brine.

Parched corn meal was used as a substitute for cof-

fee. Occasionally mother came in possession of a dollar which she paid for a pound of coffee. We lived almost entirely independent of the merchant.

One day in the early part of October, 1864, a regiment of negroes passed by our home, the officers being white men, I don't know the name of the Colonel in command but I remember that Major Willett of Kansas, was one of the officers, he having come in to the house and conversed, probably 3 minutes with mother and Fannie, principally upon questions pertaining to the war. He asked mother where was her husband? She replied that he was in the United States prison and that her son was in the regular Confederate army. Mother always made it a point to tell them that her son was in the regular army when an opportunity offered. It seemed that they had a degree of respect for a southern soldier, if he were in the regular army, but had an intense hatred for bushwhackers.

At that time, Lizzie and I, each owned a pet chicken, which were of nice frying size to which we were very much attached. The two chicks were scratching about in the yard when one of the negroes threw a rock and hit and killed mine. Being much grieved at this, I began crying and while in the house weeping a white soldier came in carrying a riding switch in his hand and asked me what I was crying about. I acquainted him with the cause of my trouble, he in a very gruff manner commanded me to desist. I not forthwith obeying his command, he stepped up to me with the switch drawn as if to strike me, commanded me in a more forcible tone of voice, saying "If you don't stop that crying, I'll wear you out; you are too big to be crying about a chicken." I could not entirely cease crying, but moderated my tone to a considerable degree.

We kept a bucket of water on the front porch for drinking purposes with a gourd in it as a substitute for a dipper. The negroes were gathered about the bucket of water some drinking, others waiting for their turn at the gourd, when my sister Fannie stepped to the bucket,

seized the goard striking it against the wall and breaking it to pieces to prevent the negroes using it.

A month or so later a company of white troops camped about our house, some of them using the kitchen in which to do their cooking. One of the number killed Lizzie's pet chicken. Then she cried, but she was treated with far more consideration than was I. Upon learning that the chicken was a pet, belonging to her they expressed regrets at killing it, took her into the kitchen and let her share a portion of it. She stayed in the kitchen an hour or two while they were cooking and eating. They made cookies with which they tried to bribe her to say that she liked the Federals, but utterly failed in the attempt. With all the cookies and other things they gave her they never succeeded in getting her to say that she liked the Federals.

There were two more independent companies of southern sympathizers who roamed about this part of the country. One in the eastern part of Crawford county led by Captain J. C. Wright late of Chester and the other in Benton and Washington counties led by Buck Brown.

The Federals hunted those two bands as they would wild beasts, and had they succeeded in capturing them, they would have been treated as such.

At the same time there was stationed at Van Buren a Captain of the Federal company, named Beeler, who was something of a daredevil himself. On a certain night Captain Beeler and a number of others sat out to capture Wright and his followers and bring them in dead or alive. On this night Wright and five or six others were sleeping in an old vacant house near where the town of Chester is now located. Captain Beeler being informed of this fact, rode to within a short distance of the house, dismounted and proceeded on foot towards the house. The occupants of the house being awakened by a voice, jumped up and ran out of the door amongst the men that were after them.

With Wright's crowd was a man named Jasper Pevyhouse, who in leaving the house, ran within a few steps of Captain Beeler and the two advancing toward each

other with revolvers in hands, Captain Beeler exclaimed: "Damn you, I've got you." The two firing at the same instant at each other. Beeler's bullet took effect in Pevyhouse's hip, while that of his pierced Beeler's body killing him. As he fell he exclaimed: "My God I'm killed."

While Captain Beeler was never in this community—at least there were no depredations charged to him—he had the reputation among the people as being a very dangerous man, all the people of this community dreaded him, thinking that he laid waste everything wherever he went, so many of the women of the neighborhood breathed a sigh of relief when they learned that he was killed.

I don't know that there was any foundation for their fears.

Having heard the women of the neighborhood speaking of the numerous unrigheous deeds that he committed wherever he went, caused me to have a very frightful dream concerning him, which dream is perfectly clear in my mind to this day. I had a nightmare. Upon awaking I covered my head from fear that I'd see Captain Beeler coming in.

Upon this occasion Buck Brown and his band came to our house. Brown and two or three others came into the house. Belle Starr of Indian Territory fame, who was at that time a young woman, was with them.

She did not come to the house, yet we saw her. Captain Brown told sister Fannie that the woman with them was Belle Starr.

Sometime after this, Sergeant Edwards of the Federals forces having learned of Brown's having been here came into the house and asked Fannie many questions concerning the leader of the guerrilla band.

Among the questions he asked how Brown was dressed. Fannie replying that he was dressed in a grey uniform, when in reality he was wearing a brown jeans suit. Edwards, jestingly remarked that he was going to kill a rebel and get himself a grey suit. A few weeks later, true to his word, he came in dressed in a suit of Confederate grey. Asking Fannie how he appeared in that uni-

form she replied, "You look so much nicer." The sergeant did not tell her by what means he came into possession of the uniform.

There was a man belonging to the Federal army named Bill Young, who had a grievance against father since before the war. Father being a blacksmith by occupation did a general blacksmithing business for the public. Bill Young resided in Washington county and was engaged in hauling various kinds of produce to Van Buren and Fort Smith and occasionally his wagon would break down and his horses needed to be shod. Father did the work of shoeing and repairing wagons for him, charging the amounts to him for which he refused to pay. So father resorted to the law in order to force a collection. Of course this procedure made a personal enemy of him.

One day while a detachment of soldiers were passing, Bill Young being with them, rode up to the gate and inquired as to who lived at this place, Fannie giving him the desired information he replied, "that's enough" at the same time dismounting from his horse, began throwing rocks at chickens, killing them and committing other depredations about the place. Ever after that, in passing he never failed to stop and kill chickens and to plunder.

Some time after this Young being stationed at Fayetteville one afternoon ventured too far out from town, some bushwhackers coming upon him shot and killed him. This was the only person of whose death I was pleased to learn, before or since that time. We hated him.

There lived a family in the Cedar Creek community named Rainey, who were union in principle, whom the bushwhackers accused of giving information to the Federals concerning their whereabouts, movements, etc. From this cause a number of them went to their home, shot and killed the old man in his house. Mrs. Andy Sharpe heretofore mentioned, and her little boy, Alei, were eye-witnesses to the tragedy: the latter picked up the bullet that passed through the man's head, it having dropped to the floor.

There was a cave in the Cedar Creek mountains in which the bushwhackers stored their belongings, such as

they could not carry with them. At the same time there was a man living in the vicinity of the cave, named Young Reynolds who knew of the cave and where it was located. While he was union in principle he took no active part either way. A scout of the Federals came to his home one day and forced him, so it was said, to conduct them to the cave. The Feds carried away all that they could carry, destroying such things as they could not carry with them.

The bushwhackers, having been informed about Reynolds went to his home, arrested him, took him to a hillside two or three miles from his home and hanged him to the limb of a tree, on the hillside, leaving him there. At the foot of the hill was a small creek, the same flowing near our home. About a year after the hanging of Reynolds, there was a very high rise in Elmore Creek. Some time in the following summer, after the water had run down and dried away, one afternoon, Oscar and I were engaged in getting wood from the drifts, to be used for cooking purposes, when I, in pulling a stick from a drift, uncovered a human skull. I called to Oscar, who was a few steps away, to come and see what I had found. He came and after viewing the object, pronounced it a man's skull. We excitedly ran to the house and told mother of what we had found. She went with us to the spot and looking into the drift she could see only a part of the object—she began laughing at our being so much excited over finding only a mushroom. But after getting it out where she had a full view of it, she readily agreed with us that the same was a human skull. She carried it to the house by means of a stick, where it was kept for three or four days, when she had Ed and Oscar to bury it.

We had not the least idea whose skull it was, nor from where it came, until some time later Frank Whitehead told someone of the family that Young Reynolds was hanged upon the hillside near Elmore's creek, consequently we had no further doubt but that the same was the skull of Young Reynolds, which had been carried there by the water.

Some time in the late summer of 1864, Jess Morton, with a number of others came to this community for the

purpose of capturing Frank Whitehead, Frank Oliver and others. In order to ascertain the whereabouts of the men, they arrested Matt, Tom and Dick Oliver, taking them away, hoping to force them to divulge the hiding place of their father and others. They caught Dick at the house of a neighbor, bringing him to our home, where they found Matt and Tom. Obeying orders they got up behind the men on their horses, my mother begging for them, but to no avail. They took the boys across Lee's creek, where they put ropes about their necks as if to hang them and did hang Tom until he could not stand for some time after being let down, but if he knew the whereabouts of his father, he refused to tell them.

Nan Oliver, Leonora and Maria Hart went to the place where the boys were being held and made a proposition to the men that if they would release the boys, they (the girls) would prepare dinner for all the men, to which they assented.

So the girls went to the home of the Olivers, went to work, killed chickens, cooked vegetables and prepared the best repast that their means would afford. After the men had eaten, they sat the boys at liberty.

A short time after this, Matt and Tom Oliver and Jim Reed being at this time 17 and 18 years of age, knowing that they could not longer remain at home in safety, joined Whitehead's band of bushwhackers. Soon after uniting with the company, the entire band went to Texas —it was the custom of the bushwhackers to depart for that state in the fall and return in the spring. Matt Oliver died here in the spring of 1865.

Late one afternoon two young men dressed in Federal uniforms, each carrying a gun, rode up to our house and inquired of mother and Fannie the way to Whitehead's company. Mother and Fannie, thinking this a ruse to learn the location of the camp, and after having it located, a large body of them would come and capture the entire company, the two women gave them no information. It later developed that the two men, Henry Stansberry and James Watkins, by name, were actual deserters, united with the band and did service with them until the close

of the war. After that time they were familiar figures with the bushwhackers.

I remember at one time, they with two or three others were secreted on the hill near our home, and they being hungry, I assisted one of my older brothers in carrying to them something for lunch.

There was another noted man with the bushwhackers whose name was Skelt Hannahs. He was one of the few Southerner sympathizers from the vicinity of West Fork. He was not one of the so called bad men, but was very daring; would take desperate chances. It was said that upon two or three occasions, he slipped into Van Buren during the night, while the Federal soldiers were asleep, took their boots and other articles of clothing and made his escape. The name of Skelt Hannahs was quite familiar with the people, yet only a few knew him personally. Late one afternoon he rode up to the rear of our house, introduced himself to mother and Fannie as Skelt Hannahs and asked them to direct him to Whitehead's camp, but the women having never seen him before, refused to give him the information sought, thinking that perhaps he was a spy. Brother Johnny having seen him upon several previous occasions, mother called him to come and identify the stranger. Johnny coming to where they were, readily identified him as the original Skelt Hannahs. He asked Johnny to go along with him to show him the way to the camp, Johnny complying with the request.

I went along with them. When we arrived at the camp, we found it was vacated, indications showing that they had been gone only a short time.

The bushwhackers had a certain signal or call, by which they recognized each other. Hannahs riding along the path that led up the creek bottom, occasionally producing one of those wierd sounds, somewhat resembling the hoot of an owl. Finally we heard a similar sound coming from a point, apparently about a half mile away. Hannahs then told us that we might return.

Sometime in the month of June 1864 there was a wagon train, consisting of either four or six wagons known as a sutler train, the wagons were loaded with

merchandise being transported from Fayetteville to Van Buren, each wagon was drawn by four mules and the train was guarded by an escort of 60 soldiers. At this time the train camped at the home of Mr. Ben Hales the night before, three miles north of our home. The train with the escort passed our home at an early hour the next morning the men seeming to be in a very cheerful mood some laughing and talking, others whistling.

The bushwhackers having learned of their being camped at the Hale farm they planned to capture them, in which they were successful.

The bushwhackers numbering 108 men were commanded by Col. Buffington, a Cherokee Indian.

He formed his men in line on the hillside at the foot of what is known as the Allen hill, which is about one mile south of our home. Having so arranged his men, Col. Buffington with five others went back one fourth of a mile in the direction from which the train was approaching and concealing themselves near the road side and waiting until they were almost past them fired in the rear of them running them in front of the main body of men, where a fusilade of bullets were turned loose upon them causing great consternation among them. They realizing that they were ambushed showed but little resistance; firing a few shots they threw down their guns while others took to the woods on foot making their way to Van Buren.

Within two hours after the firing began, which we distinctly heard, the victorious party came back past our home with the wagons and teams all shouting and hurrahing at the top of their voices.

While passing the home of Frank Oliver, Mrs. Oliver stood on the front porch shouting "God bless you boys." A cousin of hers by the name of Beane, brandishing a large bloody knife cried, "Look here cousin Mary doesn't this look like business?"

After the attacking party had gone and everything had become quiet my mother, in company with Mrs. Oliver, Mrs. Korn and others visited the scene of carnage, where they found six white men and one negro lying

dead upon the ground and one white man mortally wounded who had crawled into an old vacant house near by. He told the women that his name was Bloomington Dodson, and that his mother resided in Madison county.

Mother owning a yoke of oxen and an old wagon, put a feather bed into the wagon and with brother Johnny and three or four other boys went and hauled him to our house where he died within two hours after arriving there. While carrying him from the wagon to the porch he fainted two or three times, they could get no farther than the porch with him so he died there, mother and others did all that could be done to make his last moments as comfortable as possible.

A few hours later I, in company with my boy chums, Joe Oliver, Willie and Alex Reed and Austin Harte, visited the battle ground. The first of the dead to which we came was a white man lying in the road, his head being down hill the blood had run to his face, causing a very dark color. A short distance from the road, near a large oak tree lay the body of one said to be Lient Mayes apparently a knife had been entirely through his body. The bodies of four other white men were lying about in the bushes and upon the hillside lay the body of a very large negro man having been shot in the head, his brains had run out upon the ground.

One of the attacking party some time later told one of our neighbors that they captured the negro and did not intend to kill him but when they commanded him to hand them his pistol he put out his hand as if to hand it to them then drew it back, repeating this action several times, they losing patience with him one of the number shot him in the back part of the head. Their object in wishing to take and hold the negro as a prisoner was that they hoped to be able to gain from him valuable information concerning the plans of the Federals.

Matt, Tom and Dick Oliver, Jim Reed and brother Johnny under the supervision of Mr. Ben Hale and an other old gentleman by the name of Johnson dug a pit near the road side, two or three hundred yards from the battle ground and with our old wagon and ox team haul-

ed the bodies there and buried them together in the pit. They buried the negro on the hillside where he was killed.

The next day a detachment of soldiers, 160 in number, came out from Van Buren to bury the dead. They were pleasantly surprised to find that the dead had already been buried.

All the women of the community entertained great fear that on account of the killing of the soldiers and the capture of the train there would be a general house burning in this neighborhood, in retaliation for the deed as the heads of some of the families were implicated in the work. Feeling sure that there would be troops out from Van Buren to bury the dead, they awaited them with fear and trembling but to the great surprise of all, when the soldiers came on the day following the fight, they were never more calm and polite, than ever before. They inquired of several women, the number of men in the attacking party, the women replying that they did not know, then they asked how the number corresponded in size to their crowd. It so happened that all the women made a similar reply "There appeared to be a great many more of them than there are of you." So, thanking the people for burying their dead, they returned to Van Buren.

The bushwhackers captured several prisoners among them being one Jeff Sawyer, whom they afterward shot and killed. It was said that while the bushwhackers were camped at a point on Cove creek that at one time Bill Sharp was engaged in cleaning and oiling his pistol and having completed it he thought to try its efficiency, one of the prisoners being near he shot and killed him. I am not sure that the murdered man was Sawyer but I'm inclined to think it was.

Several years ago I was at Fort Smith at a time when the United States court was in session and engaging in conversation with one of the jurors, I learned that his name was Dodson, that his home was in Madison county and that he was a cousin to Bloomington Dodson. Also that he was in the fight at Allen hill and was captured by the bushwhackers. It did not occur to me to ask him if

he was present when Sawyer was killed. He further stated that when the fight began he had a purse containing $37.50 in gold, and seeing that he was going to be captured threw it into a clump of bushes near the road in order to prevent its falling in their hands. He described the place where he threw it and I have made some search for it but failed to find it.

The bushwhackers took the wagons and teams to their rendezvous in Lee's creek bottom, where they divided the spoils among themselves.

About one week later mother and I spent the day at the home of Frank Oliver. They feasted us on oysters, sardines, candy and raisins, all the girls had new calico dresses and some of them with long strings of beads around their necks they seemed to be living in luxury after a long period of scarcity.

The bodies of all that were killed were exhumed including the negro and were reburied in the cemetery at Fort Smith in the summer of 1867.

* * *

Experiences of Miss Rachael Couch

Miss Rachael Couch (later Mrs. Lake) lived in what is now Alma, opposite Farris Grove, previous to and during the War Between the States.

She was quick, impulsive and daring and a true Southerner. Her brothers were in the Confederate army.

Living near what is now the town was a John Brodie, also a Confederate soldier, who had slipped in to see his people. While on the visit he was wounded in the throat by a Federal soldier somewhere near the Ross settlement, close to the Bushmiaer farm. The news of the shooting soon spread and among those who heard it, was Miss Couch, who decided to try and learn where he was. So while riding around on her pony she came to this settlement in which a number of Federal soldiers were. When she rode up, some of the inhabitants asked her what she wanted and she replied that she was hunting her geese and asked if they had seen them. In reply, they pointed toward some woods saying she would find them

there. Riding on, Miss Couch found Mr. Brodie lying on the ground.

That night he was taken to Farris Grove, which being very wooded, provided a safe retreat for him. There he was cared for by Miss Couch and some of her friends. They were afraid to have a light so had to minister to him in the dark. Silk thread was used to cleanse the wound, drawing the thread back and forth. Finally, he recovered, but never had good use of his voice.

Several times, Miss Couch made trips to Fort Smith for supplies; under her hoopskirt she wore, buckled around her waist, a pair of boots. These she would fill with medicine and other supplies and returning home she would store them in a place of safety for future use. Sometimes it would take her two or three days to make the trip. At times she found it difficult to get back and forth through the lines, having to watch her opportunity to slip through.

Sometimes during the war, Miss Couch was a member of a party who went into the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, for salt, a commodity very much needed and hard to obtain. Their destination must have been the Bean Salt Works on the Illinois.

A short time before the war, her mother had lost a favorite brother whose trunk containing his clothing was kept sacred in her room. Included among the articles was a handsome broadcloth suit. Mrs. Couch was ill and was in bed when a soldier came into the house to see what he could find. On reaching her room he tried to move her from the bed to see what was hidden under her, but her daughter prevented him from doing so. But the soldier, however, discovered the trunk and began ransacking it. When he found the suit he began doning it Miss Couch grabbed for it and a perfect tussle ensued. Finally the coat was torn leaving each with a piece, and when the soldier reached the head of the stairs, Miss Couch gave him a push and he landed at the foot, where stood Miss Sue Hunster with a broom which she brought down on him with much force and several times. After managing to get up, he left with great haste.

Miss Couch had two cousins, Mary and Jemimah Couch, who were quite large and strong. Their family owned a threshing machine and as there was no one else to take it to the different farms, these two girls took it from farm to farm so the tillers of the soil could have their grain threshed. Those who know anything in regard to the working of a threshing machine can understand the girls had quite a job.

They each owned and played a "fiddle" so in the evening after the work was done, there would be dancing, the young ladies furnishing the music.

At different times, Miss Rachael Couch joined parties going to a water mill near Mulberry to have what corn she could obtain ground but often it would be taken away from her and the others by Federal soldiers. The northerners not only aggravated the young lady herself, but also her people. Time and time again they hung her Uncle Uriah Couch. to make him tell if there were other Confederates in the neighborhood, but each time he refused to tell.

Another time, when a young Confederate soldier was found very sick, Miss Couch and her friends carried him to Farris Grove and cared for him like they had done for Mr. Brodie. And as in the first case, they had no light at night for fear of the Union soldiers. At his death, they buried him in the Byers cemetery.