**A JOURNAL WRITTEN BY**

**Francis Marion Wilcox**

1897

Introduction

Mary Floy Katzman

July 17, 1998

Copyright © 1998 and 1999 Mary Floy Katzman

When we're young there aren't enough hours in the day to raise our children, earn a living and get some sleep, but as we become older we turn to other things. One of those things may be "cleaning the attic" and digging into a trunk or box or writing a journal. Sometimes we know "something" is there and in our later years we finally get around to organizing stuff. This journal is one of those "somethings".

Bill Howe of Denver, Colorado sent a copy of this journal to Jeffrey C. Weaver and me. He and Aunt Ginny have given their permission for me to make copies and make them available so others can share this wonderful find. Jeff and Mr. Howe had originally made contact on the internet and since Mr. Howe wanted more information on the Greer family, Jeff put Mr. Howe in touch with me. Mr. Howe told us a little of the contents, but I wasn't prepared for the wealth of information this journal contained. Nor was I prepared for its length and scope. Along about dinner time (which didn't get cooked), I started to pick up the phone to call Jeff when the phone rang. A voice on the other end said "Did you get it?" It was Jeff. Needless to say he was as excited about this journal as I was. Until almost dawn the next day I was engrossed in the journal. The details describing people are unbelievable from hat size to shoe size, color of hair and eyes, height and weight and on and on. In places you'll laugh and in others you'll cry. His description of his escape route during the Civil War back into Pike Co., Kentucky is so detailed, there is no doubt one could walk in his footsteps and those of his seven companions.

-2-

Francis Marion Wilcox was born in Ashe County, North Carolina November 13, 1843, but grew up in Pike Co., Kentucky. His parents were Samuel and Barbara Houck Wilcox who were also born in Ashe Co. His grandparents were Isaiah and Hannah Greet Wilcoxsen and George W. and Barbara Houck (her maiden name was also Houck). Many born with the name Wilcoxsen shortened it to Wilcox.

In doing genealogy research, it isn’t unusual to find errors. Often these errors can be attributed to trying to remember something one may have heard years before and so I urge you to check and recheck the names, spouses, relationships, dates, etc. The first little part of the Journal pertains to the Boone family and today we know that some of what Francis Marion Wilcox wrote to be in error about the Boone family.

We received a typed transcript of the Journal and were unable to check on some of the names contained in our copies. However, one surname name had been transcribed as “Trwitt” It should read “Trivett” or “Trivette”. I’ve taken the liberty of making that change throughout the Journal for easier reading.

I hope you enjoy reading the Journal and how fortunate for us it has been preserved for over 100 years. For the most part, I’ve left the writing style as I received it. Mr. Wilcox sometimes writes as if he were telling the story and sometimes as if someone else was telling the story.

Enjoy!

-3-

To my family:

I have attempted to copy the journal of our Uncle, great Uncle Francis Marion Wilcox. This was written in a flowing hand of beautiful script. Although very difficult to read is some places I have tried to reproduce his words just as written.

I have left this copy with double-space so that errors in persons names, or dates, or other factual data can be brought to my attention. In this way, should anyone have information they could state, on Page 20, say, the name Trwitt should read Triwitt - I could change my master copy and advise each of you the corrected version.

The obvious "type" error, the spelling errors, and the lack of correct punctuation, will leap out at you who are more gifted than I in these arts. I would sincerely appreciate these corrections brought to my attention as well, as I have made myself a self-imposed deadline in order to get this to you by Christmas of 1980. Your help will be wonderful.

I am in the process of writing about the events mentioned herein and would like to say that I will have the story finished by Christmas of next year. It is still in the rough-dream state, so we will see.

Bless you all, I love you with all my heart.

Ginny

-4-

P.S. Jack, in a weak moment or else not hearing my request correctly, said yes to helping me make genealogical charts from the information so devotedly given herein. When these are complete I will send them on to you as well.

The ancestors of Daniel Boone formed a settlement near Exeter, England where all followed a pastoral life. George Boone came to America in 1717, on or about that period, together with nine sons, but the names of only three seem to been preserved - James, John and Squire. The latter was the father of Daniel Boone.

George Boone settled in Berks County, Pennsylvania at a place named after his English home, Exeter. Squire Boone grew up and married in Pennsylvania, in what year is not known, to a Miss Mary Morgan. He raised seven sons and four daughters viz Daniel, James, Squire, Edward, Jonathan, George, Samuel, Sarah, Hannah, Mary and Elizabeth.

Daniel, according to memoranda kept by his Uncle James, was born July 14th, A.D. 1732, which date is thought to be nearer correct than any other. His father, Squire, immigrated to Wilkes County, North Carolina, settling on the banks of the Yadkin River, the precise date not given. They settled within a short distance of what is now Wilkesboro, the county seat of Wilkes County, south of the Blue Ridge where he followed an agricultural avocation and hunting vocation. While in the latter pursuit, young Daniel first met Miss Rebecca Morgan, whom he afterwards courted and won her heart and together they were married, the precise date we do not know. He raised nine children by her: Israel, Nathan, Daniel, Jesse, Rebecca, Susan, Lavina and Jemima. About the year 1760, Daniel Boone first crossed the Cumberland mountains and was about 26 years old when he first came west.

-5-

In 1769 he came to the territory now comprising the state of Kentucky in the company of John Finley, John Steward, Joseph Holden and William Cool. Yet according to papers found in the archives of Tennessee and marks found on green trees in Powells Valley, Virginia, Daniel came west through the unexplored regions as early as 1760.

After his tour with John Finley and Company, he went back to North Carolina, got his family and was joined by several others and while enroute at or near Cumberland Gap, they were attacked by a large band of Indians. In this attack several were wounded and worst of all, James Boone was killed dead. This so discouraged Mrs. Boone that she prevailed upon her husband to proceed no further. Consequently they returned to Powell Valley, formed a settlement, but only temporarily for Daniel. Our old pioneer had been to the "promised land" and he resolved to settle the region discovered. Consequently he went back, got his family and those left behind and after several days of wandering through an uninhabited wilderness where roamed the bison, elk, deer, bear and the "wily savage", we find him settling upon the banks of the Kentucky River at a place he called Boonesboro, Mrs. Boone being the first white woman to set foot upon the banks of said stream.

Then Daniel and his small colony erected a fort where more than once they were besieged and had to contend against overwhelming numbers of savages. These Indians claimed Kentucky as their hunting grounds and contested every inch of ground. 'Twas near this region that Squire Boone was killed, also Nathan Boone.

-6-

For general history, let the reader pursue the complete life of Daniel Boone and the history of Kentucky. Daniel Boone died in the state of Missouri, at a place called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the ripe old age of 81 years. He together with his wife, now sleep in the famous blue grass soil of Kentucky for which he so long contended.

We can only close this introductory sketch by saying, "Nobel hero and heroine, thy trails have been many, thy fortitude knew no bounds. Sacrifices were demanded and readily made. Now while thy bodies lay at rest, thy souls shall live on. Eternity is yours. Roam amid the fields such as angels delight in."

According to the best history at command, George Boone came also from Pennsylvania. The ancestors of our Great Grandfather, Samuel Wilcox, who no doubt had crossed the ocean about the same period the Boone came across, but since we do not have precise dates, we cannot give it in either case. As before mentioned, it appears Daniel Boone was born July 14, 1732 and was married to Miss Rebecca Bryant on or about the year 1755.

John Wilcox married Daniel Boone's sister on or about the year 1758. Her name was Sarah. Samuel Wilcox, our Great Grandfather, a son or nephew of John Wilcox, was born on or about the year 1760 and grew up and married a Miss Callaway, daughter of Richard Callaway and sister of Flanders Callaway. This marriage occurred, according to the most reliable history and information to be obtained, on or about the year 1785. Flanders Callaway, it seems married the elder daughter of Daniel Boone, whose Christian name was Jemima, near Lexington, Kentucky during the fall of 1776, just after her capture and rescue from the Indians by her father, Richard Callaway. Hence, Mrs. Flanders Callaway, once Miss Boone became the Aunt of Isaiah Wilcox, who was the son of Samuel, above named and born on February

-7-

the 15th 1796 in Wilkes County, North Carolina. Great Grandfather Samuel died was buried at this date, March 29, 1893, where to me is unknown.

Isaiah Wilcox, Sr. (and our Grandfather) had several brothers and sisters among whom was Elijah, George, John and Alford. Among the sisters, we can only mention one name, Deborah and we think one was named Annie. Of Alford, John and George we know but little. Perhaps Alford and George lived and died in North Carolina while John immigrated to east Tennessee. Elijah immigrated to Fulton County, Illinois about the year 1832 and died there about the year 1866. Deborah also came west and married one Thomas Bibee and he also settled in Fulton County, Illinois where he died some years later, about 1868 and is buried near his mother.

The descendants of Uncle Elijah Wilcox and Thomas Bibee are quite numerous in and around Lewistown, Fulton County, Illinois - also Canton. Among their names are to be found Marshall A. Wilcox, J.C. Wilcoxen, James and others. Also, David Bibee, Jr. son of Tom Bibee, Sr.

Isaiah Wilcox, Sr., our Grandfather, grew up and moved to North Carolina and won the heart of one, Miss Fannie Greer, a daughter of William Greer, a resident of Ashe County, North Carolina. She was an estimable woman, tall, prepossessing and possessed of much more than an average stock of common good sense. Their marriage occurred during the year 1817. The Grandmother of Fannie or "Grandmother" as I have always been informed was Hannah Cartwright, relative of the eccentric Peter Cartwright of pioneer notoriety. Grandmother, or Fannie Greer, was born in the year 1800 according to the best information to be obtained

-8-

and died during the year 1866 on the North Fork of the New River, in Ashe County, North Carolina at the home of her son-in-law, Jesse Greer who married Aunt Jacintha Wilcox. Grandmother is interred in a family cemetery near Uncle Henry Miller's at what is known as Stagg's Creek, I believe a cemetery of North Fork near New River. Henry Miller married Magley Wilcox. Grandmother Wilcox was 66 years old when she died.

It was my lot to meet her during the War between the States in the year 1862. She at that date enjoyed good health and was well preserved, somewhat careworn and considerably gray, yet active and often joked with myself, was diligent in her domestic duties and very talkative. Grandmother teased cousin Alvin Wilcox and Morgan Trivett and myself about the girls as we were just beginning to think ourselves larger than our daddies, yet could we have seen ourselves as other had seen us, we would have had a good laugh at ourselves.

The marriage of Grandmother, Fannie Greer and Grandfather Isaiah Wilcox went on smoothly and there was born to them 12 children: Dicy, William, Samuel, Jacintha, Arah, Myley, Sidney, Nancy, Matilda, Martha, Deborah and Annie. The dates of birth of these children we have not at our command. Consequently, I cannot give the ages of but a few, but will endeavor to give the history of each one, telling who they married, where and so forth as their names are listed above save Samuel, our father, whose date of birth, history, etc. will be mentioned further on towards our close.

-9-

Dicy Wilcox, the oldest daughter grew up and married Owen Trivett, a respectable young man and a resident of Ashe County, North Carolina. A farmer by trade, he settled on Old Field Creek, a tributary of New River, South Fork, in Ashe County, North Carolina. He cleared him up a farm upon which he resided like one settled bee, raised a large family - twelve children were born unto them, yet during the epidemic of diphtheria in 1862, they lost in less than six weeks five of their number. These are interred on the old home farm N.E. of the house occupied as a dwelling by said Owen Trivett at said date, 1862.

Of these living Hon. Squire Trivett lives at Marion County, North Carolina. He is by profession a lawyer, also an ordained minister in the Missionary Baptist Church. Nathan C., second son, died in the hospital at Ashland, Kentucky in the spring of 1863 being a member of the 39th Kentucky Mounted Infantry Volunteers. He left a wife, Hannah and two children to mourn his loss - Levi and John - his wife being Hannah Greer, a daughter of Isaac Greer. They reside in Pike County, Kentucky. William H. Trivett, third son of Owen, resides at Beefhide, P.O., Pike County, Kentucky. He is a farmer by occupation, was a Union soldier during the war and a member of the 54th Kentucky Volunteers. Jessee died in 1862 at Jacksborough, Tennessee. Dr. Morgan F. Trivett resides at Eskridge, Wabansee County, Kansas as of 1879 and perhaps is there yet. He is by profession a physician.

Charlotte came to Kentucky in 1865 and married Mr. James Wallace. They had one child, Dicy, who took sick and died and was buried in the family cemetery of Barbara Wilcox, 1st grave west of Samuel Wilcox, our father. She died about the year 1868. Her daughter, Dicy, died also about 1885 and is buried near her mother.

-10-

Isaiah Trivett immigrated to Indiana in 1868 and from there to Minnesota. We heard he was inclined to roam and where his last sun will set we know not.

I should have stated before that Aunt Dicy Trivett resided with her son, Solomon, in Ashe County, North Carolina until 1892 when she died and no doubt lies by the side of her children and husband who died about the year 1866 in Ashe County, North Carolina.

Uncle William Wilcox resides in Ashe County, North Carolina on a tributary of Mill Creek and on Tableland of Elk Knob, divided between waters of Big Elk Creek and Old Field Creek, all tributaries of the south fork of the New River, a remarkable healthy location. Uncle William is a farmer by occupation and also an ordained minister in the Missionary Baptist Church, stands high in the estimation of all and possesses much good common sense. Yet in my judgement, inherited too much Greer blood and consequently lets the world go 'wag' and only goes as the spirit moves him. He would not answer a letter if he knew the history of ALL his ancestors would be lost to oblivion.

He raised a family of eight children noted for their peculiarities and a good mother. Among their names we find Martin, Alvin, Isaiah, William, Lizzie, Catherine, Samuel and so forth. All reside in North Carolina near the old home ranch.

In 1862 I assisted Uncle William in cutting tops, pulling fodder and picking chestnuts, etc. He looked much like father, also grandfather, Isaiah Wilcox who I propose to speak of further on.

-11-

Uncle William preached real well, seemed imbued with the Spirit. His wife was Miss Viney Watton. I was not so favorable impressed with her as I might have been, yet perhaps she was a better person than I was and I just did not appreciate her as I should have. She was a good worker, a good talker that never tired, much devoted to Uncle William and was attached to her children - more so to Martin than the others as he was clubfooted. He became a school teacher, also farmed some. I cannot give detailed histories of each child. Aunt Vinney was rather heavy set, some 5ft. 2in. tall, fair complected, dark hair, rather good looking - had large blue eyes. Uncle William was a spare made man about 5ft. 10in. tall, black hair, fair complected, blue eyes, rather stooped shouldered like the ancestors of his race. He was slow of speech, yet very precise and entirely free from any slang.

Aunt Jacintha Wilcox, oldest girl, grew up and married one Jesse Greer and settled on the north fork of the New River in Ashe County, North Carolina, where she and her children yet reside, Jess having died in the Rebel Army in 1862 near Jacksborough, Tennessee. He was a Rebel at heart and not possessed of any too much good sense, so as I know but little him I will leave him by adding that in 1862 I visited him and Grandmother and he treated me "white" and I would be glad to meet his wife or children upon earth once more.

Aunt Sidney married Jesse Houck about the year 1838, settled in Ashe County, North Carolina and remained there until the spring of 1850. Then with father's family immigrated to Pike County, Kentucky and later on to Carter County, Kentucky. They raised several children, among whom were George, Isaiah, Sidney, Fannie, Samuel, Barbara and Floyd who later died in 1862. Aunt Sidney

-12

died about the year 1857 and is buried in Carter County, Kentucky at the Sturgill graveyard on Little Fork of the Little Sandy River. Jesse Houck lived until 1885 when he also died and was buried by the side of his wife and child. George, the oldest son resides in Leon County Texas. All the others reside in Carter and Lawrence Counties in Kentucky where they pursue an agricultural vocation.

Aunt Arah Wilcox grew up and married one Morgan Patrick about the year 1838, resided in North Carolina some three or four years, when he immigrated to Ohio where he resided for some four or five years and in the year 18?? immigrated to the state of Iowa, settling in Mohaska County, seven miles southwest of Oskaloosa on the Desmone River and what is known as the Six-Mile Bottom where he continues to reside. To Arah and Morgan Patrick the following children were born: Mary, William, George, Willamina, Albert, Roderick and Hamilton. The latter died in 1866, also the mother on March 12, 1866 and are interred on a high elevation of land in what is known as Wermis Cemetery on the east side (left) of the Desmone River commanding one of the finest views in all the surrounding country. This cemetery is about three miles southwest from Beacon, Iowa. Willamina died several years ago and was buried near Atlantic, Iowa. She married a Mr. Waters and left two children to survive her. Mary married Leo Delong, a respectable gentleman who resides in Mahaska County where all the other children reside near Uncle Morgan Patrick who remarried. His second wife was a Mrs. Mary Glass. To this second wife two children were born: Charles and Norman. They also reside in Mahaska County, Iowa. Uncle Morgan Patrick came from Ohio to Iowa in a wagon drawn by two horses. They made an average of over 30 miles per day. There were no railroads and not even wagon roads in many

-13-

places, the country was all new and Indians had not been removed but a short time hence. He could only travel by means above.

Aunt Nancy Matilda Wilcox came to Kentucky with her father on or about the year 1845 when but a buxom girl, grew up and married a young man by the name of Solomon Williams-grandson of the old moneymaker and son of Alexander Mullins who resided in Pike County Kentucky. Solomon and Matilda had born to them several children, among whom we find Andrew Jackson (dead), William (dead), Jacob, Samuel, Sylvester (dead), Francis Marion and Frances. These children all reside in Pike County, Kentucky mostly on Shelby Creek. Uncle Solomon was a member of the 39th Kentucky Mounted Infantry. He volunteered, took sick and died at Louisa, Kentucky on or about the year 1864. His remains and also those of Cousin Nathan Crankfield Trivett of the same regiment were interred near Ashland, Kentucky. After the War they were disinterred and conveyed to the capitol of the State and repose in the National Lot or Cemetery together with many others who yielded up their lives in defense of the best Government on earth which misguided, armed traitors were endeavoring to put down and ruin.

Aunt Matilda died in Pike County, Kentucky on or about the year 1881 or 2 and is buried at the family cemetery of Isaac Greer on Beefhide Creek where she awaits the resurrection to call her into life with some little ones who died in infancy - their names we cannot mention, only one, Tolbert. "Peace to her ashes, sleep on until Christ shall call thee up into everlasting life."

-14-

Deborah Wilcox married one, James Richison of Ashe County, North Carolina. She died about the year 1866 and is buried near Comet, Ashe County, North Carolina. She left one son, Francis Marion and a daughter. Where they are I do not know. In Ashe County, North Carolina I presume.

Myley Wilcox married one Henry Miller. He resides on Stagg's Creek of the north Fork of the New River, Ashe County, North Carolina where he raised a large family, the names of which we cannot give in full. There was Mary, William, John and so forth. The reside near Cornet post office, Ashe County, North Carolina, were doing well in 1862 when I visited them. 'Twas here Alvin Wilcox ate too much maple sugar and lost his grip and appetite for sweetness in the year 1867. I will never forget his groans - in fancy I hear them now as his body rolls over and over and he says, "My, sugar don't set so well in my stomach!" He could not stay inside and was loath to go out as the weather was yet cool, but he went and I guess he doesn't like maple sugar to this day. (He dreaded that trip to the outhouse in the snow you can bet.)

Aunt Martha Wilcox married one Solomon Miller, a resident of Horse Creek, Ashe County, North Carolina near Cornet post office. They raised quite a large family, among them was a pair of twin boys - one of which was called Francis Marion after the writer of this sketch. Uncle Sol was a poor, hardworking farmer and seemed kind and good natured, slow of speech and looked to me like he had just as soon the world would "wag" him as he the world. This was in 1862 and the War had no doubt thrown a pall over all those who highest ambitions were to remain with their families and aid in caring for their own wives and children instead of fighting to protect the slave property at the South, which if sustained was only destined to bind their own fetters more close and make them slaves or

-15-

the equals thereof. Aunt Martha was a large, portly woman, rawboned, dark complected, dark hair, black, very tall and showed in the continence the Wilcox side of the her race, while her size presented the Greer side. Her education was limited, manner unassuming, clever, kind and obliging. She made many inquiries after her brother, Sam, and her father, Isaiah, and seemed devoted to her husband, little ones who bid fare to become the ancestors of a mighty Miller generation. None of them were old enough to go into the Confederate Army. Aunt Martha was alive in 1885 at Comet post office, Ashe County, North Carolina.

Little Annie, as she was called, died about the time the War ended and lies in the same cemetery with her mother near Henry Millers not far from Comet post office Ashe County North Carolina.

I have mentioned these children briefly, uncles and aunts and some of their children in order that our own children might at some period in life, form their acquaintance and establish their relationship.

I have been silent so far as to our own Grandfather's history in order that I might give him a place just before that of our own dear father's history. Hence I will tell you now what little I know of him.

His Christian name was Isaiah and he was born in Wilkes County, North Carolina on February 20th 1796 and remained in said county with his father until grown.

-16-

A portion of Wilkes County was stricken off and the County of Ashe made when our people moved into the new country, settling on the south fork of New River, on the waters thereof. The County was new with game in abundance everywhere and much of Grandfather's time was employed in the chase after elk, panther, bear, deer and wild turkey. Yet at intervals he worked on the farm and in his father's shop. Being a natural genius, he soon learned to be a good workman in iron and steel, also a very good gunsmith. In a word, he was a good blacksmith and could make any piece of common machinery then in use. While in the woods he was equally good, Yet he devoted most of his time to making wagons which he ironed and sold as occasions demanded.

Grandfather, while hunting and roaming over the hills of this new country, became acquainted with one William Greer, whose wife was a relative of the eccentric Peter Cartwright, being herself the mother of several young ladies among whom was Jacintha, who afterward married one Hardin Parsons, and one named Fannie. Isaiah became "all broken up" on the latter. He courted, wooed and won her hand and about the year 1817, they as before stated, were married and settled on New River in Ashe County, North Carolina.

On or about the year 1820, William Greer with his family, also Isaiah Wilcox, his son-in-law, concluded to migrate to the Three Forks of the Kentucky River in the State of Kentucky, what is now called Owsley County, Kentucky. They made the trip like the Boones on horseback and pack mules and after crossing many high hills and precipitous mountains, they finally arrived at the end of their journey and made another addition to the few then comprising the settlement at the Three Forks of Kentucky River (where now the town of Proctor is located). Here for a

-17-

short time they devoted their attention principally to hunting and farming and blazing out new lines of travel and while here in this wilderness home, on the 7th of March 1821, Isaiah's second son was born whom he named after his father, calling his son Samuel.

The small colony became homesick and as the Indians quite often made dashes into the wilds of Kentucky in search of game and generally decorated their belts with more or less white scalps. This magnified their horrors and made them long for the flesh pots more than ever and on or about the fall of 1821 or in the spring of 1822, they pulled up stakes, packed their horses and mules and after a long, yet successful journey they arrived in Ashe County North Carolina where all settled anew. Some of those who returned, to lament their choice, while others were only to remain, gather fresh courage and be off again.

William Greer remained on the waters of New River until removed by death during the spring of 1862, being near ninety seven years old. He always longed for Kentucky and believed it to be the "promised land". His wife Hannah also died there in the same year being up into ninety. He heard their funerals preached by Uncle William Wilcox in the summer of 1862.

Isaiah Wilcox after his return to Ashe County, worked at his trades and devoted considerable time to hunting. He had now become older in years, the county was becoming more densely populated, schools were being formed and children given a limited education. Isaiah had never had a chance to educate himself, yet from moments gathered, he learned to read, write and cipher quite well. Though his books were few he came more diligent in pursuit of the Bible. With him to read

-18-

was to know it and from its sacred pages, he was led to behold his fallen state, implored God's mercy, received pardon and was called to preach the Gospel that he had been reading.

At first, he told me, he disobeyed the call. Yet, there was no rest of mind or peace of soul until he gave the inviting spirit his word that he would make an attempt. He obeyed, the spirit came, light shown in and darkness went out. God, thru this man, spoke to many crowds of people. Years rolled on and his fame went abroad. He was called to the highest seat in the Baptist church. The Lord seemed ever with him, but lo, in an unguarded moment, Isaiah listened to the tempter's sweet voice. He forgot God and relied on himself and was no longer a pillar of strength. He attempted to speak and preach but the enlightening Spirit had taken its flight. The flesh is weak, the Devil comes now boldly forward and demands his labors and Isaiah forgets and gives his consent. Oh wretched man that he was. He desires to see those to whom he had preached Christ to no more. He arises up and abandons those who had almost worshipped him. He comes to Kentucky once more, this time stopping in Pike County, Kentucky, but here he would not remain. He longs for the chase and here he goes to the wilds of the Elk River in West Virginia where game abounds. Here he hunts, traps, makes guns and seems in almost isolation, unsatisfied.

Father and Joseph Houck go in search of him about the year 1847 to find him on the head of the Elk River in rough country. They induce him to return to North Carolina and he did so only to see his deserted family.

He longed to be back. He takes Aunt Nancy Matilda and goes to Pike County, Kentucky. Here he remains only until Aunt married and then Isaiah arises and

-19-

goes to Pound River, Virginia and there forms an attachment to Sarah Mullins who becomes his second wife. They remain here two or three years, then move to Wise County at the Pound post office in said county about five miles south of the top of the Cumberland mountains at a point called Pound Gap. Here he worked the blacksmith trade until 1853 or 4, moved to Pike County, Kentucky and settled on Shelby Creek where he remained until 1863 when he immigrated to Carter County, Kentucky, settling on the Little Sandy River. While in Pike County, Kentucky on or about the year 1856 or seven, he was again visited by the Spirit and promised the Lord once more that he would go about His work. He did so and the Spirit of the Lord attended him as he claimed enlightenment and understanding was given him and more light on His word then ever before. He lived in the county until February 10, 1879. He preached an able sermon on Sunday morning and returned home and that evening contracted pneumonia, grew worse and on Wednesday following was summoned away from earth, dying as one going to sleep. He was decently interred on Thursday evening on top of a hill near where he died on the left side of Little Sinking Creek and on the left side now of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad on Upper Hill Farm then belonging to William Salsbury.

The writer of this sketch was present and saw Isaiah Wilcox buried, he buying his last suit in which he was clothed for the last time. His wife and children have written their consent that his remains be exhumed in this year 1893 and be transferred to the family cemetery of our family on Deer Creek, Carter County, Kentucky and laid by the side of his son, Sam - the first man buried here in the year 1864.

-20-

Grandfather Isaiah Wilcox was a man about five feet ten inches tall, would weigh about one hundred and sixty five pounds at his fighting weight in middle age. He was fair complected and a good looking man, with straight black hair, blue eyes, shoulders a little stooped and as age came upon him he became more so. He was a man of rather slow speech, yet positive and firm when not roiled. Yet when his temper became aroused, his whole frame seemed set in motion and his tongue worked as though on a pivot.

He was a man possessed of a quick temper, yet he controlled it in a becoming manner and if enraged, like a troubled water he soon became smoothed down and was a pleasant as though nothing had disturbed his peace and quietude.

In the days of his young manhood, he more than once was assailed by young bloods who desired to test his manhood. They offered insults and received blows until satisfied to say enough. He did not seek pugilistic engagements, yet accommodated those making a trespass on his good nature. Hiram, his second son by his second wife Sarah Mullins, more fully represents his temperament in youth that I can from his own descriptions of himself to me.

He was fond of telling hunting stories-true, which were always patiently listened to by us boys and relished at all times. He possessed much good judgment and was able to give advice well calculated to benefit all.

He wore a 7 1/4 hat in size, a number 15 collar, 37 coat and vest, pants 33 by 33, shoes number 9 and often 10. One of his favorite sayings in the pulpit was, "Sometimes Old Zade gets into very deep water and 'tis with much difficulty he wades out!"

-21-

When attended by the Spirit in addressing an audience and when warmed up, he would invariably call them all "Children - Children!" His prayers offered were such as seemed coming from the heart, made by groanings and utterings of the Spirit, yet destined to reached the Courts of Heaven, pierce the ears of a kind Savior, Jesus Christ, when he preached and plead for those lost by Adam's transgressions.

He was in politics a Republican, deep and dyed in the wool. He believed in one Government, one flag and one Constitution and a government for all. He died a poor man, yet it is often said to the writer that at death he would be as rich a man as those possessed of their earthly millions.

The second wife of Isaiah Wilcox was as stated before a Miss Sarah Mullins born March 1826 and a daughter of one John Mullins called, I believe, Chunky Bill. He was a descendant of a tribe immigrating to Virginia in an early day and their name and number in and about the head of the Big Sandy River in Pike County, Kentucky and Wise County, West Virginia is like the sands of the sea. The mother of Sarah was a Miss Temperance Blaylock, a daughter of John Blaylock of Dee River, North Carolina who was a soldier in the Revolutionary War of 1776. He proved to be a gallant brave soldier possessed of much true courage and daring that never knew fear or shirk from performing a duty no matter how perilous.

To Isaiah and "Sallie" (Sarah) were born the following children: Dulcenia, Louisa, Andrew Jackson, Hiram, Carolina, Thomas Jefferson, Isaiah and Catherine as well as one or two pair of twins that died in infancy whose names I never knew. The above named offspring all reside in Carter County near Willard.

-22-

Carolina died some years ago. The boys are all good clean men and useful. They are esteemed by me as good boys and should I never see them again, I wish them well, also "Sallie" their aged mother who has often divided rations with me.

She was a woman possessed of much courage, tall, rather dark complected, black hair, black eyes, stammered a little in speech and when roiled would say, "There's nary a Devil if I don't learn you on which side your bread is buttered!" and 'twas only a word or a blow with her. Her and grandfather lived agreeable. She was very kind and devoted to him all through his life. Her nature was to be kind yet she lacked nothing in temper but could control it admirably.

"Sallie" after Grandfather died remarried a man named Wright residing on the waters of the fork of the Little Sandy River near Willard, Carter County, Kentucky. Wright died on or about the year 1888 and "Sallie" went to live with her son-in-law, a Mr. Bryant residing in Willard, Kentucky (whose wife was Catherine). She lives there yet, I presume.

Samuel Wilcox, the second son of Isaiah and Fannie his first wife, was as before stated born at Three Forks of the Kentucky River in what now comprises Owsley County, Kentucky on March 7, 1821 and when only eleven months old was taken back to North Carolina where they settled in what is now Ashe County on the waters of the New River about nine miles southwest from Jefferson, the county seat of the above named county. Here young Samuel grew to manhood, laboring on his father's farm also inheriting some of his father's genius and having access to his tools, he learned the carpenters trade and he became a fair cabinet maker.

-23

The schools of his day were very imperfect and far from what they have become in a period of sixty years, hence his education was limited to the common branches gained by attending subscription schools or over a pine torch fire around his father's hearthstone. His principal instruction was given by a gentleman by the name of Clayton who taught in those days. The instruction was perfection, as he was an able scholar and a graduate as well and author of several text books. He was called "Old Silver Head Clayton" from the fact that he had a fracture of the skull and in closing the fracture they used about a quarter of a silver dollar in silver, in platting over the crack in his cranium.

The arithmetic used by father was Sinley? and Old Pikes, the latter in its imperfect form or condition. The writer has kept it as a relic among his books. Mr. Clayton visited my father on or about the year 1854 or 1855 while a resident of Pike County, Kentucky. He remained with us over two weeks and although now very old, his highest ambition was still to impart instruction. During his stay the writer of the sketch had to undergo a thorough drill two and three times a day to learn to spell and the names and capitols of all the states then admitted to the Union. This, to me a boy with pockets filled with white marbles, was torture. Yet not until I had mastered the situation did Mr. Clayton leave or let up on me-- about the only lessons I ever did master thoroughly. And this was forced on me by father's old teacher, "Old Silver Head".

The training Clayton gave Father was good as far as it went and the study that he gave his books along enabled him to do business and teach in the Common Schools of Kentucky in after years. Samuel had a splendid mind and made himself almost, if not quite, a perfect reader. He could set down and "read" for

-24-

hours without a book, repeat the life of Washington by heart, recite Washington's farewell address which the writer has heard him do more than once.

But young Samuel was human and on or about the age of seventeen years, a large young man in his teens, began to think no doubt that he was about five times larger than he was in reality. It is at this period that young men set a larger estimate upon their selves than they ever bring to the markets of the experienced world. Samuel began to look around and finds, like Adam or old, that he was in need of a helpmate. He about this time, met a Miss Barbara Houck, a daughter of George W. Houck a respectable gentleman of German descent. Young Barbara was about the right size and age to fully captivate Sam and she did it. As we are informed during the year of 1839, in the early spring they were joined in matrimony by a Reverend James Johnson and from that day on trotted along in double harness.

Strange things often happen in this world. Often have I heard my mother say that when she first saw father he was about six or eight years old and had accompanied his father, Isaiah, to her father's home. She said young Sammy was attired in buckskin pants and looked as though they had been well lubricated with bear-oil lard or some other greasy substance. She said he laughed at the young kid then little thinking that one day she would become the wife of that boy, yet she did.

After their marriage they settled in their native Ashe County near the old home ranch and remained for a short period and then moved some twenty-five miles northwest and settled on the waters of the North Fork of the New River near where the Miller settlement now resides on Staggs Creek. While there the writer

-25

then a small kid, wandered to a deep spring and tumbled in and when found was "dead" but was resurrected after a thorough rolling in the bed quilts for more than two hours, so Mother informed me. I don't remember anything about it yet in 1862 I visited the old long ranch which was yet standing but much dilapidated. West of the house was the spring then only about 1/2 inch deep gushing out its nice blue waters, clear as crystal. There I quenched my thirst from the same stream my father and mother had so often quenched theirs and the spring that had come so hear to sending me away from my troubles lay, the water cool, soft and pure and I thought what a good God to keep this beautiful spring flowing on.

Home was not there for Father moved back to South Fork and settled for good and went to work, cleared up for a new home, erected dwellings and made himself quite a comfortable home where he worked his trade and framed for several years and became quite popular for his integrity and industry.

While residing on the South Fork, he was chosen, elected and commissioned Captain of Co. N? North Carolina State Guards as was the custom and requirements of law that state troops be organized and meet for Company and Regimental drill from once to twice each month of the year. Samuel, now Captain Wilcox, was said to be the best commanding officer in the regiment. He commanded his Company for a number of years, but like many men residing in an old settled country, he desired to make a change. His father and one sister were now north of the Cumberland mountains, permanently settled hence we found Sam, in the early days of 1850, grooming old brown "Moike", a high headed charger that could rack a mile in 3 minutes for means of conveyance to the

-26-

"promised land" on a voyage of discovery. "Moik" was groomed, a new saddle cinched and over this was thrown a large saddle, pockets filled with clean clothing for change after arrival in Kentucky. Over saddle and saddle pockets was thrown a large black bear skin to afford the passenger ease and keep the contents of the saddle dry. Now with broadcloth leggings and heavy overcoat, Capt. Sam mounts old "Moike", bids Barbara and the four little ones goodbye and off he goes to Kentucky. Around the fifth day after starting he finds his sister and father, well likes the country, yet does not buy or rent land but returns back home and consults Mamma.

She gives her ascent to go provided that Uncle Jesse Houck, Father's brother-in- law, would come along too. Jesse hears Father's report and says he would go. They now begin to sell off, preparatory to a final move from the old Tarheel State to cross the Cumberland Mountains. At that day and age, the world was though to be a long way off. After arranging matters for the final move, father was sent back to Kentucky, this time in April to rent and have ready homes for the two families. The second trip was made like the first and on old "Moike" and successfully, too.

Father rented two farms, one of a Robert Fleming on Shelby Creek, Pike County, Kentucky for himself and the other of a Broker Mullins I believe on Beefhide Fork, Pike County, Kentucky for Uncle Jesse Houck. On or about April 20, 1850 with Uncle Henry Houck, Uncle Jacob Houck and Uncle Jesse Houck, Mother embarked with our household goods for Kentucky; the two former hauling our plunder in two wagons and drawn by four horses, the other three with Uncle Jess arriving with his own team. We went slowly yet successfully onward, the winter

-27-

playing pedestrian most all of the time. Father after renting lands, started to meet the Exodus and while in the streets of Abingdon, Virginia, Uncle Jess being in the lead looked nearly one mile north ahead, saw old "Moike" playing the rack splendidly and knew it was father on return, raised his hand and then and there in the streets of the City of Abingdon gave one of the loudest yells that I have ever heard come from the lips of a small man. Father heard it, raised his stovepipe fur hat and in a minute ole "Moike" had placed the intervening space to his rear and we now shook Papa's hand. He was well and so were the crew. We drove on north of town and stopped for dinner and Uncle Jess and Father returned to town and bought myself, George W. and Isaiah each a black pitched "Deek" cap. Oh my, but we were pleased as these were new to us. We wore them all summer and became tanned as Southern Mulattoes before fall. After dinner with Father and "Moike", Marion could get on with more ease, riding behind Father at intervals. We landed at Pound, Wise County, Virginia and in a course of time found Grandfather and Sallie ready to welcome us. We tarried for a few days then crossed the Cumberland at Pound Gap, then into Kentucky and rolled on down through Pike County and arrived at our destination on or about May 1, 1850. Here we entered our new home in a strange land among strange people among the rugged hills and precipitous mountains, settling on Shelby Creek near the mouth of Beefhide Fork, Pike County, Kentucky on what was then known as Bob Flemmings' place. Soon the writer wanted to catch some fish. It had rained and muddied the creek so he, with hook and line, was off to a hole near the house and in a few minutes something pulled at his hook. He pulled and something that looked terrible, not like the speckled North Carolina trout, came out. Back he sent the hook and gave another pull and out comes another Grumpus, as Marion

-28-

thought, until one after the other were pulled out until a dozen had been landed where the writer and his sister then got some stones and proceeded to kill the "water dogs" as he called them. They had just commenced these operations when a resident citizen, Nelson Mullins, chanced to pass by and asked us what we were doing. We told him, killing Grumpus and he says, "you are mistaken, those are yellow catfish, splendid to eat". He told us then and there how to catch, handle and clean the fish and you can imagine our good dinner. Yet, their water-dog appearance rivetted on me a kind of hatred towards that species that was never entirely obliterated. I have always relished catfish as food but never admired his continence in or out of company, never admired his manner of sneaking up after dark and trying to steal his grubb, more than once leaving me minus a good fish hook with no ready substitute.

Well, we remained there two years and then moved to what is known as the Old Johnny Edwards place on High-House place. This house was made of hewn logs and was a full two stories high with an additional log structure used for a kitchen. There at this place, on or about February the 10th, 1852 our brother William was born and my blue game rooster met an untimely death that caused my tears to flow freely, yet brought me an appeaser in a silver quarter dollar presented to me by my Grandfather, Isaiah Wilcox. On account of this untimely taking of my game rooster and although paid for him, I could not relish our Bill or esteem him as a young baby brother for quite a while. Yet as time rolled on, we found our Bill to be a good boy and was glad that he had come to stay with us.

-29-

Father soon bought land and settled in the County and remained here quite a while. He made farming his principal vocation and while a resident of the County taught in several of the Common schools, always rendering the best satisfaction. In all the districts in which he taught, he worked at his trade in winter, often going into Virginia and into Wise County and the Holly Creek neighborhood where he got better wages and at the same time erected and finished off several houses.

While a resident of Pike County, Kentucky he was run for Justice of the Peace more than once and was elected by a good majority. His Judicial ability was extremely good. His ears were quick to hear testimony, his judgments clear and his decisions once rendered caused no appeals to be asked or taken to higher courts. His manner on hearing evidence was to weigh it, make up his mind at once, render judgment and this judgment in behalf of right. Lawyers with all their technicalities could not swerve his mind from the greater object, meeting out justice to all in accordance with the laws governing him as an Officer of the State. He was recognized as among the ablest magistrates of his County where his judgments were respected. While on the Board of the County Court of Claims he was liberal to those claims possessing merit and able in his arguments in behalf of all measures, looking to the interest of his County, always guarding the same against wild extravagance. Hence, he was much esteemed and believed in as an officer.

Religiously, he did not belong to any sect or denomination, yet always seemed to have a reverence for the deity and was a firm believer in all the dispensations of Providence as coming from God. He believed that God sent his Son to atone for condemned of "fallen man". He read and believed the Bible as being the spoken

-30-

word of God. He never took the Lord's name in vain and detested those that did, looking on them as bigoted and self-willed to destruction unless they repented and found favor with an offended God. He always held ministers in high esteem, his door was always open to them and they felt at home in our house. When possible he attended preaching and always showed respect for God's people.

Politically, he was from birth an old line Whig. So long as that party lived his votes were always case for the Whig candidates and in favor of protection of protection of American manufacturers and agricultural products, believing that America should be for Americans. He favored some of the restrictive measures in regard to immigration - cherished by the true American Party or Know-Nothing party and believed that unless America restricted and made her immigration laws more rigid, in the end American boys born on American soil would one day lament and regret their foolish, open-handed invitation to the men of all nations to come to our shores and make our houses their houses. We can now see the propriety of the argument and say many of those things then denounced were right.

After the Whig party ceased to live in name my father sometimes voted the good old Democratic ticket, not because he liked to, but because it was the fashion and no other ticket was presented. He never voted this ticket because he thought them right. When the disruptions of this Government came through by the traitors of the Democratic party at the South, Father was afforded the means of becoming identified with the Party standing for the preservation of our Government and the Constitution unimpaired. He was every inch a man and believed cession as a step

-31-

in the direction of revolution, war and bloodshed that ought to be put down at all hazards. Hence, when summons came for volunteers to strike in defense of the Government that had so long afforded us protection he said, "Amen!" and encouraged men to stand by the Union as it was the only means to secure us against the disgrace of seeing our prairies and public lands become the property of landlord slave holders, making the poor man the equal of the slave in all his bearings.

Father bought land in Carter County, Kentucky during the fall of 1860 on the waters of the Little Sandy River on a stream known as Deer Creek. To this he moved during the spring of 1862 coming down the Big Sandy River in a "Joe" boat hitched onto a raft of saw logs. In this "Joe" boat was all the household goods, father, mother and the children, all except me, Marion, who had gone on a visit to North Carolina and under Jeff Davis' edict could not return at will; hence he did not get favored with the river ride. This Joe Boat was soon landed at Catlettsburg, Boyd County, Kentucky where the family and plunder was placed in wagons and soon hauled out to Deer Creek farm in Carter County where they proceeded to clear up the ground, plant and cultivate a crop. This they did successfully, yet were often looked after by Rebel hordes, parading the country, stealing women's clothing, men's clothes, horses and even cattle. Things went on and got no better as the Union soldiers gained larger victories until the demoralized stragglers formed bands and rounded into their native state, Kentucky, only to pillage and steal.

Under the name of Rebel they accomplished their hellish works when truly they were roaming and plundering and murdering innocent men for no reason other

-32-

than that they had been true Union men and whether they endorsed the Rebel government openly, we know not. But we do know that they went unchastised or punished and as such killed, murdered, stole and burned until no Union man dared remain at home and hence on October 1, 1862 we find Father and Marion enlisted their names as volunteers on Co. D, Kentucky Mt'd Infantry, Volunteers to aid in the fighting of their country's battles in defense of their country and homes against their fellow countrymen who should have been out fighting for their country and their state instead of waging war against it.

But brother was often met by brother in great conflict. "Twas courage against courage. Men differed widely in judgment as to the rightness of their cause and backed their judgment by the life's blood in this respect in regard to Rebel integrity. Yet this did not justify murder and arson and petty larceny, too low and mean for men of noble birth to engage in. I can forgive the honest among the Rebel soldiers, yet had no place for the degraded thief that entered the army to murder and steal. I leave him to the mercy of a just God before whom his hellish deeds are all known and unless repented of will damn his soul. May the Lord have mercy upon those blinded by Satan is my prayer after 29 years have passed.

The country now seems prosperous, the fruits of the great victory are realized by one and all, the four million of slaves set free had made great advanced in progress, education and civilization. Clothed with the full paraphernalia of citizenship after 240 years of slavery they have excelled our most enlarged anticipations and outstripped many thought to be their superiors in the race for a successful life.

Father from hard marching on or about New Years Day 1864 contracted a cold.

-32-

New Years Day and the night before had been extremely cold with the mercury falling some sixty degrees in less than twelve hours from forty above to near twenty below zero. We were on December 31, 1863 ordered to make a forced march from Mt. Sterling to Paris, Kentucky a distance of twenty-two miles. We struck tents - that means took them down - and at 8:00 p.m. were in line of march in a cool rain within twenty minutes. We had not marched over two miles when the wind blew almost a hurricane.

A severe blizzard set in, our clothes that were already wet began to freeze stiff, yet we marched on and made about two miles more. The snow now driver by a heavy wind after night, blinded us so that it was impossible to go on. We saw a large brick building, turned in, knocked, but no admittance was gained. Some ten steps away a cabin was seen and we observed a faint light as though there was a fire burning within. Father, little Sam McDavid, John Slvas and Jessie and Marion all turned towards this homely shanty, knocked and rapped aloud and after a while a voice says, "Who com dar?".

"Five Union men, soldiers, almost frozen to death. Open this door or down will come your shanty".

"Yes sar, dat I will, just hold on dar Boss. I's an old man, but will let you in pretty soon, so I will!"

Up he got, turned the key, the door opened and in we went. We stirred up the fire, put on more wood as the corner of the shanty was piled full as though this African son of Ham had a warning from Headquarters that cold blast would be let on us and corral us for the night. We fired up and warmed up one side at a time until our

-34-

clothes thawed out and got dried. There was only one bed in the house and a old colored woman, wife of our landlord occupied it, but she got restless over the thought that her husband had been elected fireman for the night by a majority of five, hence she arose and consented to join the meeting.

No sooner did she leave her bed than Marion and Slvas rolled in making room by laying spoon fashion for a third and after Father had thoroughly dried his clothes, he did not care to watch the old year out and the new one come in which by now was coming in like a lion, hence he too rolled in and three Union heroes were soon in the land of Morpheus or dreams. The old negro, his wife and the two other boys watched the old and new year until daylight came.

When we yet beheld the storm in all its fury being sworn to obey our Officers, we started traveling about one or two miles, stopped to warm up and in this manner by night we got to within two miles of Paris, Kentucky. During the day we overtook hundreds of soldiers who had dared to press on, only to crawl in and seek shelter under some dwelling, barn, roof or negro shanty. That day will never be forgotten by the living while they have reason. Many a poor fellow froze stiff in his saddle, all had ears, nose, feet and hands frozen. 'Twas on this day that the writer had his hands frozen, his nose and face also until the skin peeled off. We had got to within two miles of Paris, night came and we put up with a man named Fisher, a bachelor and slave owner. He was true Kentuck and every inch a gentleman and I hope he lives today. After giving us breakfast on the morning of January 2nd 1864, Father and I went on to Paris where we found a portion of our Regiment in an old church, barracks and so forth. They greeted us as heroes and swore that all the Mossback Company would round in soon and bye and bye they

-35-

did arrive, yet were frozen and full of cold. Many soon began to show signs that their constitutions were not made of iron. Pneumonia set in and to make bad matters worse, the measles found their way into our camp and the boys began to pile up in bunks to be hauled to the hospital and from there before a Reserve armed guard, many of them were hauled to their final resting place to have the usual military salute fired over their newly made graves. We lost during January and February more than twenty brave soldiers - all attributable to that cold New Years march and the blizzard encountered.

Right here I arise to say that those "featherbeds - stay at home braves" who begrudge the common soldier his meager pension, all the money in Uncle Sam's coffers would not have induced you out into that furious storm, neither would it have prompted us to go but our oaths were rostered in Heaven and when our Officers demanded that we go, we thought it but a sworn duty and had volunteered our services to perform it and in fear of death we often done it not counting the cost of multiplying what might happen. Soldiers enlist to discharge their duties regardless of the cost or danger. Hence battles are fought, marches are made and the hardships endured that we read about.

Father, about February 1st, 1864 took pneumonia fever while in camp. I had him took to a Mrs. Sarah E. Howells where we had been having our rations cooked then went for Dr. Hopson of Paris, Kentucky. He treated him for about three weeks. Father was on the mend but being removed then to the hospital, the doctors changed. He took a relapse and after a severe illness on the night of March 15, 1864 at about fifteen to ten o'clock, he breathed his last. arriving at the

-36-

end of life's journey at age of forty three years, no months and eight days. On the 16th he (in charge of Comrade James M. Clay) was started home for burial where he arrived on or about the 22 of March being interred on a mound northeast of the old home on Deer Creek, Carter County, Kentucky at a site named by himself to me on his deathbed. He knowledge and reason remained good until the last day of his life.

He knew his end was drawing near and sent word to Mother and the little ones at home so soon to behold him sleeping in death, he who had so recently parted from them in such high hopes of meeting them soon again.

How many brave men who went forth to battle and in defense of Liberty and their countries cause never returned home and if they did return 'twas often after their soul had gone out of their bodies like father's. These men returned to comfort a dear wife and child, a sorrowing father and mother or an idolized sweetheart, leaving those whose brave hearts heaved with emotion as they beheld only a body with life stripped of its charms. These brave soldiers had done all they could. They gave their lives as a sacrifice upon their countries' altar that our fine institutions, the dear purchase of our fathers, might live and be transmitted to posterity. Many of the Union soldiers sent home dead were denied the privilege of having a hearse or team of horses to haul them to their last resting place as the guerilla bands claiming to be Rebels were roaming at large seeking to accomplish their hellish designs. Those bands would unharness the horses or mule teams from the wagon drawing the corps of a Union soldier, take the team and leave the corps to stand in the road. Hence work oxen had to be employed to haul the soldiers home. My father was hauled 16 miles with work oxen on a sled from the nearest

-37

depot and not until almost in sight of home did my dear mother know he was dead. Another soldier who was murdered in the same county in which we resided was sent home on a sled with two other murdered comrades. This sled was drawn by work oxen and to the everlasting shame and disgrace of the name Rebel, they took one of the oxen that had been used to haul the dead man home to his wife and children and butchered it claiming the right to confiscate it as it was used in the "employ and for the benefit of the government that they had sworn to destroy". These are the acts we are now called upon to forget. These are the acts we are to bury as the "dead past". These are a portion of the acts we are called upon to shake hands over and greet with smiles - as well a mother be asked to forget her long lost only child as to ask a devoted Union man to forget his past. He may in his magnanimity forgive the penitent Rebel and receive him as a man though his deeds of destruction and disgrace and ruin cannot be forgotten. The grave only will hide these things from view and I doubt not that they will live on in the memory of an indestructible intelligence beyond the confines of this sin stricken world and pass in grand review before Him who is judge of us all.

The Rebel soldier may profess his friendship and declare his forgetfulness of the deeds already done, yet he in so doing condescends to do and say what I don't believe. I am an admirer of bravery and courage and detest that sentiment cherished North or South that asks me to forget the past. This is something that no true Union man can do. Nothing no true Union should ask of a brave Rebel to do. Something no brave Rebel ever can or will do. He will remember every shot fired towards our flag and those that went towards the Rebel flag. We should meet

-38-

our erring enemies with becoming bravery and ask them to share our victory and friendship as American citizens but never, never ask them to forget the past. I don't want to forget the past. Let it live and serve as a waybill for erring humanity for generations yet unborn. I feel confident that I am voicing the sentiment of Father had he lived to see the close of the mighty conflict, but he did not.

Father was six feet and one-half inches tall, large and rawboned, long arms, long fingers. He was rather commanding in appearance, black hair and blue eyes, rather good looking, wore #16 collar, 7 1/4 hat, #11 size shoe on account of a corn - one too large (size 10 a better fit). He wore size 40 coat, pants 36 x 36. He would weigh about 175 lbs in the summer and 180 to 185 in the winter. He was good natured among us kids, would quarrel sometimes (considerably) yet seldom used the rod. No doubt he would have got along better if he had applied it more and done less talking which no doubt his children learned to their satisfaction. He was charitable and not inclined to pain their minds. To sum up in a few closing words on the whole matter about our dear father, we must say he was a man possessed of a good mind, had a generous heart and a soul very large - enough to reach out towards suffering humanity and extend a charitable hand to those in distress wherever found. While a resident of Pike County, Kentucky during the twelve years he lived there, he was called upon often to make and furnish coffins to different families in which their dear dead ones were interred. When asked his price by the family obtaining the coffin he would say, "Myself or the family will need a coffin someday. If you are around and about then, you can help us make a coffin" and no charge was ever made or demanded. Yet when his race was run, none except myself was nearby at his close. He was furnished a plain coffin by

-39-

the Government he had volunteered to defend and aid in saving and in this coffin was buried in his uniform worn on dress parade while alive and in the discharge of his duty as a Union soldier. The noblest garb on this earth. We the members of his family have placed at his grave a nice set of tombstones upon which is written the following inscription:

Samuel Wilcox of Co. D. 40 H, Ky Volunteers

Born March 7, 1821 died March 15, 1864

Age 43 years, 0 m. and 8 days

"Gone Home"

The foregoing items relative to Father should be revised by some member of our family and that part retained that might be deemed important. I must now leave Father and say a word relative to our dear mother who has so recently fallen asleep.

Barbara Houck Wilcox, wife of Samuel Wilcox now dead, was a daughter of George W. Houck and Barbara Houck (George Houck's wife) both of German descent. She was born in Pennsylvania from whence they immigrated to Rowan County, North Carolina where was born several children whose name are as follows: George, Henry, Jessee, William, Jacob, Elizabeth, Nellie, Katie, Barbara and Mary. Some of the above were born in Ashe County, North Carolina where Grandfather George moved at an early date, settling on the waters of New River about nine miles southwest of Jefferson the present county seat, and where Barbara was born May 17, 1814. During her infancy she was learned to speak German, which language she spoke in her father's family until 21 years old, at the same time speaking English fairly well. She was deprived of attending American schools and consequently was not educated - only to read the Bible in that

-40-

language. Her relations in her father's family were domestic in every sense of the term. She could sew, card, spin, weave, cook and do anything essential to be done in order to make her life useful. Her services were in demand at fair wages in many families in which she did her part ably until over twenty years old when she concluded she would rather be a Mrs. of her own house than doing another's chores. Hence we find her matrimonially inclined. Upon meeting Samuel Wilcox by her good looks and loving smiles she soon won for herself his undying affection and that true kind of love which only finds satisfaction in union. The consummation of the marriage as before mentioned took place in Ashe County, North Carolina during the spring of 1929. The officiating officer or clergyman was Rev. James Johnson of Ashe County, North Carolina.

From the day Mother was united in matrimony it seems that her highest ambition was to prove a devoted wife and make herself useful in all the realizations of a devoted wife and afterwards to become a kind and obliging mother. She was always ready and willing to discharge her duty, know no such word as discouragement. Life's battles were met and fought one by one and generally successfully. She in her early life was converted to the saving Faith of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She was in her 19th year when converted - or it was during the year 1833 and as well as my memory served me - while in attendance at an old fashioned Methodist Camp Meeting in Ashe County, North Carolina that her soul was made known to the powers of love and redeeming grace. She never doubted her conversion in the least and stayed her hopes on Jesus, always looking to Him for protection and guidance and owing her strong faith in His atonement to which I feel confident much of her success in life is to be attributed. She was

-41-

always a strict member of the Methodist Episcopal Church during all the years of my life. I always found her possessing strong attachments for the church of her choice and in the society of its members she took most delight.

I remember at an early date in my own life of hearing Mother praying in public and I now think that we in later life as members of her family professing conversion might have made her much more happy had we not allowed Satan to stop our mouths in her presence and opened our soul asking her poor willing to soul to lead us to a throne that might have raised us higher and that gave her spiritual strength such as none but the angels know. Shame on me a Christian man, or a woman, that will let Satan deprive them of one glorious baptism of the Holy Ghost by a delusive man fearing timidly that robs God of His glory and man of his strength.

Mother was a devoted mother. She became the mother of eight children as time passed. There were seven boys and one girl: Jerome, Francis Marion, Elizabeth, Isaiah, Hamilton Hardin, William, Daniel Boone and Samuel Vernon. Of these Jerome died when only three years old. Francis Marion resides in Beacon, Iowa while Hamilton Hardin resides in Albert Lea, Minn. Isaiah, William and Boone reside in Carter County Kentucky as does Elizabeth, she having become Mrs. William P. Lewis in the year 1865 or 6 in Carter County Kentucky - the officiating officer being L.P. Whitten, JPPC.

Mother was a small woman not over five feet two inches tall, fair complected, black hair, black eyes and in middle age possessing a round face with rosy cheeks, an attractive nose and would weight at her heaviest about 140 pounds, yet in later

-42-

life seldom weighed more than 100 pounds. She was full of real life and inclined to joke and have her innocent fun. She enjoyed the society of the young with as much relish as those 40 year her senior. She in middle age, during Father's life was a devoted wife, always ready to share his adversity as well as prosperity. She seldom showed signs of sorrow or discouragement. Her life possessed much sunshine and when clouded the fault was not hers. Although as in all families, clouds would sometimes gather only a few kind words were necessary to dispel them from the family horizons and the usual smile and sunshine would beam if possible with more luster than before. My mother possessed much real fortitude and true courage. Tough yet was gentle, her ambition was such that she could endure a great deal with little or no signs of giving way. She during Father's life admired his common sentiments and after he enlisted in his country's service, died and was sent home, she received him on short notice and had him decently interred and then becoming the head of a large family she now threw all her energies together resolved to keep her children in the old home, teach, encourage and instruct them herself. This she did in a commendable manner. Working, planning and executing beyond the most sanguine expectations until the last had grown to manhood, grown up and married, leaving the old house deserted except the queen that had worked, planned and given so much of her time to its care and proper government. She now alone at the age of near sixty-five years at the old home where often a dozen mouths were filled by her hard earnings, finds herself all alone to enjoy life's serene journey. Here she in her old age reads, sews, knits and attends her other domestic duties seeming to enjoy life equally as much as in her younger days. Her greatest happiness seemed to be in having her children visit her at her home where she would cook her rations and divide them with relish.

-43-

She lived for her children and friends and always enjoyed their presence and society. As a neighbor she was kind and obliging and none was more attentive or devoted to those sick or in distress. She would divide her last pound of coffee or flour in her house to accommodate a neighbor. The poorer the individual the better it made her feel to accommodate them. She did not crave wealth or riches, would often remark, "What need I to care for money? When I am gone I cannot take anything with me when I die and so I live comfortable while here, 'tis all I need or want". She was a good, kind, obliging and devoted mother and always gave her children much good advice. She disdained and detested anything debasing or low pertaining to the human family and always seemed to be rejoiced at hearing of her children or friends taking an elevated position in life, seeming to share their anticipations for future joy, happiness and prosperity.

The late years of her earthly pilgrimage was much of the time spent with brother Isaiah who had proved all that a devoted son could from infancy to middle age, caring for Mother and having her care for him in boyhood, he taking, as it were, Father's place at home while Father was in the Army. Isaiah deserves praise and commendation for his devotions to Mother until her final summons came on April 6 at 8:30 a.m. in the year 1893.

The other children, no doubt were devoted, yet it was with Isaiah she ate, slept, laughed and wept and called home. Within his house she breathed her last and felt resigned to obey her Savior's summons. From Isaiah's house she took her final summons and her soul took flight. From Isaiah's house her body was conveyed to the site selected by Father where their bodies should repose until the last loud trumpet should sound and summon the nations underground to a final judgment.

-44-

She was buried at 4:00 p.m. on April 7, 1893 on a bright, clear, balmy April day. Our mother seemed willing to go.

I will copy the last letter bidding me farewell as dictated by her to my brother Isaiah and written by him on April 5th 1893 the day before she breathed her last which reads as follows:

Rose Dale, Kentucky, April 5, 1893

.M. Wilcox

My dear Son and Family:

I received your letter and was proud to hear from you all and to know that all were well as common.

Well Marion, I would like to see you but my Master has called for me and I am ready to bid my earthly relations and dear children goodbye. Only a few hours and I expect to join my friends in the Heavenly land where parting and pain will be felt and feared no more.

I want you, Hattie and the children to meet me there. Tell the children to be good to you.

Marion, I cannot describe my feelings at this time. Boone and Sam are both here with me as well as Isaiah and William and I am looking and expecting Elizabeth today. I may live until she arrives or may not. Don't trouble yourself about me for I shall be at rest and happy when I die.

-45-

I once more ask you all to meet me in Heaven and bid you all goodbye.

Thy loving Mother,

Barbara Wilcox  
(as dictated to Isaiah the writer)

P.S. Mother says for little Georgia to have her picture.

After the above was written on the 5th, sister Elizabeth did arrive and got to see our dear mother and pass another night with her as she did not pass away until 8:30 in the a.m. April 6, 1893. Brother Hamilton Hardin of Albert Lea, Minnesota and myself had intended going to see Mother in this year as we had not seen her in over six years, but procrastination is the thief of time. We from different causes did not go, time rolled on, age made her inroads and good nature and physical strength gave way and we were a little too late. Mother was willing but could not stay. Goodbye until we meet again, oh my Mother.

I come now to Francis Marion Wilcox born in Ashe County in the State of North Carolina on November 13th 1842 in the a.m. He lived there until going on several years old when his father moved to Kentucky. He attended his first school, the Subscription school, taught by one Hamilton Hardin (after whom his third brother was named) taught near Grandmother Houck's in the winter of 1849, learned his first lessons in spelling at this school. The next school attended was in Pike County, Kentucky near the mouth of Beefhide, a tributary of Shelby Creek, which in turn was a tributary of the Big Sandy River. Here father played teacher for

-46-

some three successive terms of three months in the fall of each year at this school. I learned to spell and read through the first, second and third readers of the McGuffie's series. For spellers we used Webster's Elementary in Common. We had few McGuffies and some primers of the same series, no arithmetics save an Imdeys?? [sic] which was used by only one scholar in the school.

Soon we moved to another district called Mouth of Long Fork district. Here our first teacher was a George Francisco of Elkhorn Creek, Pike County, Kentucky. He was a pretty fair teacher. Following him, Father came in some three terms in each successive year, giving to all the best satisfaction. Here at the Mouth of Long Fork, I was placed in possession of an Old Pike arithmetic, Father's text book. It had Fare and Fret Curse and Fret Rule of Three bothering me. Bbs [sic] Shilling and Pence destroying my playtime and proving me not to be possessed of any much sense. This book I stuck to quite a while but in reality I never liked it and do believe it had its effect to lower my none too high aspirations as anticipations from the present to those mathematical studies that I, in after years, would gladly have known yet owing to this early, very hard and seemingly useless encounter with an undesirable text book, caused my liking for Arithmetic to become never what it should have been. Nathan C. Trivett followed in the line of teachers at the same place. He recommended Smiley's Text Book in arithmetic. I got one and it was hard yet more desirable than Pike's. I made some proficiency and proved myself a fairly good student. I only got one licking at this school and that was for laughing. I was now also learning to write and had considerable fun at the writing desk or bench as we called it.

-47-

Our schoolhouses were not well furnished as in this day and age. Perhaps it would not be out of place before going on further to describe one of these ancient buildings. They were rudely constructed of round logs generally about 18' to 24' long, some 10' high and covered with clapboards made of white oak and weighted on with round poles or what was called ridge poles instead of rafters as in our modern day school buildings. The floors were made of Mother Earth, no puncheon or plank used. The floors got very hard and smooth and answered all practicable purposes. Upon these dirt floors our bare feet rested hour after hours. On wet days by removal of the shunghar [sic] benches made by splitting open round logs 8-12 ft., 15 inches apart and boring two holes in each end in which 18 in. wooden pins were drove in for the legs we could have a first class marble yard until books were called. Those seats were 10, 12 and 18 ft. long and generally seated from six to twelve boys or girls, the girls sitting separated. The cracks minus glass afforded light. No windows were made in any school buildings. The doors were generally minus shutters and the chimney only mantel high. Often the scholars would dash out over the top to the chimney and stroll to the spring as no water buckets were furnished and each in turn had to water themselves at the spring. This was done by getting down on hands and knees and taking it in elephant fashion. These school houses were in use during 1850 and on up until after the War ended in 1865 in many localities.

While residing at this Long Fork district I went to a subscription school two months at the Mouth of Caney Creek taught by a John Damron a good teacher of his day. He taught in any arithmetic. I went through Fowler's Arithmetic at his school, learned considerable in spelling, reading, etc. I boarded with one William

-48-

McKiney and Sallie, paid them for board in work on the farm and chores. Bill was a good whole souled man and I would like to see him again.

On leaving school I was going on sixteen years old and hired by my father to one Payne Johnson. I carried the United States mail from Piketon, Kentucky via Whitesbury, Kentucky to what was known as Orsborns Ford in Scott County, Virginia for more than a year, less three months, in the fall of the year during which time I taught for first term of school for which my father received forty dollars.

The above named mail route was a very rough one. I had to cross the Cumberland Mountains twice each week at Pound Gap. Also crossed Powells Mountain and Gueses Mountain near the head of Powells River in Wise County Virginia. These were precipitous mountains and all three had to be crossed twice a week - the entire distance being made on horseback each week was one hundred and ninety six miles. I had to cross creeks and rivers minus bridges at least 250 times per week oft times plunging and having to buckle my mail bag around my neck and put my knees in the saddle while crossing to keep self and letters dry. I rode two different horses - one named Bill, an iron grey horse and the other a deep sorrel named Charles. The latter was much the most desirable horse, sure footed and would trot you along as desired. Old Bill was younger yet I use the description "old" because Bill would stumble and fall down in dead level. I remember one day riding along in a slow trot and he stumbled and stumbled for ten steps. I held tight the rein and Bill recovered. I no doubt felt the worse of the two and just thinking hard of Bill when my eyes caught sight of a silver dime laying in the

-49-

road. I got down, picket it up and thought, "this is good for one pound of brown sugar!". This was my only dime found while carrying the mail. For my services father got $83.00 a month while Marion got the glory of riding 196 miles a week.

These routes when mail was carried on horses were called Star Routes. Why this was I did not know then and supposed 'twas because one on arriving at the top of the Cumberland, Powell and Gueses mountains was near the great solar system, nearer than ever before, hence the name Star Route was then imagined. After the 196 mile route had been divided Father bought out the northern portion of said Virginia or Osborns Ford route and his part of said route led from what was known as the Mouth of Dorton's Creek to Piketon, Kentucky and could be easily traveled in one day, each way, per week. He continued to have the mails carried over this portion of the Long Route for more than a year or until the fall of 1860.

After the election of Abraham Lincoln for president of the United States 'twas then the seeds of secession began to germinate, a spirit of disunion began to find lodgement in the breasts of Southern fire eaters, dark clouds began to overshadow the political horizon, blind lights began to play the heavens, mutterings of the distant drums had begun to roll and to reverberate as they announced in unmistakable tones the fearful solemnity of the hour. What sentinel, in view of all these unmistakable evidences of the dreadful storm ahead would have dared to proclaim a calm. He was not to be found. Soon secession was ripe and its fruits were scattered all over the land and as its seeds steeped in ignorance gave quicker and more swift growth, the poor toiling, ignorant white men at the south causing the poor and tiling ignorant white man to desert their workshops, farms and daily vocations and to meet and hear disloyal speeches made by those who had long been desirous of dividing the Government in order that they might attain power.

-50-

Now apparently destroyed by the election of a Republican president, the old Nullification of Calhoun Doctrine of States Rights was declaimed from every schoolhouse, pulpit and courthouse. The aged caught on fire, the young became ablaze. They formed parade grounds, drilling more soldiers was the watchword. (The leaders met in convention proclaiming to favor dissolution of the Union and stand for secession.) This was enough - the mails were no longer in demand.

Payne Johnson, the principal contractor of our Route was a noted Union man and an abolitionist. The poor Rebel secessionist of Kentucky, trying to hide behind the cloak of neutrality, became so bitter and embolden that they made a raid on Johnson, took his mail and made him a prisoner, but on his agreeing to discontinue to carry the U.S. Mail in the Old Dominion State of Virginia, which had seceded, was allowed to go home but not to remain undisturbed.

This ended our Government work for the time being. We commenced another Common school at the mouth of the Indian Creek, Pike County, Kentucky, near where Sam Ked now has a General Store for merchandise. We had only two students.

When the clouds of was had grown so dark that all Common schools in Kentucky were discontinued, some of us found ourselves without pay and to date no taking up had taken place of those adjourned schools or payment made for service rendered as teachers.

-51-

The clouds of war continue to darken, the blood of Cal ?? Elsworth had been shed in sacrifice upon his country's alter. The Battle of Bull Run had been fought, Fort Sumter had been surrendered. Abe Lincoln had called for seventy-five thousand soldiers for 90 days - some said three months the war would end, the Union saved and peace ruling. Others said the signals had been given and that unless the Southern Confederacy was ratified and acknowledged, a long, protracted and bloody war would ensue. The sequel proved that the latter was correct, but Marion, wanting to view things in the former light and having a burning desire to return to the place he had been born, concluded he would return with a cousin and view the land of his native state, North Carolina, and spend a month or six weeks with friends and relations in said state. Getting Father's consent with a promise to him that he would never go into the Rebel Army or fight for the Confederacy and would return home soon, Marion, in the company of William H. Trivett, Isaiah Trivett and his wife and three children, did on the 16th day of September 1961 start for Ashe County, North Carolina, where he was to make his first visit in eleven years since coming to Kentucky with his father in the year 1850.

The first day we crossed the Cumberland Mountains at Pound Gap, Virginia and entered Virginia at this summit of the Confederacy, as then mapped and by the states now seceded from the Union. Nothing strange shows up on the first day save a rain in the late p.m. and our bother to find a place to stay at night, yet after walking until tired, we finally got to stop for the night with one Tom Sowards.

September 17th: We all ate breakfast and started on for further penetration into

-52-

Dixie's land arrive in the p.m. at Gladeville, Virginia, but go a few miles further and lodge for the night, staying with a Rebel, Simon Pure, who was glad to see us going south. Had he known our hearts, he would no doubt have refused us admission or gathered a gang and had us hanged to some of those Black Jacks so common in the south especially in this country. But to cheer him more, I sang to him Dixie's Land, it being the first time he had ever heard it. He thought it was grand, had it repeated in the a.m. and I think cut off about 50% of our bill for the night's lodging. I have never sun "Dixie" since and have always paid full fare.

September 18th: We arise early and pass through Wise County and enter Russell County in Castles Woods. The country gets better and secession gets stronger along the route. We see squads of men while on the farms black men and women worked dressed in white cotton goods. These were slaves doing drudgery for white men and women grouped in squads discussing methods of how to destroy the Union. The poor slaves knew nothing of the contemplated destruction and toiled in ignorance of their master's hellish designs.

We have often thought that had he been appraised of the great designs of providence what a day of thanksgiving would have ascended from a heart covered by a black skin. But those things were not revealed until after a nation had been baptized in blood. They were obedient unto their old masters, toiled on until the final day of deliverance, which came as a result of a great Rebellion in 1861.

September 19th: We, after traveling hard all day, encountering groups of secessionists, found ourselves upon the banks of the Church River in Russell County near what is known as Bickely's Mills Ford. Here, we made our baggage wagon our principal hotel, cook, eat, camp and sleep for the night.

-53-

Dawn's fair sweet songsters in their Masters praise awoke us early. Susan soon announced breakfast was ready, we draw up around the tempting food, eating heartily and with bright hopes, move on through a strange county where more than twelve years before we had forded along behind our immigrant wagon as Father moved to Kentucky. We travel through a portion of Russell County today and into Washington County, Virginia. On this day we meet a squad of Rebel soldiers in Rebel Uniform. Uniforms were the new elephant gray, their trousers had black strips running up the leg. Truly they looked pretty well and our only wonder was what color and what kind of clothes does the Union soldier wear. We had never heard. The Rebels were not yet in possession of arms but were soon going to where they could get a chance to aid in destroying the best government on earth and aid in keeping themselves the equal of the southern slave whose labor had degraded there for more than a century. They boasted to us of their superiority and told us that one Southern man could whip at least a half-dozen Yankees and they would now have their independence acknowledges.

England and France were going to ratify the Confederate Government, cotton was king and England was going to have her cotton even if she had to take up arms and aid them in the destruction of the Government. And to England's shame, be it said that she indirectly did do the United States more damage than all other European powers, furnishing munitions of war and seizing our vessels.

It is time we made them pay the $15,000,000 in damages (when it ought to have been one hundred million). Her devotion to the enemy, South, was not real. She

-54-

longed for the destruction of the government that Washington had established. Her expressed friendship then, as now, is hypocritical and her greatest desire was "first after the spoils". Yet in these United States we now have a majority bowing to John Bull, the dictator and willing to do England's bidding even to the destruction of our Republican form of protection and government. We pitted the judgment of these Southern advocates dressed in gray uniforms. Our reading had been of Union sentiment and were just the reverse of those poor misguided Southern soldiers going out to fight for Southern rights. Poor men, thought we, your rights in the interest of Southern slaves are like my own few and far between. They were generally ignorant, poor white men who deemed it an honor to kiss a slave owners hand or be allowed the privilege of his society even for one hour. 'Twas wonderful the magnetism possessed by ownership of but a single slave. I have known one poor old negro wench so to magnify one master and family that an entire neighborhood became to magnetized that they all went voluntarily into rebellion at the first call to aid those fighting for Southern rights. We admired the bravery and heroism displayed by those poor, misguided, self-dependent beings, yet pitied their judgment.

The close of September 19th finds us upon the south side of Clind Mountain, a range of the Allegheny and near Big Moccasin Gap. We find a location and go into camp for the night near a church house where some branch of Southern Methodist held forth at night. Although tired, myself and Will Trivett attended the meeting which was one of exhortation and prayer participated by one and all. Many words of advice are spoken, many a fervent prayer offered, especially for the Southern soldiers who were enlisting to fight for Southern homes and

-55-

Southern rights. The services continued to a late hour and no doubt some poor Rebel soul heard his father and kind old mother talk and pray that night that never heard them any more.

September 20th: We return to camp "Laydown" and soon know no more until morning when Susan announces that breakfast is ready and we prepare for moving on farther into Dixie. We pass through Abingdon, the county seat of Washington, today a nice town of some four thousand inhabitants. At this town we got our last state bank bill changed and got all silver in exchange. The merchant had great faith in the solvency of the banks of the sunny south, hence his readiness to give silver in exchange. We look for Father and Old Moike, who more than twelve years before had caused such a loud cheer as we were driving north through this city. They were not here, but upon the courthouse top standing perpendicular was a long flag staff and to it was seen flowing the Stars and Bars - emblem, thought we - oh woe and misery - our thoughts were for once. A shudder came over us. What did it mean - "blood, blood?" an in want monster cried - and we passed on towards the southern part of the city looking eagerly to get our first glance at a railroad which we soon saw but the train was not due or had already gone and no freights were nearer than Glades Springs, some miles away. So we had to content ourselves by hearing the faint whistle of the locomotive far away in the distance. This was a sad disappointment to me who had walked over 100 miles and I must say above all other things I had wanted to see the fast running locomotive the most.

Little did Marion think that in less than 30 years he would own the land over

-56-

which more than a dozen of those Iron Horses would make their daily schedules and become as common as the old familiar long sled yet much more brisk than when he had used old Buck and Berry as his principal means of locomotive power.

We had got the money changed, saw the town, beheld the Rebel flag, looked at our railroad, which we may speak of later on and now as we are leaving the beautiful little city, we halt for dinner and an hours rest. We ate, drink some good water, rest, arise and move onward. The country gets better, farms are larger and slaves more numerous, the Rebels more boisterous.

I shall never for an incident of this afternoon's tramp. While passing a rich old slave owner's farm and dwelling house, surrounded by the usual slave cabins, a number of little black, chalk-eyes curly heads climbed upon the top of a tall old-fashioned gate, to the number of eight or ten. The gate was fully ten feet high. When we got opposite the gate with its row of black heads peeping over, Will Trivett and myself made a dash looking angry and uttering some world of apparent anger, for the eager gaze of those directed towards us and at our wagon drawn by oxen - something new to them as they worked mules in that region. The entire negro outfit let all holds go and back they fell, one upon the other, three feet deep, screaming so loud that they aroused their master who asked what was the matter. They cried loud and said, "Here goes some Yankees, Master!" Their master saw us going south and half-heartedly hollered, "Arrest them!"

This was funny to me them but later on I learned that the owners of slaves taught the young black children that Yankees would take them off and treat them most

-57-

cruelly and even these ideas were being instilled into the minds of the older slaves and they too expressed themselves as being afraid of being made captives by Yankees. We, today too, expressed don't wonder why their rotten system fell, but often wonder why it stood so long.

After we scare these negroes off the gate, we traveled on and find ourselves on the waters of the Holston River where we bivouacked for the night.

September 21st: After eating, sleeping and eating again at the beginning of a new day, we yoke our oxen, hitch on and start on further into Dixie's land and the farther we go today, the worse the land becomes. Many titles were no doubt in litigation by and between occupants, consisting of Rebels and Union sympathizers. Rattlesnakes, red foxes and wandering bear roaming in search of acorns and ripe persimmons were about. The slave element seemed more scattered as the country became more rough, but we learned in after years that element died out as sentiment for the Union got stronger and after a while many of those residing among those rugged hills donned the blue and battled for the Union.

We are now nearing the borders of East Tennessee and perhaps inside of Johnson County. This county although rough and possessed of precipitous hills and mountains could boast of many loyal sons and daughters who after our exit bore many hardships and persecutions even some unto death. It was in this Johnson County later on that some of the first blood in defense of the Union and the loyal homes of East Tennessee was shed. A Rebel doctor, whose name we cannot recall shot and killed a Union man near Taylorsville, the county seat of said county. The

-58-

union man's name has been forgotten also. This was in the spring of 1862. The deed committed was a foul murder, yet at the time it served among Rebels to stamp this doctor as brace, courageous and a true southern gentleman. Union men being largely in the minority had to bear these atrocities and murders and look forward to a day of reckoning which came through slow in the line of progress.

Taylorsville was a small valley of some 500 inhabitants, divided in sentiment. Yet as many southern men, all soldiers quartered near here, increased. The Unionists had to remain mute and not tell what their principles were.

## We travel some 30 miles this day, ascend and camp on the south side of Rich Mountain at the bank of Roans Creek. We were now in the state where we first saw daylight and must say, from the elevated summit of Rich Mountain, a spur range of the Blue Ridge, we not very favorably impressed with the land of our nativity. We camped, cooked, ate and drank water, discussed many topics yet uppermost in our minds was one of home which they claimed we would reach by the next p.m., as we were now in Watauga County, North Carolina - once a portion of old Ashe.

We arose early, donned our clothing, washed and ate breakfast, yoked the oxen and horses. We had a pair of each, the horned animals working the lead and soon bid our camp adieu. We rolled on like jolly fellows and about noon crossed the county line. Upon our north set Elk Knob, the most elevated spot on earth that I had ever seen and this day its grey summit seemed to say, "young man, we bid you welcome to the county that gave you birth. I have stood here for centuries, have welcomed your grandfather, father, relations and friends to my summit and ere you return home, you must pay me a visit and stand upon my most elevated

-59-

crest like Moses and view the landscape over", to which I bowed in assent, provided I remain long enough and let me say that in October of the next year or the last days of September 1862, I payed my vow in the company of Isaiah Greer, Phillip Greer and George W. Lowrance.

We could see 100 miles north and behold a thousand hills at one look. I may speak of the peak later on, but let me say for the present that my name or initials are cut there in a small water birch or mountain birch among hundreds of others.

We passed near the base of this mountain and all day long I would constantly gaze at its elevation and grandeur and must say, although a boy in his teens, there was something that seemed to convince me of an almighty power whose work in rearing those stupendous elevations were beyond man's comprehension. They were acts of creation such as nothing but an almighty God could do. They taught lessons of inspiration to youth and old age. They were monuments destined to perpetuate the workings of an all wise and independent God until the last loud trumpet shall sound to summon all to a final roll call upon the shores of the great beyond - the inhabitants of earth, those sleeping and those who will be changed in the twinkling of an eye.

We urged our weary, sore footed team forward and at the close of this day arrived at Uncle Owen Trivett's whose name and family we described in some past page of this scratch. They welcome us and we accept their greeting with cordiality and they say, "rest your wearied feet and feast, you are hungry birdies and when rested up and all the dust washed off, we will see what you look line." These remarks are from Aunt Dicy and she did even examining us closely for land

-60-

marks of our father and mother with whom she had spent so many days and years yet had not seen for over twelve years. After eating and sleeping we proceeded to dust ourselves and get into clean clothes and present ourselves for that inspection and soon had the satisfaction of knowing that we resembled Father and Mother, both. We remained here with Isaiah and Uncle Owen Trivett for some two or three weeks, got well rested and in fact made Isaiah's our headquarters or home so to speak. After our rest we started out to visit our kith and kin and found them numerous, kind and clever, all Rebels and in favor of a Southern Confederacy. This did not suit me but the southern people were not running things my way just then. I hastened to get around to see all my relations in order that I might return to Kentucky inside of six weeks to two months at the farthest. Things passed along well until a month had passed. Many were enlisting and were going to the front, as they called it, to fight for the Southern Rights.

War clouds gathered more darkness as time moved along. Jeff Davis, the arch traitor and president of the Confederacy say that in order to check loyal Tennesseans and other Union men in the south from going north, issued an edict to all persons desiring to go north. So many days would be given, after a lapse of certain dates anyone going would be subject to arrest and liable to be placed in prison or made to enlist and fight for the Southerners of States Rights. This Edict was not published until about the time the dates expired and not one man in a thousand ever knew such an Edict had been made. 'Twas only a ruse and delusion or pretext to force men to do what they had resolved not to do, yet being surrounded by enemies on all sides, they had to accept the situation, remain at home in hopes of a brighter period which failed to come soon and to many loyal Union hearts it never did.

-61-

We took stock of the situation at once here. We were in Dixie's land among friends and relatives, nearly all Rebels. Our home was in Kentucky where they were strong for neutrality. Our promise to our loyal Union father was, "I'll never go into a Rebel army or fight for Southern Rights". I truly believed at that time that Southern Rights would consist of about fifteen feet of hemp chord for each placed around the leading Rebels' necks and then caused them to look up and count the stars. Our hearts, though silent, beat for the Union. My impulse, if I dared to express it, was in favor of the old flag to be once more waving over our nation and undivided and free. Yet not one sentiment dared we utter for fear of being arrested and put in prison. Hence we held our peace as best we could and listened with or ears to catch the sounds of discontent reported as being alive in a state that had cast a 60,000 majority for remaining in the Union, but afterwards was dragged out by a frightened Rebel Secessionist's Legislature.

The first sound was all wrong. The war cry was uppermost. Old men, middle aged and even little boys were all ablaze and many were enlisting for the fray. The women, old and young, stood by their husbands, sons and brothers and urged them on. They imagined that should they fail in their efforts to establish a Confederacy, they would become prey to an almost uncivilized race of beings, not fit for the lowest mulatto in their midst to associate with. Hence their devotion and input grew out of misguided ignorance and false declarations. Those who ought to have know better but in reality were like their devoted women were misled and thought to believe these things. Things that had not a shadow of truth in them.

-62-

The masses became fired. Two Regiments were made up in this country, the First North Carolina Cavalry and the 26th North Carolina Infantry. The latter was early to the fray and last to come away and when they did come with a final surrender at Appomattox there was only a remnant left of the more than 1,200 that first enlisted. This Regiment was baptized in blood and had the honor, if it be an honor, to loose a larger percent in battle than any Southern regiment enlisting during the war, leaving over 500 men killed, wounded and missing in battle at Gettysburg.

Cousins Jacob, Jesse and Wash Houck were members of this gallant Regiment. The former a lieutenant, the latter had his arm shot off at the battle of Petersburg, Virginia. Jesse died near Petersburg, Virginia and Jake lived through. After these two Regiments were recruited others were in demand. The fife and drum was constantly heard. Mass meetings were announced and generally featuring speech makers - more or less, and new recruits kept "falling in" and were off for the fray. New uniformed Rebel soldiers would return and these uniforms set the yeomanly [sic] all on fire. Well do we remember the young lassies of the South and how they would idealize those brave yet misguided men. We often thought that we would like to be in those soldier's places while at home here in uniform and be the one to be played to and caressed by some of Dixie's fair daughters, but then we remembered that no morning lasts a whole day and that there are two sides to everything. So we would rather do with the attentions than to wear the attractions of a Rebel soldier, dressed in Rebel Grey arrayed in opposition to the dear old stars and stripes that had so long waved in triumph over a united country and whenever unfurled brought a new wave of hope and higher aspirations for the

-63-

emblem and country it so proudly represented. Hence we, although cut off and in a country where the stars and strips had been pulled down and the stars and bars raised in their stead, once more resolved that we would never raise our feeble arms against the Government that had afforded one and all equal rights and protection under the laws enacted by and for the people. The period for our return home to Kentucky was now up. The rightness anticipated on our leaving home and the peace looked for had not come. The clouds of war had become more dark. The reins of the Rebel government were drawn more tightly. The Rebel chief, high in his usurped authority had issued a proclamation or edict granting those of adverse opinions or cherishing Union opinions a few days to cross the lines and leave Dixie, at the same time notifying his subjects in arms to arrest all such as those going north to be traitors and cause them to enlist and fight for the would be Confederacy.

The writer never heard of this proclamation until after the expiration of days had passed to leave. Had he attempted to leave he would have been arrested and forced to enter the Rebel army or would have been sent to a Rebel prison to linger and to die of starvation. So as he was in the land of his birth, among friends and kindred relations and only seventeen years old, he resolved to remain longer and wait for daybreak.

The mails had been stopped. No news from home could be obtained. Neither could we send any to our home in Kentucky. We longed for word from home but none could we obtain. We were now made to realize that we were entirely cut off and all lines of direct communication severed.

That disease called homesickness was not beginning to get a hold of one who had

-64-

never known what it was before and whether we can fully describe the disease to those who have not endured its pangs we know not, but will make an attempt right now.

We viewed ourselves in the light of a child after the first six weeks of absence from our parental roof where we had thought ourselves full grown and independent at all times. We were among friends but not our parents. We could see our uncles, aunts, but not our father, mother and brothers and sisters. The tables of our kith and kin were loaded down, attractive and free. Yet 'twas not our Old Fall Loaf groaning under its loads of spare ribs, sweet potatoes, corn bread and Rio coffee as mother used to place there three times a day. No, I would listen but no welcome "Nevo Wee" from a mother's lips could I hear calling me to come to dinner. I'd climb up to the summit of different hills, picking up chestnuts all the way, only to be forcibly reminded that I was away from home. No Father or Mother or Brothers or Sisters to share them. They were good, but not relished because I could not share those chestnuts with those whose faces had always given back a smile on sharing a portion of our gatherings of nuts, grapes, etc. Homesick now, all over homesick in the land of the Confederacy. What must I do!

I was a boy away from home. Oh how I would have enjoyed a letter telling me all were well, but it never came. Willingly would our parents sent one but no mails were allowed to come through. Rebellion meant separation in more than one sense. We could climb to the loftiest mountains where we could look over one hundred miles over almost innumerable hills and even the rays of the golden sun shining upon their crests in the direction of home could only bring a sigh and a wish for dear old home. Yet far away beyond our northern vision for reaching it

-65-

our lingering gazes in the direction of home would turn and we would return to our place os stopping, to lay down and dream and think of home.

Father and Mother and the children were continually before me. The old Shanghai Rooster's voice would have offered a plaintive strain, the bark of "Catch" would have been more music for me that all the piano in Dixieland. Oh we wished, we longed and prayed for home, but home was beyond the Cumberland Mountains in the would be neutral state of Kentucky. This neutrality could not be maintained and by the aid of Federal bayonets, Kentucky was kept in the Union and was saved the everlasting disgrace and shame of secession. Our homesickness continued to get no better. We say that it was a chronic case and will state here the best way is to never contract it. Leaving home by young and old especially the former, always places one in a worse condition than remaining at home and leaves those away from to hunger and thirst after those they leave. We saw we were entirely cut off now, no chance to get back. So we had better go to work and make the best of it. Consequently, we hired ourselves out by the day and got 50 cents per day for gathering corn and took it in homemade Janes [sic] to make us a new winter suit. The James was blue and black mixed; coat long tailed and a pretty good fit, made by Aunt Dicy Trivett for which I paid her $1.00 - also pants and vests accordingly.

Next I worked myself out a pair of homemade boots. These boots cost $6.00 and to pay for them I cleared the land for W.H. Trivett and then got one, James Cooper, to make them for me. He forgot to put the stiffening in the shank and they were always annoying me and at bed time they were hard to pull off. These boots were long-legged Kip, looked well enough, but were not so easily managed as by

-66-

Doghide and Groundhog skin moccasins were at home years before while I was driving old Brick and Berry, my favorite ox team, whose names I give to held in lasting remembrance.

After paying for these boots and some other clothing, I in the early Spring hired to one Nathan Waugh at Old Fields to work on his farm a dry month (60 days). That is, it required 60 days to get in a full dry month. For this month's labor I was paid $13.00. Thirteen whole big, long Confederate dollars, god in Dixie for its face value. Yet its face value was not very high even among the lovers of States Rights Law Rebellion. Yet it was money then I owned $13.00 of the wherewith, worth less than $5.00 in genuine money.

Right here I want to say for the benefit of my children, "Beware of paper presenting a money face and appearance with nothing of value to back that face! Paper representing money in dollars without an equivalent in gold or silver or its full value become only circulating medium for a time and is only a means to cheat and fraud, robbing the laborer of his earnings under the guise of "law". Money must in all countries have a base value equivalent to the amount represented and circulated or it becomes only as dead matter and filthy rags. Children, go in for the paper dollar backed by gold or silver and no other and in the end you'll be all right."

Directly after working this long dry month, the Confederacy began to feel Father Abraham was coming and that more men were needed. The first enrollment of conscripts, men from 18 to 35 years, were summoned to assemble at their representative county seats and enroll themselves in the regular order, so as to be ready for the calls as circumstances demanded. The militia all obeyed that

-67-

summons, went and enrolled in order to avoid separation and soon got orders to raise regiments of eleven that they might go in together as volunteers. Rather than be counted conscripts, although this was truly the great driving motive that sent a large number classed as volunteers, they rushed into the Rebel army to battle against the flag.

The 58th North Carolina Regiment known as Col. Palmers Partisan Rangers were made up of these class of men, enrolled conscripts. Col. J.B. Palmer got permission to raise this regiment with a promise they range through East Tennessee, Western North Carolina and Virginia affording protection to Rebel homes. This Regiment was raised during the summer of 1862 and was at once ordered to Old Cumberland Gap where it aided in doing raiding and scouting duty for some time. Afterwards it was moved some 45 miles west to Big?? Creek, Tennessee. Here they did duty during the late fall months of 1862 and from this point the Union men who had enlisted to save themselves from conscription, deserted; some to return home, while others crossed the Cumberland Mountains and made their way into Kentucky and into the Union Army.

The writer came with 1st Lt. Thomas Ray of the 58th and others recruited by him from North Carolina as a soldiers. Leaving North Carolina on the 6th day of November 1862 and arriving at Big Circle Gap on or about the 11 or 12th of November 1862 where he remained until December 19th 1862. While here at the Gap, he played Rebel soldier as demanded, yet never drew any gun, stood in the line of battle one night with a borrowed musket, but no Yankees came and we shed no blood. The fright was caused by an old powder house taking fire, blowing

-68-

up and making a sound as through it was heavy artillery fired at long range. We lost no men, but quite a lot of men lost their avoirdupois through fright. The line of battle remained in position all night long. Not a gun was fired yet several flashes minus reports occurred and at sunrise next morning when ordered to break ranks and march to quarters I never saw such brave good humored boys. This was my first battle in Dixie's behalf.

I was getting homesick to see Kentucky and I told some of Company M I was going home soon. They asked if I would like company they would go with me. I told them yes, I'd be pleased to have them. Soon arrangements were made and off we went.

The night we started was cool and chilly, the 19th of December 1862. Yet by hard walking we kept warm. We left the camp about 9 p.m. surrounded and passed all of the guards and outside pickets. We crossed the Cumberland mountains when no roads existed on the east side of Big Circle Gap. After a while going down the north side, we would swing over and off cliffs and ledges of rocks high as two story houses and truly not know where our bodies would light.

The men were all determined and brave. Yes, deserting an army that they never at heart belonged to, having to fight against their country's flag, the stars and stripes, gave them courage. The names of those men accompanying me were as follows: Daniel Grayham, Jefferson Greer and Thomas Greer, two brothers; and Isaiah Greer, a cousin. Also Phillip Greer, a nephew of Isaiah; George W. Lourance, a brother-in-law to Isaiah Greer; Robert Jones and F.M. Wilcox. The writer of this sketch was then going on eighteen years of age.

-69-

We succeeded in crossing the Cumberland mountains by daybreak next morning and crossed the state road running parallel with the mountain on the north side by sunrise and must have walked 18 to 20 miles surrounding pickets thru crossing this precipitous portion of southern mountains. Yet, as we ascended the hill on the north of the road, imagine our chagrin to hear the old bass drum beating roll call at the gap not over four miles off. The point was gained, the road crossed and the woods were ours. Kentucky was yet sixteen miles away and we dare not travel any roads. We ascended the northern hill as the old bass drum pounded our "Little Sallie Gooden" keeping step to its music until it ceased. Well knowing that Co. M. would be short men not present and accounted for, yet fully assured that Old Bill Smith would be sent out to hunt us up in less than an hour, we knew that it was his business to hunt us and our business was to not be found and get inside the Union lines as early as possible.

We soon found a loyal Union Tennessean and agreed to give him $16.00 to pilot us through the woods. He at once started us over rugged hills and through the woods traveling us as fast as pedestrian speed would allow until night came on. We stopped for the night at a little shanty wherein dwelt a loyal Tennessean with three miles of home. We had traveled about 28 miles to reach this place, less than 18 miles in a straight line. The next morning we arose with the sun and by 8 a.m. was on the summit of Pine mountain. The line into Kentucky had been crossed. Here we felt like a sinner that has gained Heaven.

A loyal family resided on the top of this mountain on the Kentucky side. We got breakfast, bid our guide farewell and came down on through Whitley County,

-70-

Kentucky. At the home above mentioned I saw my first blue uniform I had ever seen being worn by a loyal man, a Kentucky man. The sight of the blue uniform inspired us all with new hope. Although in a country infested by Rebels almost daily, we felt that we were not so far away that the influence and inspiration afforded by the old flag. No, the residents of the house first across the line were loyal. They spoke of the glorious Union, called the southern soldiers by their true names-Rebels-while the name Yankees, as the Rebels called the Federal soldiers, became Union soldier. How different, yet how glad we were to hear such loyal sentiment. It said to us in reality the Union does exist and the day will come that those arrayed in opposition to the Old Flag must ground their arms and return to the allegiance in the old Union as it was. And so they did.

We left this house after breakfast and traveled north all day long, crossed many high hills and mountains and late in the evening found ourselves close to the county line of Laurel County, Kentucky, in the neighborhood of Joe Fields said to be infested with highway robbers and thieves. Many persons advised us that we turn aside and not pass through this infamous Joe Fields territory or we would be robbed and perhaps killed. We counted the cost and found that our money, which was Confederate, was less than $20.00. Nor worth a whole dollar in gold. This would not enrich the robbers or greatly damage us if taken. Hence we agreed to go forward directly through Joe Field's territory. This place consisted of a lonely woods on each side of the state road extending some five miles without the sight of a house. It was called "Joe Fields", yet we never saw a field.

About half way through this place in the shady woods, we heard a yell and whoop

-71-

in the forest that sounded as though Old Nick had been turned loose. Some of our crowd wanted to run, but Jeff Greer and myself said, "no!" We took the lead and saw eight men armed with guns and pistols on horses from across the road acting as though they would be ready to take us in. They remained in position until we had walked up within five paces of them. Their Captain called out, "Right and left wheel!" At this command they obey and left the road open fanning out to four on each side. "We are glad to see you are getting through. You will soon be on the Union lines. The soldiers are now at London, the county seat of Laurel County, Kentucky where you can enlist.

We expressed our desire to soon get there, told our story as to how we had made our thither and they bid us God speed and directed us on our way. These men had mixed suits, come citizen, some Union blue and some Rebel grey and no doubt these comprised the robbers of Home Guard of the Joe Fields. Though they asked us for neither clothes nor money, they would not have found either, for the day before upon a high mountain in Whitley County, Kentucky we had placed our entire clothes under large stones knowing that these clothes might cause our arrest or cause us to be shot at from the brush. I shall never forget how Isaiah Greer's tears shed over what was then his last letter from home from his wife and three little ones, which he had received at Big Creek Gap, Tennessee. He read it over and over, the tears gushing down his cheeks after which he raised a large flat stone and placed that the other letters upon the ground as though burying his dearest friend. After the letters were laid down, the writer placed some neckties and a letter or two with them. The stone was replaced to cover up his dear wife's last message to one leaving home and his native state to seek protection under the

-72-

Old Flag, while at the same time it covered up messages from a devoted and loyal friend to a boy whose determinations were to risk his life to get back to Kentuck where he could give expression to his Union sentiments that had become full grown and had been for a long time. Our other clothes were placed under larger stones and if not disturbed moldered into dust upon the top of the rocky range. Let us hope that their genes, if any, produced Union sentiment rather than Rebel grey backs.

After leaving Joe Fields we traveled on in a northern direction for some time, coming to within eight miles of London in Laurel County, Kentucky. There we turned our course and traveled east in the direction of the Kentucky River and after traveling several miles, we stopped for the night at a house on a stream west of the Kentucky River. Here we slept the night and felt pretty safe for the first time since leaving the Gap or Rebel camps.

Next morning we arose, washed ate breakfast and started our traveling through Laurel and Knox Counties passing over some of the roughest mountains to be found. I need not say roads for we seldom traveled them. Roving guerilla Rebel bands kept us alert and the rougher the roads, the safer we felt. After traveling another full day, we found ourselves on the waters of the Red Bird, a tributary of the Kentucky River some twelve miles south of Manchester in Clay County, Kentucky. We stopped for the night at a widow woman's house, a Mrs. Gipson. Our Confederate money was gone. At $1.00 a meal it was soon exhausted and now were over 100 miles from home, perhaps more, with no friends or money. Oh, how we wished that the war was over and that we had never left home during the war to visit friends in an enemy's land. We had nothing to fall back on but the ground. It was getting cold, Christmas was coming and us without money and away from home.

-73-

We thought and thought and then thought...we did not have time to think. Something must be done. We needed money and must have it. Buy it with our labor!. Yes, that was our only medium. We asked Mrs. Gipson if she could give us some work and she said yes. She would give us 33 1/3 cents per hundred to cut and split her some white oak rails. Isaiah and me agreed and at it we went and cut and split 4,000 of the toughest rails I have ever seen. For this labor we were paid in greenbacks, the first such money we had ever seen. We appreciated them as Lincoln's money. I called it Lincoln's Rhines. It was good, had a purchasing power that was not found attached to the Jeff Davis rags which we had been accustomed to carrying but had gotten rid of through our tramp through East Tennessee.

We were cutting these rails about Christmas day 1862 and on Christmas evening, Col. Carter, acting Brigadier General with his staff, rode up into the widow Gipson's hard and stopped for the night. Placing our pickets and inside guards his entire command of 4,000 Union soldiers camped nearby. He was on his way to East Tennessee to destroy the railroad while the eastern army were making some movements. These were our first Union soldiers that we had ever seen, dressed in Federal uniforms throughout, armed and equipped carrying the Old Flag. How different from the Rebel rags and the gray janes. Ah, our blood seemed to raise the loyal sentiment so long cherished could now find for once, full, free expression. We went to bed early and where before we had lain in nights of dread listening for the Rebel raiders infesting that section, we now felt safe. A Union general in the same house with his army as guards. We fell asleep and such sleep we do not remember experiencing in all our natural lives before or since.

-74-

The next morning we awoke to witness the entire command pass on. Three regiments of cavalry and one of infantry made a grand show. Guns, pistols and sabers clanking, the latter rattling at the sides of each cavalry man, and a would be citizen seated upon the fence, asked a soldier what that was hanging at his side, referring to the saber. The soldier quickly replied, "a jackass batten" with an oath, the citizen said, "Is that right!" After they went on and we, after splitting over 4,000 rails, got our pay and started for home in Pike County, Kentucky.

Our first day's travel was up a large stream called Cut Shin, a tributary of the Redbird. I think we crossed it some 300 times in less than 16 hours and pulled up onto the Lewis neighborhood, stopping overnight at Moses Creek. The people were loyal here, yet in great dread of roving guerilla bands that often scooped down on them taking their property and often murdering them for no other reason than being loyal Union citizens aiding poor Union men to get back to the Union lines. These guerrillas were independent bands claiming to be regular Rebel soldiers, yet were only thieves claiming the side their hearts were one. They were not loyal to any legal authority and never better satisfied than when robbing some Union man of his horse, clothes and money. They were naturally cowards, devoid of principal, fit only for acting this part of bushwacker, murderer and assassin. These same robbers who this day and time proclaim against the Union soldier drawing pensions for honorable services because they, the blood-thirsty villains, cannot get upon the rolls.

-75-

After leaving Cut Shin on Moses Creek, we traveled east, crossed the middle fork of the Kentucky river and made our way to Perry County. We crossed rough, high, steep hills daily, our meals irregular and sleep more so. The wind and water rendered our travel slow and tiresome until it seemed that our legs when willed to push on and go forward could not move any more under ordinary effort.

The sentiment of the country was divided about equal between secession and loyalist. We had to play it real fine and consider ourselves as the Romans and do as the Romans do while in Rome. The secessionist would advise us on how to sneak past the Unionists and the Unionists how to get through the Rebel neighborhood.

We finally reached Trouble, a tributary of the Kentucky River, a stream being true to its name and an appellation most admirably noted to the region through which it serpentined its waters along. The stream was "trouble", indeed, a rugged one minus bridges, 40 to 50 miles long and to be crossed it seemed to me more than half a thousand times and generally to be forded on the bottom - that means waded. The last mile traveled on this stream became trouble indeed. Rebel soldiers were reported in the neighborhood. We had crossed Trouble just below an old mill down below us in the Collins neighborhood. Upon the south bank stood the Mill House, a little further up the bank stood the old Rudely construction, a low, log still house where corn, apples and peaches were boiled and from this made into juice, doubled and made into brandy and whiskey. We felt troubled as we knew Rebels liked these articles well.

-76-

An old darkey was in front of the still house some 20 yards away chopping wood. We walked up and spoke to him and asked if any Rebel Soldiers were ever seen there or if they came there at all.

“Yes sir, you better believe they does. Two of Col Ben Adel’s men are in the still house now and lots more of them just above dis here place. You better believe dar is chickens and blackbirds near here, Suh.”

We knew were in for a meeting soon with the Rebel soldiers. Four of us moved slowly on – the other men having stopped in Clay County, Kentucky near Manchester the county seat.

We all agreed to tell the same story of our loyalty and to yell, “We are soldiers belonging to the Southern amy and have been captured by General Carter on his late raid into East Tennessee and finally made our escape”. We met sixteen armed Rebels, told our story with such bold effrontery that they never doubted, but drew up closer and made us taste their apple Jack from their Rebel canteens. They aided us in crossing another high mountain between the head of Beaver Creek in Floyd County as well as Troublesome Creek.

We bid Trouble some goodbyes for a time. Yet in less than two years the writer would again travel down that stream from head to mouth – but how different. When first traveling it in fear, on foot, passing Rebel soldiers daily and then in the advance of 1, 500 Union Cavalry acting as one of the advance well armed soldiers in blue uniform, putting everything to flight and capturing 19 Rebel soldiers from Rebel John H. Morgan’s men along this troublesome stream.

-77-

We reach Beaver and stay all night in Floyd County at one Mr. Isaac's. Next morning we move on and cross high hills and mountains and late in the evening reach Uncle Isaac Greer's, the father of our Isaiah.

Aunt Nancy, his mother, was out milking when we called. Sid did not know me. Her son Zade (Isaiah) says, "you know me, don't you Mama?" She dropped her cup exclaiming, "Glory be to God, my son Isaiah has come home!" She embraced him as though he had arose from the dead. Who can express the joy at that meeting after several years separation! We were all known soon and at home for a time.

Isaiah Greer, George Lawrance and Phillip Greer came to that point with me only to learn that Father had moved to Little Sandy in Carter County, Kentucky, over 125 miles north. I visited friends and relatives here for three weeks, then in the company of George Elswick and George W. Sowards I started down the Big Sandy Valley for Carter County, Kentucky. After some six days tramp through mud and water I arrived home on Deer Creek, Kentucky on February 13, 1863 - one year, five months and twenty-seven days from the time I bid my family goodbye September 16, 1861.

My mother did not know me on my return for a time but finally said, "Tis not Marion? Oh, yes, tis my Marion come home to me now!" She knew that her oldest boy had come home to her now. He had been counted dead yet her hope had lingered day and night that he might be heard as being alive. He was finally home and soon Father came and stepped in and says, "Well, Marion, they say you've come home!" I can see his tall form, his smiling face as it was but yesterday. The other boys, Sowards and Elswick were at home also with me while at our house. The war was raging yet seemed to be off for a season, then brought nearer.

-78-

I enlisted in the Union Army Volunteers in Company D, commanded by John McGuire first and then by a Captain Elius P. Davis of Carter County, Kentucky. I was a private as was my father who enlisted the same day. I don't feel that I need to attempt to record my wandering scout raids while in the service of the United States. 'Twas not pleasant. Much hard and fatiguing duty to do; an enemy to rout often and many undesirable things to be demanded by officers and performed by the private soldiers. The honor of an army is generally accorded to its officers yet in reality it belongs to the men who did the duty.

Thousands of times the private soldier suggests a course to be pursued and it is done. The officers command and get the glory, yet they do not merit it anymore than does the poor private lying the ditch. Our regiment was engaged at Mr. Sterling, Kentucky in two battles or skirmishes with Peter Everch commanding Rebel forces in the fall of 1863 and with Rebel John H. Morgan in July 164. Morgan's forces were repulsed with a loss of over 100 killed and some 200 wounded and missing. Next day he was attacked again at Cynthiana, Kentucky where our regiment again was engaged, killing and capturing over 300 men and defeating Morgan to the degree that he never rallied in sufficient force to come to Kentucky afterwards. During this raid I was 16 days and nights in the saddle, stopping only long enough to let the horses graze. We slept on our horses for miles at a time and when the raid was ended, we were almost ended. No man can describe how we suffered with the heat, fatigue and for water and rations, going often three days without enough to eat one meal.

-79-

I remember Noah Blankenbeckler of Company E. He bought two loaves of corn bread about as big as a man's hand. He gave 75 cents for the two. He gave me one and it tasted so well that I've always liked it ever since. It was good! An old hen boiled, minus sale, was good!

I don't want to attempt to go over this part of my life. Scouting and raids made in the cold, hear or show. Too much for physical man to endure. In the hospital for more than five months - took out by one Sarah E. Norvel of Paris, Kentucky - saved my life. I was placed in Camp Nelson Hospital, Camp Nelson, Kentucky in Ward 5 on July 19, 1864. I remained there until October 19, 1864. I got a furlough home on November 23rd and mustered out by an empowered ally on December 31, 1864 at Charletsburg, Kentucky. Left at Grayson sick and I never got home until April of 1865. The was nearly over and peace had begun to be talked about all over the land. In a very short time the dark clouds of was that for more than four years had darkened our political scene began to move off. The skies grew brighter once more.

Then Rebel Lee surrendered to Gen. U.S. Grand on April 9, 1865. Joe Johnson to General Sherman a few days later at Raleigh, NC. Jeff Davis, the leader is captured in petticoats and imprisoned at Fort Monroe. Other commanders of less note on the Confederate side surrendered in fast succession. The war ends. The boys return home, both north and south. Slavery is no longer a curse or institution in this land. The Union is preserved and all rejoice who followed the Old Flag.

But in the midst of our rejoicing at the harbinger of peace again, the country is destined to gloom and the saddest hour was yet to be mourned. Abraham Lincoln,

-80-

the modern Moses and inspired President who had wished, prayed and longed for peace upon terms made in accordance to the Constitution he had sworn to defend, is assassinated on April 14, 1865 by John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.

A cowardly villain courting notoriety and from subjugated traitors had not the usual courage to aid or defend while they were in need. They did not sympathize with such a wretch. Neither can any other. This cowardly act was one that lost to the Union soldiers their truest and best friend and to the common country, both north and south, its blessed leader. It robber the loyal men of this nation their glory in a welcome and dearly bought peace.

The was over and history records its doings so I bid it goodbye. After coming home in 1865, I worked a little on the farm, taught school in the fall on the Brushey Fork of the Little Sandy River. I then attended school and taught on Little Turk at Penington Place, then at Little Fork at Joe Clark District. Then I went to Willard Fairview in 1868, then to Olive Hill and hire to J.A. Watson, a clerk, until 1870. At that time I was nominated as Assessor and elected for four years. I taught in the fall at Olive Hill, Kentucky during 1871 and 1872.

In the fall of 1872 on September 16 I got married to Hattie Abbott, the daughter of William Abbott who was, on his father's side of English decent, American born, coming from Virginia. His mother was of Scotch-Irish decent and named Murphy. On the mother's side, she was of Irish decent, crossed with German, best I can tell. Hattie's mother being Mary Ann Coleman, the daughter of Charles Coleman, his wife being of Irish decent and named Fuller - All American born, all

-81-

residing in Ohio mostly in Athens and Morgan Counties where are to found their descendants in numerous proportions today. After getting married in 1872, we settled in Carter, Kentucky at upper Tygart and remained there until March 15, 1889 when we came to Iowa. In 1869 I joined the Masonic Fraternity, Trimble Lodge 145, Grayson, Kentucky; in 1885 admitted and joined Olive Hill Lodge 625 at Olive Hill, Kentucky. Admitted in 1887 and joined Leighton Lodge, Beacon Iowa 3951. Joined the M.E. Church at home under Rev. H. Baker's preaching in fall of 1890. Was baptized by pouring kneeling by the side of Little Fork of the Little Sandy River in the fall of 1871, I think by Rev. Baker. The Lord blessed me after I turned to him in various years, yet by neglect of duties to be performed, I lost his spirit that attended me most powerfully after my coming to Him, though in many ways He manifested His love towards me. Yet I want to say that nothing should ever deter a man from following God and I hope my children profit by these remarks.

When a boy, hear the top of a high mountain in Pike County, I was moved to pray and did so and was blessed. Yet I looked for more to happen and did not realize my blessings as it came. Oh, that I had understood how to realize a blessing that time in my youth and build my foundation on it. 'Twas God calling me. I cannot say that after leaving Dixie land I ever enjoyed myself religiously as I should have. It was not until after the war that I found God's refreshing power. I regard cowardice as the meanest of all things. Cowardice listens to the agents of satan and leads one to commit willful and uncalled for sins. Let not the fear of man, devil or agent of Hell ever keep you, my children, from doing what your conscience dictates to be true and right. The greater portions of lost blessings can be attributed to cowardice. Stan uses this weapon in various ways. Next to

-82-

cowardice comes false pride, prompted by Satan to entrap the mind the delude the soul. Watch and pray and let humility ever grace your lives and this will elevate you and give you peace that the world cannot give.

Never curse or swear or use bad words. They neither make one better or wiser or braver, but degrade all and debase those in the sight of God and all that is good. I detest a profane swearer and have no place for them. We should try and make the world better and not worse for having lived in it.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it Holy. Never break the Sabbath. God instituted this day for His own praise and glory. He gives us six days and certainly we should be too good to want to steal the seventh.

-83-

Copyright © 1998 Mary Floy Katzman