Remeniscences of War, and Eposode of
Wilson's Raid near Selma, Ala., April 1865.

Impressed upon memory's tablet are the bright beautiful days of sunny April (1865) eighteen sixty five with its bursting buds and blossoms. How beautiful and sweet scented were the golden glories of the jasamine! The dogwoods arrayed in robes of white, seemed to proclaim that Spring had come with its wealth of bloom and fragrance to again cheer and make light the heart of man.

But how rude the shock, that called us from the boundless enjoyment of all the beauties of Spring in Alabama! The dark clouds of out civil war were drawing nearer and still nearer, until we were enveloped within its folds, during those idealdays of Spring, and on April the second Sunday afternnon, the battle of Selma was fought.

Never can we erase from memory, the sounds we heard of shot and shell as it bleched forth from gun and cannon carrying death to our friends and neighbors--yea--and to brothers three for aught we knew.

And unforgotton never, will be the prayers of Mother as she pleaded to the God of Battles, as none but a Mother, can for her sons.

Those terrible sounds, the popping of guns and roar of cannon seemed to come from a woodland near out home, so clearly did we hear them. Finally they ceased and we felt, that out country was in the hands of the enemy.

The agony, that weighed upon our souls during those succedding days and nights was too terrible to have been endured! The reputation of Wilson's Raid had preceded them. Prison and penetentiary doors had been opened to swell the columns of the invading host.

A Confederate scouting party of fifteen or twenty men were sent to the Summerfield road to ascertain whatever of the enemy they could learn.

Not long afterwards we were startled with a cry from the servants. The Yankees are coming!! The Yankees are coming!!! Needless to say, that we were all filled with dismay and horror. The servants seemed to fear them on their own account as well as for us.

Up the road where the dogwoods were blooming, over the road we had so often gone to school, to church, to town, came dashing back the scouting party.

In hot persuit were double the number of Yankees, shooting at our poorsholdiers, as it seemed to us, with an hundred guns. "Oh, there goes a horse without a rider!" cried Mother, oh, poor man, has he been killed ? On they went for a mile, and then the persuit ended, and the Yankee soldiers returned in quest of whatever their inclinations led. And that was for everything they could use or destroy. They came galloping up to our very doors, ran up the stepsand through the house, up stairs and down. The rush of heavy treading feet booted and spurred, the clanking of swords created such a din and uproaroof sounds that the very house seemed coming down upon our heads.

My father, upon whose head the snows of many winters had fallen, had returned home about noon, hoping he might be some protection to

us, having left us on Sunday to take away clothing and other things that were hastily gotton together to a place of safty. The atrocious deed of the enemy had been so talked of that mother and I and the servants begged father to go away. We had but little time for this, words and tones were full of terror, our good old cook, took hold of him and almost pushed him out of the yard, begging, "Master, for Gods sake to go," that them, "old Yankes would kill him." Against his inclination, he made his way to a woodland not far off.

That our fears were well grounded subsequent events of that day and week fully confirmed. The Yankee soldiers seeing a horse in the lot with the sweat marks upon him and saddle and blanket upon the fence, disined that the man who had ridden him was on the place. Intent upon his capture or death, or both; two of them remained to search for him. Evidently, a fear that General Forrest might swoop upon them, caused the most of them to return to Selma in the afternoon. So diligent was their search that night, that they were brought within one fence corner of where father was lying concealed. The proximinty of such a foe!! Sleep to their bodiesmay have meant rest. To may father, it meant escape from their clutches!

And so he eluded them and made his way back to Perry county. A refugee from New Orleans, a venerable old gentleman, by these vandals, was hung to a bed-post and the house burned down, without even his body being rescued from the flames.

Pitiable indeed was the condition of the women and children in the country around Selma during that perilous week. Without one hand to protect from the "tender mercies" of men "condemened as criminals" in their ouwn land.

Mother's room quickly filled with ruffians, who seemed searching for "hidden treasures," every bureau drawer and wardrobe shelf was soon run through or emptied on the floor. Disappointed in not finding the treasure or from the malicious wickedness of thier hearts, the Captain seized the shovel from the fireplace, holding it over me, took his seat in front of me, and said that I must tell him how many Confederates we fed the evening before. I replied that I did not know he insisted again and again that I must take pencil and paper and give him the numbers. I said that was impossible, that I did not know. That Mother opened the smoke-house door and told our soldiers to help themselves the the Yankees would be here to-morrow and she wanted them to take all they could carry away. His curiosity on that line seemed satisfied, he dropped the shovel, and began asking for money--for gold---running around here and there as if to find something. Calling to Mother from the back piazza to come there. Fearing for her own saftey and that of her daughter, she declined to go, saying she was sick, and would not leave her room. Her health was delicate in the extreme. Again, he called out to her to come there again she declined to go. A Captain gives you positive orders to come there said he. "I cannot help it, I am sick, I will not leave my room, If the Captain wishes to see me, he must come to me." Again he orders. "Bring me some matches, I will have your ginhouse burned."

She reached for the matches on the mantle-piece, a box of Confederate matches, who does not remember how we scratched and scraped

before we could get alight, and hurled them across the room next to hers, on the piazza, where he stood, and out on the ground they landed. He quickly deligated one of his soldiers to go to the ginhouse and burn it up. The soldier obeyed orders and scraped, every match in that box--but not one ignited. They were found by one of the servants not burned, and thus the ginhouse was saved--a remarkable exception to their rule; for every day we saw the smoke ascend and the heavens glow from the burning of some neighbors ginhouse, corn-cribs or dwelling.

With violent exclamations and threats of burning, he picked up a chunck of burning wood from the fire-place, told one of his men to get him some light-trash, he would soon have this house burning.

He looked ina frenzy, running around fire in hand; something xkchanged his mind, he threw it back to the hearth.

After repeated question about our gold, of which they appeared to to think we possessed thousands, he seemed bent and determined to force a confession from mother as towhere our gold was hidden. She told him she could show it to him. "You see all these servants standing around us and out there in the yard. There is our gold." "What, them old black stumps!" "Yes, more acres and more negroes." was the Southerners motto. , Not satisfied with the explanation, he threatened her life time and again. At length he said, "You have only fifteen minutes to live, if you don't give me your gold, I will kill you." Meanwhile he and others were rushing through and around the house as if looking for somebody or something. Returning to mother's room to again demand the gold, of which we had but very little. "You must get me the gold, I tell you, or you will have but ten minutes to live." "I cannot give you any." "Get me that money or you will have but seven minutes to live." "I have told you what we did with our money, we did not accumulate gold." "But five minutes have you to live, if you don't get me your gold." "I have none for you, and you cannot take my life, unless, my Father in Heaven permits it, and taking my life will give you no money." Growing still harder and more violent, he told her, sha had only two minutes to live, if she did not give up her money, he would blow her d---- old head off.

I was sitting by her side, and had thought he was trying to scare her into giving up her money. But at this point, the awful thought came to me fo his carrying the threat intoexecution. Hoping to get rid of him, I said, Mother if you have any money in the world, do give it to him. I knew she had in her pocket two silver half dollars and a roll of Confederate bills, and that sewed up on her clothing was some gold ~~xxxx~~ and that there was some buried--not vey much, but more than we cared to give him. She dre out the contents of her pocket and held it in her hand. He grabbed the silver pieces, but took no notice whatever of out poor Confederate "promises to pay." He did nt get the amount he thought he ought to have. So with terror we heard him say with sardonic sarcasm. "By the way, madam. you have a handsome daughter. I may want a wife some day"---------"O, God protect my child"---came with earnest fervor from mothers lips. With this appeal from earth to Heaven so quickly anwsered, turning

away this man's thought from gold and murder ? "Madam, said he, are you a praying woman ?"

"Why do you ask ?" "I want to know if you are a praying, woman, are you a christian?" "Why do you, of all men, ask such a question ?"

"I want to know if you are a christian ?" "Long ago, she replied, I gave my heart to God, I have tried to live a christian life I am a praying woman. If you kill me, as you say you will, you will only destroy a feeble body, my soul is safe it is in my Fathers keeping, that, you cannot harm. Do what you may to my poor body, my sould is beyond your power. But you cannot kill me unless He permits it. He will hold me in the hollow of His Hand."

To our utter astonishment, he said, "Will you pray for me ?" "What do you mean ? Why do you ask such a thing of me?"

"Because I want you to pray for me," and again repeated the request. "Do you mean what you say ? are you sincere ? Surely you don't want my prayers." "Yes, I want you to pray for me," again he said. "If you mena what you say, if you are sincere, if you really want me to pray for you, I will do so."

"I do want you to pray for me," he said. With gun in hand, he got down before us, and my mother prayed for that man. For the salvation of souls she had all her life prayed. But what a peculiar and trying hour was this in which to go to the Great God to ask for his peace and pardon for the soul of this man, who had been the personificaton of evil to us.

Calmly, quietly but earnestly, she asked God to whom all sin is hateful, to show this man the wickedness of his heart, that he might repent. That if he had pious parents, many prayers had gone to the throne of grace from their hearts in his behalf. If it pleased God to answer their paryers and give him a change of heart---Now. And with her amen he arose. Professed during her prayer. Said that he pious parents, his mother was a praying woman, and his father was a Baptist preacher, that they had prayed for him many a time. That he felt ashamed of his conduct, begged our pardon, hoped no other man would treat us so ill---would shake hands in good-bye and left us. We are informed to watch as well as pray. I felt I must watch and saw two big tears fall upon the floor while mother was praying, And that two soldiers sat upon their horses, where they could hear, the one close to the window where we sat, the other near a front window just outside the piazza. In recounting out experience during that perilous week, the remark was often made. "If that man had been converted his first act would have been to have returned those pieces of silver." The judgment day alone can reveal the fact , mother said, but one thing I do know. That he came into our home like a roaring lion, that he went out like a lamb. That God had delivered us from evils with which we had been sorely threatened.

Every day during that week the Yankees went out depredating for miles around Selma. Gatherint up matches, jewelry and silver ware as well as to get all the money possible. In this matter, they were

no respecter of persons---taking from one of the colored men, "for whom they were so sorry " a silver watch, his own personal property, and ten dollars in gold from another and jewelry from others. Many ladies concealed valuables on their persons but would invariably give them up rather than submit to a search, which was often attempted No souvener was too sacred to restrain their vandalism. Two neighbors had such a dreadful experince that first-day Monday, that the mothers left thier homes, with their little childern and came to us, feeling there was some comfort in numbers, never expecting to reenter them again, the Yankees having threatened to return that night to burn them out and what mortal kin could tell, what it was they would not do. They inaugurated a regular warfare upon the feathered tribe, as well as everything else. Commanding the servants to catch th chickens and turkeys or shooting them down as impulse dictated. With chickens flying, turkey running, dogs barking and Yankees shooting a regular panic was enacted in the back yard. Our servants, in justice be it said were certainly respectful, sympathic and kind, Uncle Dave showed as much devotion to us as was possible for for one to do. Working almost all night,,he sawed plank, made a false floor in the granery over the wheat, scattering shucks and fodder and placing boxes barrels and hogheads over it to cenceal the device. Taking up the brick and dirt from a big old chimney in his house, he placed a barrel of home made molasses in it replacing brick, ashes, and wood, Saying to mistress, "that he wanted to try to save something for us to eat when the Yankees had gone." He told mother that he would do all he could to protect us from any injury--even at the sacrifice of his life--and his every act justified the belief that he would have done it.

S. Ellen Phillips.