Life of Lillah Hassie Brandon
continued

My Dear Children

I now deposite in in your hands and the hands of a people justly renowned for their courage, love of liberty, love of science history, and biography, seventy years of the life and incidents connected with the life of a southern lady, Though I know not that my life, and character forms a proper subject for delineation yet as biography has always been esteemed and often rendered interesting and attracting I know not why some real advantage might not result to you my dear children if to none other from a general history of my life. Then with an humble hope that God may aid and own this one more effort for his glory and your comfort I commence a work that I consider due from every parent to their children. Though I am well aware, that in the statements of events and incidents your literary tastes will observe many errors Yet I hope the endearments of friendship and mettings of love will plead my cause. And in the language of my beloved Lord you will be led to say she hath done what she could Though wanting in matter and style yet I hope it will fix the attention upon divine things more closely and make its way more directly to the heart and what is lost in respect to sublimity will be gained in perspicuity, force, and duration. And as I always admire a life most where the individual is his own

biographer. And I set the greatest value upon that in which the writer tells his own story. (I shall therefore bring before you the minute details of daily life thoughts which sometimes lead to domestic privaces and displays a divine grace surrounded by a halo of life-like events.) And while I touch the history of others I shall endeavor to remember that I am under the eye of God. And while I connect their names with mine it shall be for Gods glory in the discharge of duty And should the humble pattern of my life arouses any of you to advance and excel and animate others to greater dilligence I shall not have undergone this labor of love in vain In touching the character of others I shall avoid embellishing facts by description or unnecessarily magnifying by admiration. Though none of you my dear children that I recollect except my eldest daughter Mary now mrs Burkett has ever expressed a wish to see my lifes history extended to this period drawn out by my own hand. Yet I suppose your reasons were good for you could not realize with me the surgeing of those billows which anon overwhelm me by its waves

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Chapter 55th January 11, 1862.

The events connected with the past year have left their impress upon times tablet, and has, no doubt, filled eternity with a scene that excite the sympathy of angels. Battles have been fought and victories won by the people of this Confederacy. But when we look through the battle's din at what is done and read the oracles, and behold the gifted sons of our Country braving the storms to shield us from wrong, braving the strife even unto death. Yet they tell of liberty of life immortal and divine

Many are falling sick and dying away from Mother, Sister and home, as though death itself had thought to win something from the embrace of a grave among friends. Yet, thanks be to God, that ere the rites of interment are closed many of our country's gifted sons are borne back and by the souths rich soil with a grave at home.

The change to some, is as calm and sweet as the noiseless tread of the Evening twilight growing into the cloudless splendor of midday, but in a hospital, it more frequently is affected by a convulsive upheaval of all the strength of the soul to pass through the painful transition.

Our dear Sons left their dwellings with care worn sighs, as the weeping voices of rushings friends, and waving hats, and kerchiefs, mingled with the unearthly noise of steam boat and cars bore them off to the scene of death. At parting their hurried glance revealed a tale

that checked the burning tears, and with every lineament manifest in concentrated feelings, which plainly said any-thing except submission to northern fanatics. But could we withhold our lamentations as we beheld for the last time those youthful martyrs to a tyrants rage; falling victims to the ambition of those under whose control they determined no longer to serve? Nay; but our mourning for our departed heroes will denounce the fate of those, with which a scene of dreadful death will surely ensue. But let us leave them to an avenging God, while we once more trace the lineaments and heritage of our young soldiers whose birthrite, a sculptured stone or battered piece of board only now reveals.

I beheld one, as he stood, on the day of his departure from home, in all the beauty of youthful manliness, with his eyes of light, and his brow of intellect and glowing cheek, with girdle and sword, and in full uniform, with his calm, but clear glance kindling into power as he stepped twice upon the balances to compare weight with my own dear James. Yea with what undaunted mood did George Webb (though now dead, operate with our dear sons, who went first to camp near Huntsville thence by to the dark waters of Mobile, where those islands, and models of natures formation is now pillowed by blockades of northern usurpers. But after my dear Hines had endured the strife for several months, he was taken sick, and for eight days was unable to leave his tent.

As soon as he got well enough to travel he came home on furlough, spent twelve days and then on the 27th of December, 1861

left us for the last time. My own health was very poor while he was here, having an attack of hemorrhage from the lungs. But thanks be to God, who has again raised me up to delineate scenes, and depict those personal characters whose works will go to after times, though they now wade through the deep sands, and raise for themselves shanties in those pathless regions which has hitherto been with the appearance of barrenness, but now whose pines, fearless of the spoiler's power, leads naturally ~~to~~ and necessarily to a representation to the beauty and grandeur of a free and God loving people, with each bold idea borrowed from the Deity.

Yet while it arouses the northern Lion and his whelps from their lair, they are led to exclaim, "How goodly are thy tents O Israel; and they long to make our people, with their chaste glory, to reflect a brilliance upon them that will ennoble their national name.

But Oh! my sons, my noble sons! it may be while I write, that you are strugling in battle for deathless trophies.

May the banner of the Almighty be over you, shield you, and give you skill and protection, and grant that you may live to see this conflict cease, and your country's skies unclouded.

Speak thou the word O! Christ our King; and our Confederacy will be unchained, the blockades shattered, and the enemy's army dispersed.

Our sons write that General Bragg is inspecting, and they are hourly waiting and expecting to be led into battle. Oh! that the commissioned Cherubim from Gods throne may fight for our people. And may that divine truth to which they have clung, as the blood upon the door posts of the Hebrews, be as

legible characters upon their brow, that the sign and seal of the covenant may be remembered before God. The Lord give my sons strength to cope with the event while they are standing on the crumbling cenotaph of fear and hope. yet by hope's coloring they are led to expect a brilliant triumph. Amen.

Neglecting to place the sentiments of our dear Addie, in ~~the~~ regard to Josephine, in the ~~la~~ conclusion of the last chapter, I will add it to this.

To Josie in Heaven

Dear Josie, thy voice has died away, once in our dwelling heard, where sweet household scenes have passed. But still I love to think of the time we have spent together and cherish feelings of pleasure. Though mournful now yet so strong, that death alone can sever.

Never, no never shall my soul forget the friend and sister I have found to be so congenial, so good. But, dear Josie, thou art gone. Yet amidst all of our troubles, sorrow and sadness, I think with pleasure of the time when we will meet again where pain and sorrow are never known.

How often are our hearts made to thrill by the sound of thy precious name. sometimes we almost forget, and think that our loved one will appear. But we know that thou art gone for still the hours pass on and thou art not here. All the old places where we saw thee moving, from early morn until the day was passed, thy step so light, thy look and tone so sweet are all around us, yet we see the beautiful form no more. Often have I seen thee with my own babe, caressing and pressing him so fondly to thy bosom, imprinting kisses upon his soft cheek, while he would entwine his tiny fingers in thy

beautiful curls. But our heavenly Father took him from us, and then we knew not that thou would so soon follow him. Yet we that are left, know that you are both safe in heaven, and we know too, that the Judge of all the earth will do right.

Addie J. Brandon

Gaylesville Ala.
December 23, 1860.

May 8, 1862.

Chapter 56

This, my dear children, is a time when my troubled heart is consigned to bear its part in the tumults, toils and cares, to which this unnatural war, that stands forth without a precedent in history, has subjected us

This morning, Francis, who has been stationed again by the Alabama Conference, as preacher in charge, in the city of Wetumpka, left home for the camps. Warm from my poor heart the tears flow. Four of my five sons ar now confederate soldiers.

James and Heines, from exposure and hardships endured during the battle of Shilo are now, if alive, suffering intensely; James from a spinal affection from overexertion, and Heines from Bronchitis, which has caused the loss of his voice. But my beloved Lord will restore it again. Holy is His name.

It was His protecting hand that shielded them through the awful billows of lead that was thrown among them, and

though burst after burst of shell rent the air, while the fire seemed to blaze to the heavens clothed with a garniture of death, deluging the earth with blood, yet they passed passed through it all unscathed

Fierce indeed, was the struggle, and appalling beyond description the scenes displayed through the conflict. And my poor suffering sons, and others, seem at a loss for language to depict the scene, and the wings of fancy droop in their flight in their search of figures to adequately portray the events of those perilous days. Hines writes that he had the pleasure of seeing General Prentice's command surrender to their (his) regiment

On the first day, my daughters, sister Dobbs, and myself were engaged in prayer and a wrestling spirit was graciously given us, for our people, that God would interpose. He heard, and answered and in the language of the Psalmist He delivered their soul from death

In reflecting upon His mercy, I am led to exclaim, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits. While I repeat the prayer, "Open to me the gates of righteousness and I will go into them and I will praise the Lord

Since writing the above, Francis has been very sick; but on recovering so as to travel he went from Montgomery to Wetumpka, remained there for several days, and at length reached home, relapsed and was again confined to bed. On recovering, he left again, for Virginia on July 17, 1862.

A short time before leaving he heard of the death of our dear James

Chapter 57.

June the 7, 1862.

How, my surviving children, and kind readers, shall I narrate the death of my beloved James? which occurred on the 26 of last month. (May 26. 1862.)

I may truly say that it is a constituent element that deeply affects our spiritual and intellectual progress and communicates with our heart's strongest sympathies It has opened afresh the fountain of tears that had not ceased to overflow for our dear Josephine. Tears: yes let them flow, ere this heart should break. They are nature's offering. They are in place here. Let me weep because of disappointed hopes.

He was taken while contending with principalities, and powers of the world in the cause of his God. And again, at his country's call he stood forth in the uniform of a patriot and soldier.

He died from home; hundreds of miles from home, in a hospital, where no womans soothing voice flowed forth in song of glorious praise to God.

Where no Mother's or sister's kiss touched his marble brow. But he was illuminated by the light of the gospel, as the bright seraphs repeated the song commenced on Bethlehems plains.

How shall I tell you, for two full months previous to his death, he had been sorely afflicted, and yet the officers of his company, never sought to get him a furlough The excuse was that General Bragg would not give furloughs at that time.

With all due deference to such officers I would just say that your murderous neglect of your mens comfort, is bringing a destructive force to bear upon your own interests

Since writing the foregoing every corner of our souls has been thrilled by the appalling news of our dear Elias's death which took place on Tuesday the 29th of July 1862 at Gainsville (Ala) hospital. He was our youngest son, four years younger than James, but like twin brothers they were linked by a three fold cord that will ever beautify the christian name. And as Saul and Johnathan they were pleasant in life so they were barely separated in death. But as I intend to connect a history of each of their lives with my own I shall say no more in this place.

August 7th 1862

Turn not away Dear Reader from a story of these youths which makes its appeal to thee and thine but in deep reverence before God read of them. Who when but boys consigned their scanty store to the bank of heaven. I have known them give the last little piece of money they possessed to the church. The interest Christ himself has declared shall be a hundred fold in this world and in the world to come life everlasting. Their time too with the improvement of their talents amidst hard work in the field was appropriated to intellectual and religious studies. They

committed to memory many chapters in the New Testament also psalms and hymns.
Their sabbaths were kept sacred When Sabbath school was kept up all our children were punctual in their attendance. Their father and I from their infancy taught them to attend the services of the sanctuary and by faith in a crucified and risen Saviour they becam heirs of God and joint heirs with our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.
Francis, James and Hines early began the masters business they would take our negro boys and some of the white boys of the neighborhood and hold prayer meetings in the grove on sabbath evenings. There they had happy times some conversions. They were young decifles of the meek and lowly Jesus and the word of God was a lamp to their feet. We know not how many seed fell upon good ground the destiny of some of those boys are unknown to me. But Heavens mansions are capacious. may we not believe that many souls will be garnered from the little field of those precious boys.
I might write a volume of incidentes and events of Francis, James and Hines boyhood of their school days of their comprehensive and

and exalted views of education
Physical, mental, and spiritual
ever striving to promote
social order and inspire
that feeling of fellowship
and brotherly love which
is of equal service to the
nation and to the church
They always tried to shun
sectarian peril, and to keep down
those bigots and demagogs who
were ever seeking to sacrifice
the general welfare to their own
ambition. James taught school
some months before entering the
ministry. It was rather a trying
time while keeping up a
substantial and moral dicipline
But by the help of the good
Lord the Great master in the
instruction of the human
race he endeavored to regulate
his own habits of mind, and
so to govern himself in such a
way as to utilize his faculties
of mind and heart. While
teaching he had a fine opportunity
of studying character and
discriminating between the evil
and the good the true and
the false. He approved and
endeavored to promote love among
his pupils as a conservative
element. During a few months
of the school his dear sister
Jane assisted him; situated
as they were they found it a
difficult task to set a standard
so as not to discourage the dull
nor overwork the gifted.