A STORY OF SECESSION DAYS IN TEXAS AND BITTER EXPERIENCES OF UNION SYMPATHIZERS IN CIVIL WAR DAYS

AS TOLD BY A MICHIGAN WOMAN

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS
OF
MRS. C.C. HAMPTON

NOTE BY HER SON: When I was a boy teasing for "stories" my chief delight was to get mother started to tell the "Story of Texas." Later in life when I had sons of my own, my mother came to stay in our home after father died, for some time, it was her grandsons who thrilled over the hair-raising incidents, as did I myself. I wished to make a permanent record of these experiences, and so while Mother retold the story to my boys, I took down in shorthand the words just as they came from my mother's mouth, that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren might also know that the women who helped build up the great West, were not the only ones of heroic build. It is a simple tale, told in simple words, yet filled with a fierce interest that always riveted the intense interest of every listener, old as well as young.

Will Hampton

FROM MICHIGAN TO TEXAS

We started from Lenawee County, Michigan the first of October, 1858 with three horse teams and drove as far as St. Louis, MO., where the roads became so bad that we took the teams and went on board a freight boat and went down the Mississippi to a place called Gaines Landing, and there we started and drove across Arkansas and arrived at Sulphur Springs, Hopkins County, Tex., the last of October. Here my husband's sister resided with her husband, named Geo. Evans. We remained here until the first of March when we bought 160 acres of land on the prairie of Hunt county[1], six miles from the little village of Black Jack Grove, twelve miles from Huntsville, the county seat. We intended to start a stock farm, and my husband expected to practice his profession, that of medicine.

We lived here very quietly for about a year, when my husband came north to make some collections in Michigan, and during his absence there was a story set afloat that he had gone north to obtain some arms and ammunition and poison, to distribute to the negroes. A young man from Michigan had told that Dr. Hampton had stumped that state for Fremont[2], and that gave the southerners the idea that the Doctor was a "Black abolitionist," and they determined that he must leave as "they did not intend to allow any such character among them." He expected to be gone north only from four to six weeks, but the time passed until he was away nine weeks, and another young man who had accompanied us there was very anxious about him, as he had been told that the Doctor would be awaited upon by a committee and ordered to leave within ten days or "suffer the consequences." This young man, Freeman Gould, finally came to me saying that he feared that some mischief had befallen Dr. Hampton, and told me what he had heard. Three weeks after he told me this, the Doctor returned, but in the meantime my hair had begun to turn gray.

This was all occurring after the John Brown[3] raid, which had caused the

1 Located in Northeastern Texas

2 John Charles Fremont (January 21, 1813 – July 13, 1890) was an American military officer, explorer, the first candidate of the Republican Party for the office of president of the U.S., and the first presidential candidate of a major party to run on a platform opposing slavery. (Wikipedia)

3 John Brown (May 9, 1800 – Dec. 2, 1859) was a radical abolitionist, who advocated and practiced armed insurrection as a means to abolish slavery for good. He led the Pottawatomie Massacre in 1856 in Bleeding Kansas and made his name in the unsuccessful raid at Harpers Ferry in 1859. He was tried and executed for treason against the state of Virginia, murder, and conspiracy later that year. President Abraham Lincoln said he was a “misguided fanatic” and Brown has been called “the most controversial of all 19th-century Americans.” Brown’s actions are often referred to as “patriotic treason,” depicting both sides of the argument. John Brown’s attempt in 1859 to start a liberation movement among enslaved African Americans in Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia) electrified the nation. He was tried for treason against the state of Virginia, the murder of five pro-slavery Southerners, and inciting a slave insurrection and was subsequently hanged. Southerners alleged that his rebellion was the tip of the abolitionist iceberg and represented the wishes of the Republican Party. Historians agree that the Harpers Ferry raid in 1859 escalated tensions that, a year later, led to secession and the American Civil War. (Wikipedia)

southerners to be suspicious of every northern man. A few days after Mr. Hampton's return we drove to Sulphur Springs to his sister's. A few days previous a man came along who had been drinking, and said: "There is great excitement at the Springs, there is lots of talk about abolitionists and they have you mixed up in it some way." Dr. Hampton said "Is that so, I am going down tomorrow and will find out about it." We did not know whether to believe what the man said, but thought it would be wise to see if there was any foundation to it, as knowing the temper of the people, the Dr. did not want to allow any rumor to circulate that could be headed off. That night after arriving at his sister's in Sulphur Springs, the house was guarded at the suggestion of some of the prominent men whom the Dr. had met, and who were friendly toward him. The common people; or the tougher element; were filled with the story, which had been circulated, of the arms and poison for the negroes that the Dr. had gotten, and they wanted to mob him that night. But the cooler heads among his friends, said to place a guard about the place, and if Hampton tried to get out among the negroes they would catch him redhanded and then have the evidence of his misdeeds. We knew nothing of the watch being placed, but of course nobody tried to get out of the house and so the watchers had their trouble for nothing. These prominent men took the Dr. off to one side the next day, on the pretense of looking at a new church they were putting up, and told him of the story of his bringing arms, poison, etc., from the north, and that he was going to try and arouse a spirit or insurrection among the slaves. And for his safety they then wrote out a statement that they believed Dr. Hampton to be a good law abiding citizen, not guilty of the charges against him. But the spirit aroused continued hotter; and hearing the continued threats I would not let the Dr. go to Sulphur Springs for the lumber to put up our buildings, and fences, and consequently he had to hire it hauled fifty miles at great expense.

The people were greatly excited over the threatened insurrection of the negroes, and one old darkey had, previous to our visit, been tied up and whipped a number of times in the attempt to make him confess that he knew of supposed plans. The very day that we came to town the old man had been catechized by his master, and the gang who were torturing him, and under their threats and torture he "admitted" that such a plan was a foot. To leading questions he answered about like this: Was the man who put you up to this living at Black Jack Grove? "Yes, Massa." He is a rather short, thick set man isn't he? "Yes, Massa." He has long whiskers, hasn't he? "Yes, Massa."

At this point, Dr. Reeves, a friend of my husband, interjected a remark which I think saved my husband's life, for it threw the slaveholders off the scent by committing the "witness" to a statement which let Dr. Hampton out for that day at least. Dr. Reeves asked -- "His whiskers are long and red, like mine, aren't they?" "Yes, Massa," said the old negro, and this eliminated Dr. Hampton, for his whiskers at this time were coal black, while Dr. Reeves' whiskers were firey red.

That afternoon Dr. Hampton attended a public meeting which had been called to discuss the threatened insurrection, and one of Dr. Hampton's friends said to him --"If you are called on to speak do not say anything, for whatever you say will be misinterpreted and turned against you." The Dr. then noticed that the people who were seated near him were one by one moving away, and it was evidently merely to "Get out of range," for the Texans had a habit of shooting first and explaining afterwards, and the Doctor's brother-in-law said that evening that he had no doubt, but if Hampton had tried to say a word at the meeting some hot head would have pulled his revolver and shot him down.

This was about the middle of May, 1860, and one of the accusations against Dr. Hampton was that he had been at the convention and helped to nominate Abe Lincoln which was not true, though my husband had been at the meeting "Under the Oaks"[4] in Jackson, Michigan when the Republican party was organized. Another charge was that he had abolition literature in his home. He invited the men to go and search his house for that, or anything else they thought he had. The excitement finally died away, as the neighbors became better acquainted, and we began to think we might outlive the trouble and remain in peace. But for several months I lived in daily fear of having my husband taken away from me and hanged to the nearest tree, as was so often threatened.

When the talk of secession began Dr. Hampton had talked against it and tried to make his neighbors see what it would mean. For a time most of our neighbors were with us, and opposed the idea of Texas leaving the Union[5]. Others who were rabid for Secession seemed to have no idea what it would mean and result in. My husband spoke in public meetings opposing secession, and I remember at one meeting, where the question was being discussed, those who favored it thought the North would not fight to keep the states together. Dr. Hampton said, and I can, at this distant date, forty years later, see how he looked and with what impressive earnestness he uttered these words: "Secession means war! And such a war as you in your wildest moments never dreamed of"!

After Texas finally voted to secede the most of the Union men, who had been with Dr. Hampton before, gave up and said they would have to go along with their State. They placed loyalty to their State above loyalty to the Union, and were sincere in their ideas, as many of them later gave their lives, and the lives of their sons for the cause they had espoused. After the State had seceded, Dr.

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4 Jackson is the disputed birthplace of the Republican Party. Undisputed is the fact that the first official meeting of the group that actually called itself “Republican” was held in Jackson under the Oaks on July 6, 1854. Since the convention day was hot and the huge crowd could not be accommodated in the hall, the meeting adjourned to an oak grove on “Morgan’s Forty” on the outskirts of town, where a slate of candidates was selected for state elections. (Wikipedia)

5 In the statewide election on the secession ordinance, Texans voted to secede from the Union by a 76% majority. The Secession Convention immediately organized a government, replacing Sam Houston when he refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Texas seceded from the United States on February 1, 1861, and joined the Confederate States of America on March 2, 1861. (Wikipedia)

Hampton had to be very careful what he said, and gave up the struggle, thinking we would perhaps be permitted to live in quiet if he took no active part on either side.

During this time Dr. Hampton was teaching school, and as one school teacher, one blacksmith, and one of each trade was permitted to be exempt from the draft, no call was made on him to enlist in the rebel service. But so many young men and older boys were called into the rebel army that, along with the larger girls having to spin and sew to make garments for the men in the army, the school house was emptied of the larger pupils and in the fall the school was closed. Then the rebel sympathizers began to hint about "Hampton going into the rebel army." The old talk about his trying to start a negro insurrection began again. They would watch him as he opened his newspapers; when he got the mail; and said they could tell by his looks; when he read of the confederates being defeated; that he was hoping for a Union victory. They put spies under windows to see if they could hear a single word that would betray the real sentiments of men suspected of Union sentiments.

"Uncle Billy Downing", as he was called, a Union man who was hard of hearing, and over fifty years of age, used to call and talk with Dr. Hampton, and whenever he came, we used to place the boys around to see if any eavesdroppers were about. Downing was a fervent Baptist, and believed in the literal hell fire and brimstone, and he used to say he "would die and burn in hell before he would enter the confederate army," but they drove him into the ranks later, though I don't believe he ever fired a gun at a Union solder, nor that his two sons who were forced in prior to his own induction ever did. He was the last man to bid me goodbye when I later on during the war started North, and as he put my youngest boy in the wagon he said with tears in his eyes--"Kiss your pa for me, my boy." He was a good and true friend and a true Union man, as were so many others who were forced to join the rebel army or hang to the nearest tree for refusing to join and swear allegiance to Jeff Davis.

They soon began warning Union men who refused to join the confederate army, to leave the State. Two men from the North, lightning rod peddlers, were warned to leave. One night we heard horses galloping by, and the next day learned that the two peddlers were found hanging to a tree not far from our neighborhood. Every little while during the winter we would hear of a man being found hanging, and the only reason was because he was "Union" and would not flee.

After the battle where Hollikoffer[6] was killed, there were five men living not far from us, who had voted against secession, who were accused of sympathizing with the Yankees, and rejoicing at the death of Hollikoffer. One man put powder

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6 Felix Kirk Zollicoffer (May 19, 1812 – January 19, 1862) was a newspaperman, three-term United States Congressman from Tennessee, officer in the United States Army, and a Confederate brigadier general during the American Civil War. He led the first Confederate invasion of eastern Kentucky and was killed in action at the Battle of Mill Springs, the first Confederate general to perish in the Western Theater. (Wikipedia)

in a log to blow it apart, and they interpreted this as in celebration of the death of Hollikofer. Another had a crib of corn that he was accused of saying he would keep until Uncle Abe's army would come down and he could sell it for hard cash. The others were related to these two, and I never heard any other accusation only that they voted against secession. These five men were taken by a party of armed men who had no official standing, and a mock trial was held over which a minister presided. The men were convicted of what? Of sympathizing with the North, of being treasonous to the South, and were taken out and hanged on the spot! This shows how bloodthirsty the people were becoming, when a Minister of God could take such action as this, and glory in this spilling of blood.

Soon after this incident the leaders were beginning to urge the Dr. to join the confederate army. Companies were being formed in the neighborhood and they began increasing the pressure. He told them his profession led him to save lives, not destroy them; that his family was not in position for him to leave, and various other excuses, but they began growing more persistent. Dr. Hampton was sent to see a Mrs. Featherstone, a lady friend whose husband was a captain in the rebel army. These several incidents had made me, as you might say, fear to trust Dr. Hampton out of my sight, and I went along with him, on horseback to see Mrs. Featherstone. While there he was asked what the war news was, as we took several papers and they were rather scarce in that locality. I had warned him to beware or he might say something that would cause trouble, as it was just after the fall of Fort Pillow[7]. In reply to her questions he said that President Davis had suspended Floyd until he could give a more satisfactory account for the fall of Fort Pillow. She wondered what the account was. He told her what the papers said, that General Floyd[8] had surrendered most of his forces, but that he, himself had escaped with a few followers. She said she did not think it was right to hide their reverses, as some of their papers tried to do, as she wanted to know of the reverses as well as the victories. While at the Featherstone house two men rode up, armed with bowie knives and revolvers, and calling Dr. Hampton out, said they had learned that he had a revolver and they had orders to get it by force if he would not sell it. He came in and said "wife we must go home as they want my revolver." Mrs. Featherstone said "why did you tell them you had it? Why didn't you say it was loaned? They are two of the worst men in the county and now you will have nothing to defend yourself with, and they have repeatedly threatened your life!"

Previously rebels had taken the gun belonging to my oldest son, and the revolver was all the weapon left except a broken old revolver that was useless except at short range. The two men, as we rode home remarked on the two excellent saddles we had, and said they wanted them for the army, but the Dr. said

7 Because of its strategic location, controlling traffic on the Mississippi River, the fort was attacked and captured by the Union Army, which controlled it during most of the war. The battle took place on June 4, 1862. (Wikipedia)

8 John Buchanan Floyd (June 1, 1806 – August 26, 1863) was the 31st Governor of Virginia, U.S. Secretary of War, and the Confederate general in the American Civil War who lost the crucial Battle of Fort Donelson. (Wikipedia)

he needed his, and my son needed the other to herd the stock. But that night the two saddles were stolen, and in the barn we found a bowie knife, the same as the men the day before, so we knew well enough who had taken our saddles. Soon after we had left Mrs. Featherstone's that day, a certain Dr. Dubois, a rebel, called, and Mrs. Featherstone asked him what he thought of President Davis suspending Gen. Floyd. He flew into a rage and denounced it as a "lie" gotten up by Hampton to discourage the southerners, and that he would have Hampton hung inside of ten days if he did not go into the Confederate army." He said, "I tell you the kind of man he is. The moment the Yankees get here, if they ever do, he will turn right in with them and burn and murder, and likely as not your house will be one of the first he will help to destroy." She told him she had been acquainted with Dr. Hampton for some time and did not believe he was that sort of a man. Dubois repeated his charges and said again he would have Hampton put out of the way if he did not join the Confederate army. The next morning Mrs. Featherstone sent a boy over and he then warned us of what Dubois had said. She told Dr. Hampton not to stay home another night but to come to their home, or at the different neighbors, as she was afraid that Dubois would get up a crowd from the volunteers who were stationed near where he lived at Lone Oak, to come and mob Dr. Hampton. She was so very much in earnest, that we went that night to a Mrs. Heffner's, who had been a Union man at first, but who, with two sons, in the rebel army. His wife brought out an old musket and handed it to me, saying-- "Here, Mrs. Hampton, take this, and if Dubois does come with a mob after your husband, use it."

The next day Dr. Hampton started after a saddle to replace the one that had been stolen, as he began to think he would have to ride for his life if worst came to worst. While he was on the way to secure the saddle, he met Dr. Rufus Scott, a southern born man but a true Union man who, however from his surroundings had to conceal his real feelings. Dr. Scott told Dr. Hampton what his son had heard the day before, which was this: His son was at the postoffice standing behind a door reading a paper as the mail was being distributed, and he overheard three men conversing on the steps just outside the open door. One was Dr. Dubois, another a Captain Cansler, who had been with the rebel army, and the other a Col. Renfrew from Sulphur Springs. As they talked a company of recruits rode up, and were introduced to the two strangers by Capt. Cansler. After a short exchange of war news Capt. Cansler said: “We have enemies right at home. You passed the home of one of the worst as you came to town. He lives in a two-story frame house with a stovepipe through the roof.” As we lived in the only frame house of that description in the entire region Dr. Scott’s son knew at once whom he meant. The crowd discussed the matter, and Cansler finally said: “If he don’t go into our army inside of ten days we will blackjack him.” This was a favorite expression, meaning to hang to a blackjack tree. Dr. Scott’s son hurried home and told his father what he had heard, and Dr. Scott, who was a warm and true friend of ours, started the next morning to let the doctor know of the trouble that was brewing.

Dr. Scott was the physician who had been deputed to remain at home and knowing the temper of the people, he told Dr. Hampton that he would either have to go into the rebel army or flee for his life before the ten days was up. They discussed plans for getting my husband out of the country. The doctor had been planning for some time a trip to Shreveport for a load of supplies which he could not get at home. The neighbors knew of the proposed trip, and many would bring in small sums of money for the purchase of things not obtainable at our nearest market place. This proposed trip was now made use of to good purpose. Dr. Scott said they would undoubtedly lay in wait for him and mob him on the road to or from Shreveport; preferring to do that, to attacking him at home. So, under the guise of getting ready for the Shreveport trip we all made haste to prepare for the attempted flight of my husband. He could not for a moment think of joining the rebel army, and to flee was the only alternative, hard as it seemed to leave the family behind. On return with the saddle he and Dr. Scott rode to Greenville to see if a Union man named George Brown would make the ride with them. Dr. Scott had a pass to Little Rock, Ark., from Kirby Smith, to go after medicines and medical supplies, and was to meet my husband after a certain distance had been passed. Brown, before the outbreak had intended to leave and had written a friend in Kansas to have his house ready, but he was suspected, the letter opened and his intention discovered. When he started to pack preparatory to leaving his goods were "attached" and he was told he was lying about his pretended intention to move to western Texas, his letter shown him, and he was prevented from leaving the state. He wanted to get away, but finally decided not to go with the Dr. because he did want to leave his family, as long as he could live there without being ordered to enter the confederate army. The night that my husband and Dr. Scott were away seeing Mr. Brown, I worked all night preparing for his flight, and made a pair of saddle bags out of a grain sack, covered with oil cloth.

As the Dr. had decided to take Dr. Scott's advice and wait until a few days before his time set to go to Shreveport, before making his break for the North, he started to build a dam across the head of a ravine near, so that water would form a pond so that it would make it easier for the boys to water the stock. This was the last of March. On the first of April I experienced what might be called an "April fool", but which was a very exciting day for me at home. While the Dr. was at work on the dam, Jimmie, my ten year old son, came rushing in and said "I believe they are coming to mob pa, men all armed are coming." I looked out and saw half a dozen men riding up from the direction where the recruits were rendezvoused at Lone Oak. I thought they were surely coming to take my husband and hang him or take him into the rebel army, and I sent Jimmie to tell his father and brother that a party of armed men were coming. The doctor told Jimmie to tell me that if they enquired about him I was to say he was hunting stock on Turkey Creek, the opposite direction from where he really was, and if they stayed about the house to hang a red cloth from the chamber window, and if they left, or made no enquiries, to hang out a white cloth. I took the ammunition, the old musket and the broken revolver up stairs, and sharpened the

butcher knife as quickly as possible. There were some loose boards up stairs and these I pulled over the stairway and hauled some grain bags over them, forming a sort of barricade so that it would be difficult for anyone to get up the stairs even if they were not met with opposition. I thought perhaps my husband might get into the rear of the house without being seen, and up stairs behind the barricade he could make as good a fight for life as was possible. I had done all this before Jimmie got back with word about the cloth. Just as I had finished I looked out the window and saw a large company of soldiers. It proved to be a regiment that had been located on the gulf and had been ordered to the front and was enroute north. They had a company of scouts ahead and it was this advanced party I had at first seen and thought was the rangers after the Dr. and I then hung out the white cloth to let my husband know they were not after him. It was a big scare with a happy ending.

On the evening of April 9th, Dr. Hampton left on horseback, and you can imagine my feelings as I saw him riding off into the prairie in the gloom, knowing as I did that so many men who had attempted to break through to the North to the Union lines had been followed and killed before they got out of the state. This was on Wednesday and on Friday Mrs. Featherstone came down to say that she could not get her flour ready for the Dr. to take to Shreveport on Monday as she had expected. We had arranged that I was to tell that the Dr. had started to join Capt Featherstone's company in the rebel army, and I told Mrs. Featherstone that the Dr. was not going to Shreveport but had gone to join her husband's company. She said she was glad because the doctor had been abused here at home but when he got to her husband's company he would be treated right and would be with good friends. She was very indignant when I told her what Capt. Cansler had said, and said that Cansler would lose friends by his actions, and that she thought the neighbors would sympathize with me and make it easier for me now that the Dr. had gone to join the confederate army. At this time Capt. Cansler was up for some office, and Mrs. Featherstone told her friends what Capt. Cansler had done against Dr. Hampton and it came to Cansler's ears and he knew it would hurt him in the election and he came to me and tried to conciliate me. I said to him—"Mr. Cansler, did you not, sitting on the postoffice steps at Black Jack Grove, say that you had enemies right in our midst, and that Dr. Hampton was one of them, and if he did not go into the confederate army in ten days you would have him hung?" He said—"Mrs. Hampton, I am ashamed to say that I was so intoxicated that day that I do not know what I really said." I replied that when a man was drunk, he usually gave utterance to his real sentiments. Cansler was over-whelmingly defeated, and he laid it all "to that Hampton trouble." This was while they still believed that Dr. Hampton went in the confederate army.

I learned later that Dr. Hampton and Dr. Scott met at Tarrant, the county seat of Hopkins county, and rode together to a cousin of Dr. Scott who lived ten miles south of Little Rock, and whose first name was Conway and last name Scott. This cousin was a very wealthy man, a planter and the most influential

man in that part of Arkansas. They happily found him to be a good Union man, but being so prominent among his neighbors he was not molested though he made no secret of his real feelings. They stayed at Conway Scott's over night and then rode on toward the northern part of Arkansas, telling everyone they were endeavoring to overtake Young's regiment of confederate soldiers which had been ordered across the Mississippi river. This was the regiment to which Capt. Featherstone belonged. They had gone out as cavalry but had been dismounted, and Lt. Heffner was sent home with the horses. Dr. Hampton met Lt. Heffner and gave him a letter to give to me, and I got this letter about a week after he had left so I knew he had gotten safely part way out of rebeldom, though he still had a long way to go to be safe.

At the last place that my husband and Dr. Scott stayed before they reached the Union lines they were being suspicioned, and the next morning they thought they were being followed by two men who kept them in sight, dropping back when they slowed down, but keeping them in sight. They soon met two men who told them with great excitement that "the Yankees are only a short distance ahead of you", and the two doctors appeared to be greatly agitated and asked if there was not some road that they could take to ride around them and not "fall into their clutches." They were told there was a fork just a little ways ahead and if they took the right hand road they could probably pass by unseen. They watched and saw that when the two men they had met came to the two who had been following them, all four rode back south. The two doctors rode ahead with all speed and when the forks were reached they took the left hand road and kept on with all speed toward where the "terrible Yankees" were supposed to be. They soon fell in with a squad of the 9th Ill. Cavalry who were on a foraging expedition. I forgot to say that Dr. Scott's wife's brother had ridden with them toward the Union lines. This man had been forced to join the rebel army but had deserted and went with Dr. Hampton and Dr. Scott. When Dr. Scott saw Dr. Hampton and his brother-in-law safe in Union hands he turned back to the south and after getting his supplies at Little Rock he returned home and sent word to me by one of the Glenn boys that Dr. Hampton was at Pocahontas as a rebel clerk and he thought he would soon be appointed as assistant surgeon of the regiment. Dr. Hampton was really at Jacksonport in the Union lines, but Dr. Scott did not even dare tell me he had been in the Union lines, or even tell his wife. He finally got an opportunity to see me and tell me the Dr. was safe in the Union lines, but he said to me—"Mrs. Hampton I have not even told my wife, for she might tell her sister, and then it might go farther. I have not told you before because I have not had an opportunity to speak to you alone, but I want you to know that the doctor is safe, and I take you to be a woman of discretion, and you know what it would mean to me if it became known that I had been within the lines of the Union army."

Soon after a Union man named Martin D. Hart of Greenville, secretly began organizing a company of Union men with the intent of leaving the State and joining the Union army.

Three of the Glenn boys were forced into the rebel army, but Joe Glenn was left behind to do the harvest. After that he too was ordered to join their army. I knew he was to report on a certain day when he appeared at our house. I asked what he was going to do. He said – "Mrs. Hampton I don't know – but I won't go if I possibly can prevent it. I would like to borrow some paper so I can write to my folks. (Before Dr. Hampton left he told me—"There are two men you can depend on, Uncle Billy Downing and Joe Glenn. They will stand by you.") A few days after Joe Glenn was at my place, people began asking if I knew where Joe was. He was not found as he was hiding in a canebrake near Dr. Scott's who kept him in provisions. He was in that canebrake for six weeks. Glenn had lain in the swamps so long that his hair was matted, he had long whiskers and with his revolver and bowie knife, he looked like a demon, but I knew him to be a true Union man. He was able to join a group of other Union men who were escaping, they made it to the Red River but were discovered and fired on, several were killed, but the greater portion reached the Union lines and among them was Joe Glenn.

Dr. Scott had, as before, gotten permission to go to Little Rock for more medicine, he started a few days before the others escaped but he was able to join up with the Company, and all were mustered into the Union service in Missouri. In the meantime Dr. Hampton was with the Illinois cavalry at Helena, Ark., on the Mississippi river, although I did not know it at the time. With the aid of an old southern gentleman Dr. Hampton was able to send a message by letter which he sent to Mrs. Featherstone, whose husband was in the rebel service as I mentioned. He told her while enroute to join her husband's company he had fallen in with Union soldiers and feeling he was at last among friends he had joined them. He asked her to consider how she would feel under like circumstances, and to do for Mrs. Hampton as she would have anyone do for her under like conditions. He enclosed a letter to me and asked her to deliver it personally which she did. Her husband who was discharged for sickness was home at the time and he told her to tell me that if I was determined to start for the North that he would help me, for "the doctor Hampton had been treated so badly he did not blame him for staying among friends when he found them." He advised me to take the doctor's letter and go to Sulphur Springs, and my brother-in-law thought I could get through. Captain Featherstone and his wife helped me make up the necessary story to tell so we would all tell the same thing. My story was: "that I had received a letter from my husband in the Confederate service near Little Rock, and he sent for me to come to him." Captain Featherstone told me it would be a very hazardous trip, as he had seen a number of wagons on the Mississippi bottom where women had tried to take cotton to Memphis to sell, because of the blockade where guerillas had taken the teams off the wagons, burned the cotton and left the women to get home on foot as best they could. He asked what I would do if treated the same way—"I said it required more courage to stay home and watch my son Frank driven into the rebel army at fourteen, better to die on the road."

I managed to sell some wheat for both hard money (gold) and some Confederate money; the Confederate money would be no good after I got out of the confederate lines. On the 29th day of Oct., 1862, just as the sun was setting on the western prairie we set out and drove six miles that night and stopped with Dr. Scott's people overnight. Mrs. Scott told me when I left the next morning – You will meet Dr. Scott on the way (he is trying to return for the birth of our baby; tell him I would rather see him in ten years than now, and have him killed. I met Dr. Scott on the road the second day before noon and told him what his wife had said. He said he must go home at any cost. Dr. Scott had met with a rebel Colonel, an old acquaintance and a brother Mason, who wrote him a pass. Along with some letters he was bringing from men he knew, the pass and letters had so far kept him out of trouble and he was determined to go on home. He said the Union Army would be there before Christmas and advised me to turn back, as it was hazardous to attempt to leave the state. I told him that his mother was joining me at Tarrant as she had sold her house and lot and was going to live with her other son Conway Scott near Little Rock. This lady named Stanley was a rebel and did not know her "boys" were for the Union. I had been training my boys, Frank, age 14; Jimmie, 11; and Charlie, 6; to answer every question with, "I don't know." Our wagon was a northern built one different from the southern ones, and we were all to say "we got it from a northern abolitionist who was driven out of Texas." We were bound for "down near Little Rock to join my husband." We met with the old lady Stanley at Tarrant and she drove with us from there on.

We were two weeks getting to Conway Scott's place, ten miles south of Little Rock. The road was through woods the greater part of the way. We passed many deserted houses, as the men were away in the rebel army, and the women would go back to their old homes with their parents, if they had any, so that for some day we would drive for miles and miles and not see an inhabited house. At night, if we were fortunate enough to find a house where we could sleep, Mrs. Stanley and little Charlie and I would get a bed in the house, or if they could not give us a bed we would take our own bedding in and sleep on the floor. The boys would sleep in the wagon. But often we would have to sleep in the wagon, and the boys would spread bedding under the wagon and sleep on the ground. We carried our provisions and would build a campfire and make our coffee, and sometimes it would be nine at night before we would have our supper. One night we passed by the camps of a confederate company, and we drove on and went to a house a little off the road, and tried to get a bed for Mrs. Stanley and myself but were refused, so we slept in the wagon. The day before we got to Little Rock we passed through a little town where I saw some Confederate officers, but the place where we stayed the night before we could not get feed for the horses so I had to stop and buy feed, and let the horses eat.

Soon after starting, we had to ford a river, and as I had to drive the horses unchecked, they both drank all they could fill, and before we could get across they got enough to make them ill. As it began to grow dark the horses shown signs of the effect of the water so soon after the meal, and they kept stopping.

Finally they laid down, and it came on to rain and got pitch dark, and we could go no farther. We had been unable to find a house where we could stay, but saw a light ahead in the darkness. Frank went on to the house to ask if I could stay, but they said no, the house was full. Mrs. Stanley had gone on and they let her stay, and she said the next morning that there was no one in the house but herself and the man of the house and another man. The boys and myself had stayed in the wagon and in the morning we found the horses were all right, and we drove on and crossed the Arkansas River at Little Rock, and drove ten miles farther to Conway Scott's where we arrived about the middle of the afternoon.

Mrs. Stanley wanted to surprise her relatives, who she hadn't seen in seven or eight years. They were happy to have us all. Mrs. Stanley never realized I was really on my way to the Union lines. We stayed with Conway Scott for two weeks being treated like family. I was sad to learn later that Conway Scott's property was destroyed by our own Union soldiers; as they would have only his own word that he was for the Union and it was war time.

When we left the Scotts', I paid a neighbor, a Mr. Smith to drive ahead of our team, so we wouldn't lose the road, as we often had coming from Texas. Much of the road was through woods not marked. We sometimes drove after dark, Mr. Smith's horses knowing the way. We crossed the Crawleys Range, of not very high mountains, and it took six days. At night I slept most of the time in the wagon. Mr. Smith said Taylors Creek was the last place we could get rid of our Confederate money, so he and the boys bought feed for the horses, as we might have to wait days to get across the river after we got to Marion, opposite Memphis. We found a small inn to stay and while they were gone the innkeeper tired to buy my team and wagon. I gave him my usual story about needing to join my husband somewhere in Kentucky. I was later told the innkeeper would have paid me in Confederate money which was of no use in Tennessee. The next morning we came to a river, we had to have a permit to cross and Frank and Mr. Smith went to get the permit. The day we got to Hopefield[9], opposite Memphis, we were stopping in a small hamlet and a man rode up very excitedly telling people that Hopefield would be burned to ashes before he returned there. Guerillas had found three deserters from the Confederate army and hung them and burned the ferry. So he expected that the union gunboat would come down and shell the town in reprisal. I thought we might not be able to get across after all.

That afternoon a fearful thunderstorm came up and we looked for a house to remain in overnight but found nothing. So we drove after dark. Mr. Smith said he would rather not drive into Hopefield anyway so we stopped three or four miles out. He said the guerillas were in the habit of rushing into Hopefield and

9 Hopefield was a small town on the Mississippi River in eastern Crittenden County located across from present-day Mud Island in Memphis, Tennessee. As a railroad terminal and river landing, the town was pivotal in the development of transportation and commerce between Tennessee and Arkansas during the nineteenth century, but devastation from war, disease, commercial setbacks, and the geological power of the Mississippi itself ultimately destroyed Hopefield in the early twentieth century. (The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture).

stealing everything from wagons or anything else they could find. It continued to rain and as Mr. Smith's wagon was filled with corn and feed for the horses he had to come into our wagon, and we all stayed in our wagon that night. The top of our wagon was made of rag carpeting, and over that I had stretched heavy sheeting, so we were quite well protected from the weather.

The next morning we drove into Hopefield about nine o'clock and saw the ferry boat, which was a sort of raft which had been built to take the place of the boat that had been burned by the guerillas. Frank went down to the bank and was on hand when it reached the shore, and asked if they could take us across, but they said they could not make two trips a day, and they had a load for that day, and could not take us until the next day. We had to remain in Hopefield all night and I did not sleep very much, but lay looking out of the window at a gunboat that was moored just opposite the house where we were staying. As soon as the flatboat, which was all the ferry they had, arrived, we drove our team right on, and we stopped at the gunboat where Mr. Smith and Frank had to take the oath of allegiance[10] to the United States before we could land. A man came on the ferry and asked me where we were going, and other questions, and examined our wagon, which was made in Jackson, Michigan, and had the makers brand on it. He quizzed me and I told the same old story about my husband in the Confederate army, and being on my way to his friends in Kentucky. As we drove on shore on the Tennessee side, and I stood once more beneath the old flag of our Union, I clasped my hands, and looking up, I said with as much reverence and gratitude as anyone could ever feel—"Thank goodness, then I'm out of Dixie!" The same man who had questioned me on the ferry said—"You think you can tell the truth now, do you," I replied "I hope so, for I have told enough lies to sink a nation." I felt perfectly safe for I saw a body of blue coats just across the street from me.

It cost $10 to ferry us across the river. Before I could pay I had to send Frank to get a large bill changed, and as soon as he came back and paid the ferryman we drove to the Hardwicke House and I enquired about the boats north, but could get no information there, and with Frank I started out to find the office of the agent of the steamers that ran to Cincinnati. I told the agent I was a refugee and wanted to get on the first boat that went north, and he said the first boat would be the Lady Pike on Thursday, it being Tuesday then. I said my son had a colt he had ridden all the way from Texas and we wanted to take it along. The agent said it would cost so much he thought it would not pay to take the colt and advised me to sell it, but Jimmie had become so attached to his colt I decided to let him take it along. We then went to the office of the Provost Marshall where my son had to take the oath of allegiance again. I had much trouble disposing of my team and wagon, but the Landlord, Mr. Hardwicke, said he would pay me $200.00 in greenbacks and pay my stable bill and give me my hotel bill, $25.00, for the outfit. He also took my goods to the boat for me, and I let him

10 The United States Oath of Allegiance is an oath that must be taken by all immigrants who wish to become United States citizens. The first officially recorded Oaths of Allegiance were made on May 30th, 1778 at Valley Forge, during the Revolutionary War. (Wikipedia)

have the rig. While staying at the Hardwicke House, I still kept up the story of the confederate soldiers wife, as the agent of the line of boats advised me to, saying I would be better treated if I did. I wrote a letter to my father, and when the Landlord took it to put in the mail he noticed the Michigan address, and said, "Your father? Your father in Michigan, eh?" but I was then ready to start for the boat, and did not care if he finally knew I was a northerner.

This was the fourth day of December, 1862, and it took us six days to get to Cincinnati. Some of the passengers were very much worried, as the boats were frequently fired on by guerillas along the shore, but I felt perfectly safe, as the dangers we had to meet were nothing to the dangers we had already passed through safely. We arrived at Cincinnati and took the train for Toledo, but Jimmie's pony had to be shipped on freight train and had not arrived in Toledo. So I went to the agent and told him that my boy had ridden the colt from Texas to Memphis, over 700 miles, and how fond he was of the animal, and that plenty of feed had been put in the car, and the old gentleman said that when the colt arrived he would see that it was well taken care of and sent on to Hudson at the first opportunity. My husband had a brother living in Toledo and we stayed one day and night at his home, and found out that Dr. Hampton was still in Helena. We arrived at Hudson on the 14th of December, having been on the road from Black Jack Grove in Texas since the 29th day of October. We travelled in the wagon though hostile territory over 700 miles, over poor roads, being over three weeks in the wagon. My sister June met us at Hudson, and a team was hired to take us to Medina, where my sister, Jane Hice, lived.

Thus ends this story of experiences in wartime in Dixieland
Mrs. Cornelia C. Hampton

NOTE: -- My father, Dr. Carlos D. Hampton, finally was reunited with my mother, and enlisted in the fourth Michigan Inft., as Asst. Surgeon. It was the new 4th, not the old 4th. My brother, Frank Hampton, when he reached the age of 16, enlisted in the Union army, was captured, and was in rebel prison until the war ended, and with 2,000 other released prisoners, was on the steamer Sultana when it was blown up while a short distance from New Orleans on "the way north." He was among the lost. The family property left at Black Jack Grove was confiscated, as expected.

The story as related above, was, as stated at the beginning, told by my mother just as she used to tell it to me and my children. And I ran it as a continued story in my newspaper, the Charlevoix Courier, at the time I was owner and editor.

Will E. Hampton

From National Archives

SURRAT.

BOOTH.

HAROLD.

War Department, Washington, April 20, 1865,

$100,000 REWARD!

THE MURDERER

Of our late beloved President, Abraham Lincoln,

IS STILL AT LARGE.

$50,000 REWARD

Will be paid by this Department for his apprehension, in addition to any reward offered by Municipal Authorities or State Executives.

$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of JOHN H. SURRATT, one of Booth's Accomplices.

$25,000 REWARD

Will be paid for the apprehension of David C. Harold, another of Booth's accomplices.

LIBERAL REWARDS will be paid for any information that shall conduce to the arrest of either of the above-named criminals, or their accomplices.

All persons harboring or secreting the said persons, or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of DEATH.

Let the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers.

All good citizens are exhorted to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.

EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

DESCRIPTIONS.—BOOTH is Five Feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender build, high forehead, black hair, black eyes, and wears a heavy black moustache.

JOHN H. SURRAT is about 5 feet, 9 inches. Hair rather thin and dark; eyes rather light; no beard. Would weigh 145 or 150 pounds. Complexion rather pale and clear, with color in his cheeks. Wore light clothes of fine quality. Shoulders square; cheek bones rather prominent; chin narrow; ears projecting at the top; forehead rather low and square, but broad. Parts his hair on the right side; neck rather long. His lips are firmly set. A slim man.

DAVID C. HAROLD is five feet six inches high, hair dark, eyes dark, eyebrows rather heavy, full face, nose short, hand short and fleshy, feet small, instep high, round bodied, naturally quick and active, slightly closes his eyes when looking at a person.

NOTICE.—In addition to the above, State and other authorities have offered rewards amounting to almost one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of about **TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.**