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SHERMAN'S ARMY COMES TO CAMDEN: THE CIVIL WAR NARRATIVE OF SARAH DEHON TRAPIER

EDITED BY KAREN D. STOKES*

SARAH DEHON TRAPIER, THE WIFE OF AN EPISCOPAL clergyman, spent most of her life in Charleston, South Carolina, where she was born in 1814. Just before the start of the Civil War, the Trapier family moved to Camden, an early market town in the South Carolina backcountry that had prospered during the nineteenth century as a trading center for the cotton plantations of Kershaw District. Despite scarcities and anxieties, the Trapiers remained relatively safe at Camden until the war's final months, when the enemy arrived at their door. In February 1865, the army of General William T. Sherman invaded the town, and Union soldiers occupied and pillaged the Trapier home. The Trapiers, like many others on the Confederate home front, had their lives changed forever by the harrowing encounter. Sarah Trapier's account of what happened was penned within a few months of the events, while her emotions were still raw and the memories fresh in her mind. It was addressed to an unnamed friend or relation, possibly a northerner, to give "some idea of the situation of thousands of others, like our own."¹

THE TRAPIER FAMILY'S PATH TO CAMDEN

In his autobiography, the Reverend Paul Trapier described his wife, Sarah Dehon Trapier, as "my chief earthly treasure." She was an individual, he wrote, "of rare judgment, of truest affection, and of as brave a spirit as ever was in woman."² Sarah was the daughter of Rev. Theodore Dehon (1776–1817), bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina.³ Her mother was Sarah Russell (1792–1857), the daughter of Nathaniel Russell

* Karen D. Stokes is processing archivist at the South Carolina Historical Society. She wishes to thank Joan Inabinet and Charles Baxley for their valuable assistance, as well as the anonymous readers of the *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, whose suggestions were helpful.

¹ Quoted from Sarah Dehon Trapier's account. See p. 105 of this article.

² Paul Trapier, *Incidents in My Life: The Autobiography of the Rev. Paul Trapier*, ed. George W. Williams (Charleston, S.C.: Dalcho Historical Society, 1954), 19, 35. The original manuscript is part of the Gadsden Allied Family Papers at the South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston (hereinafter cited as SCHS). Unless otherwise noted, all quotations of Paul Trapier are from his autobiography.

³ Frederick Dalcho, *An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina* (1820; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1972), 223-232.

(1738–1820), a prominent Charleston merchant.⁴ Twenty-year-old Paul Trapier met his future wife in 1826.⁵ She was only twelve years old at the time, but as he later wrote, “I think there sprang up then an incipient attachment, which, unconscious probably to both of us, took deeper root than would seem likely from our difference of ages.”

Paul Trapier was born in 1806 at his grandfather’s country estate, Belvedere, on Charleston Neck. He attended several schools in Charleston, graduated from Harvard in 1825, and subsequently studied for the ministry in New York. In 1830 he was ordained as a priest in the Episcopal church. As a regular delegate to its yearly General Convention, Trapier took an active and significant part in the affairs of the national church. When the South Carolina diocese withdrew to become part of a new church of the Confederate States, he also figured prominently in its councils.⁶

After their initial meeting, Paul Trapier and Sarah Dehon crossed paths again five years later in 1831, when Sarah, along with Paul’s sister Alicia, began taking lessons with a tutor at the Trapier home. Paul, by then a member of the clergy, was “charmed” with Sarah’s “appearance and manners at the age of 17.” The two became engaged the following year and were married on April 27, 1833.⁷ Decades later he said of that day, “I secured a blessing second only to that of acceptance with my Saviour, whom I thank unceasingly for giving me such a wife.”

George W. Williams noted in his introduction to the Paul Trapier autobiography that the minister’s life “began in affluence and ended in poverty, began in happiness and ended in misery.” This also was true, of course, of the woman who shared his life for nearly forty years. The young couple spent time during the early years of their marriage at the rectory of St. Andrew’s Parish Church, Rev. Paul Trapier’s first parochial charge, located on the Ashley River, northwest of Charleston.⁸ The St. Andrew’s parsonage, Trapier wrote, “was embowered in one of the most beautiful gardens which nature and art can create—more than two hundred varieties of camellia, combined with stately avenues of magnolia, to delight the eye even of European visitors.”⁹ Of that time, he recalled, “We enjoyed the seclusion very much, as it enabled us to see so much more of each other, and many were the happy days we passed in our diminutive parlor, or in

⁴ N. Louise Bailey, ed., *Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981), 3: 625.

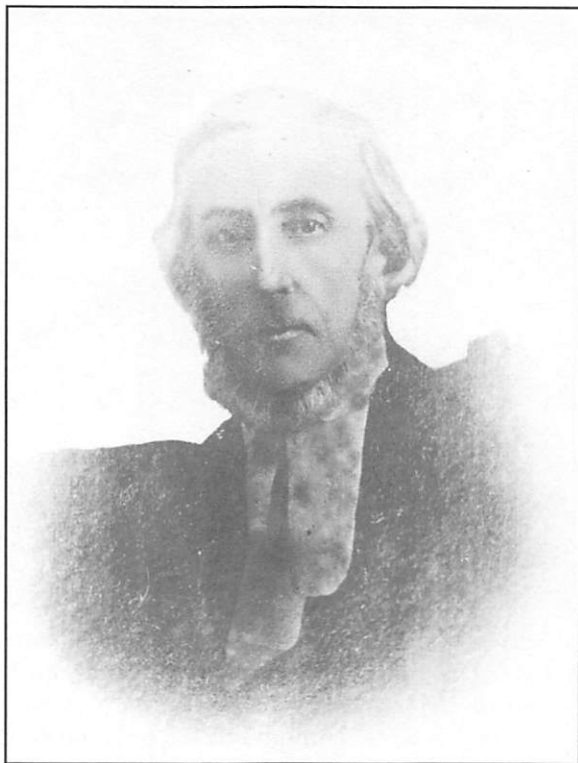
⁵ Trapier, *Incidents in My Life*, 19.

⁶ *Ibid.*, viii, 1, 17.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ [C. C. Pinckney, Peter J. Shand, and Paul Trapier], *Report of the Committee on the Destruction of Churches in the Diocese of South Carolina during the Late War: Presented to the Protestant Episcopal Convention, May 1868* (Charleston, S.C.: J. Walker, Printer, 1868), 8.



Rev. Paul Trapier (1806–1872). Sarah Dehon, the daughter of an Episcopal bishop, married Paul Trapier, a Harvard-educated Episcopal minister, on April 27, 1833, when she was eighteen years old. Paul and Sarah Trapier had twelve children, born between 1834 and 1856. From the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.

walking about under the trees around the house, with our then only child, the very perfection in our eyes of infant loveliness." Finding that this "lodge in the wilderness" would not do for a permanent home, the couple moved back to Charleston to live with "Mother Dehon" at her elegant home on Meeting Street (today known as the Nathaniel Russell House). Their twelve children were all born at this place, where the family resided for the next twenty-five years.¹⁰

¹⁰ Paul Trapier, *The Private Register of the Rev. Paul Trapier* (Charleston, S.C.: Dalcho Historical Society, 1958), passim. Their children were: Sarah Alicia (1834-



Rev. Paul Trapier was rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (pictured) from 1829 to 1835. The rector, Sarah Dehon Trapier, and their eldest child, Sarah Alicia (b. 1834), were part-time residents of the parsonage at St. Andrew's during this time. Though located only a few miles outside of Charleston, Paul Trapier described the parsonage as a "lodge in the wilderness." From the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.

In 1840 Paul Trapier became the rector of St. Michael's Church in Charleston.¹¹ He described its congregation as "made up in large part of old families, priding themselves upon ancestry and attached to the church rather because their fathers had been there than from enlightened acquaintance with its principles." Devout, serious, and uncompromising in matters of the faith, the rector attempted changes at St. Michael's that proved controversial, and "after a long struggle of six years," he resigned, though he was consoled by his certainty that he had left behind there "a small but

1878), Paul (1836-1855), Frances Dehon (called "Fanny," 1838-1848), Mary (b. 1840), Theodore Dehon (1841-1905), Zoe (b. 1843), Pierre DuGue (b. 1846), Alice Pauline (b. 1849), Elizabeth Shubrick (called "Lillie," 1850-1864), Anne Dehon (b. 1851), Edith Russell (b. 1853), and Richard Shubrick (b. 1856). In his autobiography, Paul Trapier noted that his daughter Mary married Thomas Fisher Gadsden (1839-1891), son of Christopher Gadsden, an Episcopal bishop of South Carolina, in 1866.

¹¹ Trapier, *Incidents in My Life*, 20.

devotedly pious band of Christians, the leaven to leaven the lump of worldliness, and to bring a blessing upon the Church in that Congregation."

Soon after leaving St. Michael's, Rev. Paul Trapier played a principal role in the establishment of Calvary Church in Charleston, a "project for good to the souls of slaves," as he called it. He was appointed minister there in April 1847. Earlier that year, a layman, Henry D. Lesesne, had put forward resolutions at the fifty-eighth diocesan convention "deploring the lack of adequate Church provision for the colored people of the city" and calling for the "establishing and maintaining of a congregation of colored people in Charleston." Trapier stated in his first annual report that the Calvary congregation included "both white and colored," who attended the services and the Sunday School. By late 1849, the growing congregation was worshipping in a new church building on Beaufain Street. Trapier ministered at Calvary until 1856, at which time he resigned due to ill health.¹² In 1855 he published a catechism specifically designed for black communicants.¹³

About two-and-a-half years before the war, Paul Trapier was elected to a professorship at the newly established diocesan theological seminary in Camden.¹⁴ He purchased a large house just outside of town called Kamschatka (formerly owned by James Chesnut and his wife, Mary Boykin Chesnut, the famous diarist).¹⁵ Here, Trapier wrote, "I looked forward to passing the remainder of my days most delightfully . . . The students of the Seminary were pious and studious, several of them of rare intelligence."

¹² Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820-1957* (Columbia, S.C.: R. L. Bryan Co., 1957), 202.

¹³ See Paul Trapier, *The Church Catechism Made Plain, for the Use of Those Who Cannot Read: On the Creed* (New York: General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, 1855).

¹⁴ Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 687-689. The seminary opened in January 1859 and closed in June 1862.

¹⁵ Elisabeth Muhlenfield, *Mary Boykin Chesnut: A Biography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 62. James Chesnut had the house built for his wife, Mary. Kamchatka (also known by this spelling) was named for a Siberian peninsula. The house is extant and is a contributing property to the city of Camden Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In the 1905 edition of Mary Chesnut's diary, she mentions a trip that she took to her old home in Camden on June 1, 1865: "The Trapiers live there now. In those drawing-rooms where the children played Puss in Boots, where we have so often danced and sung, but never prayed before, Mr. Trapier held his prayer-meeting. I do not think I ever did as much weeping or as bitter in the same space of time . . . He prayed that we might have strength to stand up and bear our bitter disappointment, to look on our ruined homes and desolated country and be strong. And he prayed for the man [Confederate president Jefferson Davis] 'we elected to be our ruler and guide.' We knew that they had put him in a dungeon and in chains." Mary Boykin Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, ed. Isabella D. Martin and Myrta Lockett Avery (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1905), 397.



Sarah Dehon Trapier lived most of her life in this neoclassical mansion at 51 Meeting Street, Charleston. The house, which was completed in 1808, was built for her maternal grandfather, wealthy merchant Nathaniel Russell (1738–1820). After Russell's death, the house remained in the family until 1857, when it was sold to Governor Robert F. W. Allston. Historic Charleston Foundation purchased the property in 1955 and operates it as a house museum. From the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.

One of these gifted students was William Porcher DuBose (1836–1918), later a Confederate chaplain and renowned Episcopal theologian. When the war began, DuBose, like all of the other seminarians, soon enlisted in military service, and after about a year, the school shut down.¹⁶

¹⁶ Theodore DuBose Bratton, *An Apostle of Reality: The Life and Thought of the Reverend William Porcher DuBose* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936), 45-49.

"DARK CLOUDS NOW GATHERED ROUND US"

Sarah Trapier's manuscript, which is part of the Gadsden Allied Family Papers at the South Carolina Historical Society, was written in 1865. Her narrative commences as her family is well into the third year of their residence in Camden. Full of pathos as well as religious and patriotic fervor, it opens with a description of the vicissitudes and hardships of their lives during wartime, but mainly concerns two fateful months that the Trapiers endured toward the close of the war, in a town that lay in the path of General Sherman's destructive march through the state.

Sherman's campaign across South Carolina began on the first day of February 1865. His army of over sixty thousand men was divided into two wings. The right wing, under the command of General O. O. Howard, included General John A. Logan's 15th Corps. After leaving much of the capital city of Columbia in ashes, Sherman moved his armies northward. At Liberty Hill, in northwestern Kershaw District, General Logan divided his command into two columns and sent a detachment from one, under the command of Colonel R. N. Adams, to raid Camden to the south.¹⁷

David P. Conyngham, a newspaper correspondent traveling with Sherman's army, described Camden as "a beautiful town" and mentioned its historical significance, noting that two battles had been fought there during the American Revolution. He also related how the mayor and city council had prepared "a very pretty speech and address" for General Sherman on surrendering the town, and that it was "rather mortifying to them to have it unceremoniously occupied by some foragers." Conyngham stated that the first Union forces to arrive at Camden on February 23 were a small group of "foragers," who "skirmished with some cavalry, driving them into the town, and, following them, soon took possession of it."¹⁸

This "cavalry" defending Camden was a small group of militia composed of elderly men and boys under the command of Col. Burwell Jones.¹⁹ Conyngham reported that on the next morning, Generals Howard and Logan sent in larger detachments, who "destroyed all government property, public stores, the depot, and some public buildings." The federals additionally destroyed "about fifty thousand rations of corn meal, and four thousand bales of cotton" in Camden.²⁰

¹⁷ John Gilchrist Barrett, *Sherman's March through the Carolinas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), 35, 101.

¹⁸ David P. Conyngham, *Sherman's March through the South: With Sketches and Incidents of the Campaign* (New York: Sheldon and Co., 1865), 343-344.

¹⁹ Thomas J. Kirkland and Robert M. Kennedy, *Historic Camden, Part Two: Nineteenth Century* (Columbia, S.C.: The State Company, 1926), 163.

²⁰ Conyngham, *Sherman's March through the South*, 343.

"The storm has at length burst upon us; the anticipated blow has fallen, and Camden has been made to undergo, in her turn, all the horrors of invasion," lamented a local newspaper on March 10, 1865. The same edition gave further details of the sacking:

The advance body . . . first fired the freight and passenger depots; then the Cornwallis house, also the Commissary store house on the southeast corner of Broad and DeKalb Streets. From this latter building the fire spread south and consumed all the structures on that square fronting Broad Street, down to Rutledge. They also burnt Mr. Geo. Douglas' store, cotton sheds in rear of Gerald's and Bell's stores, and the Bridge over the Wateree River, the Masonic Hall and adjacent buildings. They broke and pillaged all stores, took what goods they wanted and threw the rest into the streets . . . After the cotton and stores had been burned the majority of the Yankees dispersed over the town in small squads to rob on private account . . . The detachment first entering Camden was followed by others, and large forces were camped in the suburbs. In fact the whole of Sherman's army was within twenty miles of us. They left the town Saturday night."²¹

Sarah Trapier's account echoes a number of the particulars reported in this article published in the *Camden Journal and Confederate*, which described Sherman's soldiers as having "run through the gamut, from impertinence to outrage, from pilfering to wholesale spoliation. Many families have been stripped of everything they had in the world. In one neighborhood, where they unearthed buried liquor, they were especially riotous and fired houses with wanton cruelty."²²

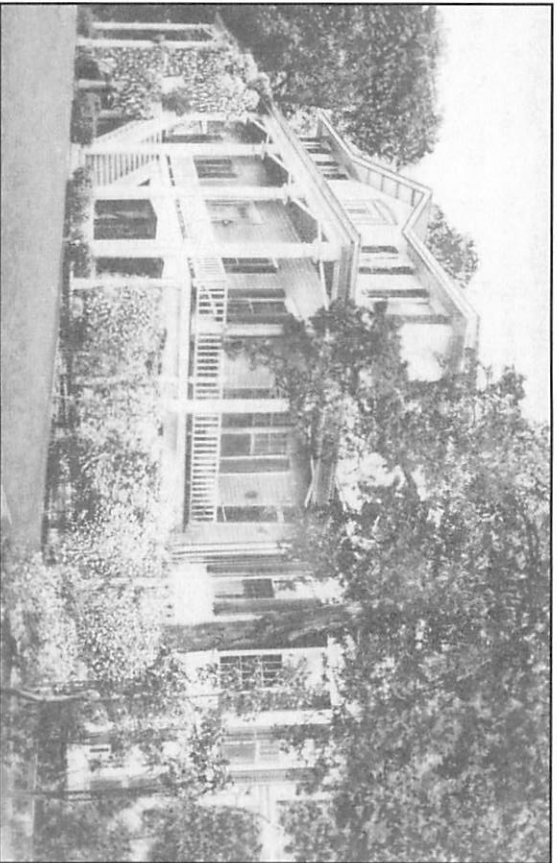
When it was all over, the Trapiers were left with little else on earth except the house that they lived in and each other. "I take refuge in my family," Paul Trapier recorded a few months later, "without which I see not how I could struggle on."

Less than two months after Sherman's armies left, Camden was subjected to another invasion during Potter's Raid, an expedition led by Union general E. E. Potter. His forces left the seaport of Georgetown, South Carolina, on April 5, 1865, headed west, their principal purpose being the destruction of railroads between Florence and Sumter. The general's orders also included a directive that "the food supplies in that section should be exhausted." The infantry troops led by Potter included the 25th and 157th Ohio Volunteers, the 157th New York Volunteers, the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, and five companies of the 102nd U.S. Colored Troops.²³ Eventually, General Potter's force of about twenty-five hundred men reached the

²¹ *Journal and Confederate* (Camden, S.C.), March 10, 1865, quoted in Kirkland and Kennedy, *Historic Camden*, 163-164.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Allan D. Thigpen, *The Illustrated Recollections of Potter's Raid, April 5-21, 1865* (Sumter, S.C.: Gamecock City Printing, Inc., 1998), ii, 618.



Paul Trapier purchased Kamschatka in 1858 and relocated his family from Charleston to Camden. The Italianate-style house, constructed circa 1854, previously had been the home of diarist Mary Chesnut and her husband, James. From the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.

vicinity of Camden, where they overcame the resistance offered by a small group of home guard (old men, boys, and furloughed veterans) and entered the town on April 17.²⁴

Emma Holmes, a refugee from Charleston living in Camden during this time, recorded a few paragraphs in her diary about Potter's Raid, stating that his troops "committed some gross outrages—violating a young lady at Mrs. Baxley's." She also noted acts of pillaging and related reports of many dead black women and children left along the roadside in the wake of the departing army.²⁵ Sarah Trapier's account only briefly mentions Potter's Raid in Camden, but she did record that after Potter's army left the town on the April 18, "Numbers of families awoke to find themselves without a single servant." She added, though, that "none of our servants left us."²⁶ This was true at the time, but in his autobiography (most of which was

²⁴ Kirkland and Kennedy, *Historic Camden*, 174.

²⁵ Emma Holmes, *The Diary of Miss Emma Holmes, 1861-1866*, ed. John F. Marszalek (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 434-435.

²⁶ Quoted from Sarah Trapier's account. See p. 119 of this article.

written in 1865), Paul Trapier related that all of their slaves had left the family by the end of July.²⁷ In his official report on the expedition, General Potter noted that "five thousand negroes joined the column and were brought within our lines."²⁸

Several accounts written by individuals residing in Camden during the winter and spring of 1865 exist, but few are as lengthy or as detailed as that of Sarah Trapier. The collections published by the United Daughters of the Confederacy contain only a few reminiscences by Camden residents about the time, one of which, by Esther S. Davis, is quoted extensively in volume 2 of the most comprehensive history of the town to date, *Historic Camden* (1926), by Thomas K. Kirkland and Robert M. Kennedy. The Davis memoir, from 1911, and the recollections of Harriet DuBose Kershaw Lang, published in the *South Carolina Historical Magazine* in 1958, are among the best known women's narratives concerning this period in Camden's history, but both were written long after the fact.²⁹ Sarah Trapier's account is rare, then, and all the more significant, because it was recorded (at most) only a few months after the time of the actual events.

An ardent believer in states' rights, Rev. Paul Trapier had rejoiced at the prospect of establishing an independent southern confederacy. The single letter to him from Sarah that has been preserved reveals that she, even as a teenage girl, shared his strong political convictions.³⁰ But both husband and wife witnessed their hopes crushed. For Paul Trapier, the defeat of the South not only meant the end of the Confederacy, but the end of the American republic. Writing in late 1865, impoverished and embittered, he expressed despair for his country, "all of which," he emphasized, he once used to love as his own.

I have no heart to derive satisfaction from the glories departed of the first successful Revolution, nor can I do aught else than mourn over those not less magnificent of our late unsuccessful, but heroic, attempt . . . I try in vain to lay hold of something to rest on for a ground-work of hope for the future of my country. The U.S. Constitution has long since been a piece of waste paper . . . [The] right of Secession, for which 13 States have been pouring out the lifeblood of their dearest and their best, is now overpowered by the might of a brutal majority, and the people of those 13 States after having been over-run and desolated by hordes of cruel soldiers, are drawn in worse than chains of iron back into a Union, which for 40 years has been but an instrument of torture to them. The choicest families of the land are reduced to menial service, and degraded by petty military satraps below

²⁷ Trapier, *Incidents in My Life*, 32.

²⁸ Thigpen, *Illustrated Recollections of Potter's Raid*, 612.

²⁹ See Rives Land Beaty, ed., "Recollections of Harriet DuBose Kershaw Long," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 59 (July, October 1958): 159-170, 195-205.

³⁰ This letter was written during the nullification crisis of the 1830s and is found in the Gadsden Allied Family Papers, SCHS.

their own slaves—and those whom our entire people have been delighting for 4 years to honour are caged and fettered like felons, to glut the vile thirst of a vulgar race for a base triumph over greatness, before which, when it was in power, they trembled, and over which, now that it is fallen, they exult with demoniac malice.

For the next five years, struggling to support his large family, Trapier ministered at several different churches in South Carolina, including the Church of the Nativity in Union, and taught again when, for a short while, the diocesan seminary was reestablished in Spartanburg. In 1870 financial need forced him to accept a position as the rector of a parish in Maryland. His health began to fail the following year, and in 1872, he died.³¹ Sarah Dehon survived her husband for another seventeen years, passing away on September 27, 1889, at the age of seventy-four. Both are buried at St. Michael's Church cemetery in Charleston.³²

EDITORIAL NOTE

In the transcription of Sarah Dehon Trapier's narrative, a few changes were made to punctuation and spelling, principally in the omission of some dashes between words or sentences and in writing out ampersands. All scriptural quotations are taken from the King James Version.

THE CIVIL WAR NARRATIVE OF SARAH DEHON TRAPIER

You ask me to give you some account of our family during and since the war; and I will do so, as it will give you some idea of the situation of thousands of others, like our own.

At the commencement of the war, we numbered twelve (my husband and myself and ten children)—of these all were girls, except three, and one of these is a little boy of nine years of age. Our eldest son, our comfort and stay, always delicate from childhood, but brave of spirit and strong in faith, entered the army at the age of 18.³³ Our hearts sank within us as we thought of the sufferings and trials thenceforth to the lot of one so delicately nurtured, so fondly cherished. Little did we know how fearfully were these forebodings to be realized. The first year of the war we never saw him, but

³¹ Trapier, *Incidents in My Life*, 36-38.

³² Clare Jervey, *Inscriptions on the Tablets and Gravestones in St. Michael's Church and Churchyard, Charleston, S.C.* (Columbia, S.C.: The State Company, 1906), 270, 315.

³³ Theodore D. Trapier served in the Marion Light Artillery (also known as Parker's Company).

he bore up wonderfully under the hardships, fatigues, and want of food, which he constantly endured; and our hearts were cheered by letters full of ardent patriotism, constant hope, and patient endurance; winning by his gentlemanly deportment and faithful discharge of his duties the unqualified approval of his commander and the affectionate esteem of his fellow soldiers. At the end of that time, constant exposure brought on the fever of the climate, and he returned home feeble and emaciated. But we nursed him with the tenderest care, and home joys and home sympathies acted like a charm, and he returned to camp brave and hopeful as ever.

In the meantime our second son pursued his studies at home, and aided his father in every possible way, until the third year of the war, when, at the age of 17, he too entered the army.³⁴

My husband, as you know, is a clergyman. He came to our present home advanced in years and broken down in constitution by 25 years of laborious ministerial duties. As Professor in the Theological Seminary of our Church in this Diocese he received a salary of \$1500. We owned the house we lived in,³⁵ and the income from our other property amounted to about \$2000; so that at the commencement of the war our large family were able with economy to live comfortably. We knew that this could not last. But we knew the cause to be a righteous one, and we gave ourselves to it, expecting and prepared to suffer.

My children seemed born patriots. Descended on the father's side from those who had distinguished themselves in the first Revolution, and on the mother's side from those who, driven out of France during the Reign of Terror, had become broken-hearted by oppression and suffering, the love of liberty and independence seemed a part of their nature.³⁶ You will not wonder that they gave themselves heart and soul to the work. The chamber of my grown daughters was soon stripped of the carpet from the floor and the curtains from the bed, and even a part of their warm winter-covering went to minister to the comfort of the poor, suffering soldiers. They knit at

³⁴ Pierre D. Trapier served as a private in the Second Regiment, Company F, Confederate States Engineer Corps (the Engineer Corps did not have state designations).

³⁵ James Chesnut sold the house, Kamschatka, to Paul Trapier in December 1858 for eight thousand dollars. It was sold to Mary M. Kirkland in 1871 for less than half that amount. Kamschatka File, Camden Archives, Camden, S.C.

³⁶ Rev. Paul Trapier was the grandson of Paul Trapier (1749-1778), a Georgetown planter and delegate to the Continental Congress. Sarah Trapier's grandfather was a French Protestant emigrant who settled in Boston, Massachusetts. Paul Trapier left a history of his family entitled "Notices of Ancestors and Relatives, Paternal and Maternal." It is the first part of his manuscript memoir at the SCHS (which includes his autobiography). An edited and annotated version of the family history was published in the *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina* 58 (1953): 29-54.

even their meals to supply stockings for our armies. I had then four sweet little girls. They called themselves "Us Four," and everyone knew them by that name.³⁷ Well do I remember the delight with which they packed their first box for the hospital. They earned money by making little fancy articles, and with this they purchased comforts for the hospitals, then crowded with the sick and dying.

During the first year of the war these children earned in this way 50 and 60 dollars. The second year of the war our income from the Theological Seminary was withdrawn for a time, as its exercises were discontinued, because of the enlisting of all the students in the army, and everything advanced in price. But success then waited on our banners and we began cheerfully to deny ourselves many of the comforts we had been accustomed to from childhood. We were at no expense for education, my eldest daughter instructing the younger sisters and their little brother. My husband worked daily in the garden and thus supplied us with many little comforts. He tried at one time to teach a boys' school. But his strength failed and after three months he was obliged to give it up. Providentially at the next meeting of our Diocesan Convention it was generously resolved to continue the salaries of the Professors, and our income became again more nearly adequate to our expenses.

The third year of the war the taxes became enormous, eating up our entire income, and obliging us to live on our capital. Our younger brother, then Rector of St. Philip's Church died this year, worn out by incessant labours for his flock and for the sick, the wounded and the dying at the hospitals.³⁸ His family (a wife and two children) came to us and are with us now.³⁹ Our capital was invested largely in Confederate securities, and as the only currency was in Confederate notes, which were at a great discount, we were sinking more and more of our means. Still we never dreamed of the failure of our glorious Cause, and we therefore willingly and cheerfully submitted to increased privations. Tea, sugar, and butter were luxuries reserved for sickness.

Often have we been for months without fresh meat, dessert, or sweet things of any kind. I have seen the little children sit down with all of us to a dinner of a shred of bacon, hominy, and rice, with some preparation of corn,

³⁷ The Trapier daughters known as "Us Four" were the youngest: Alice Pauline (b. 1849); Elizabeth Shubrick, called "Lillie" (1850-1864); Anne Dehon (b. 1851); and Edith Russell (b. 1853).

³⁸ Rev. William Dehon (1817-1862). He died late in the second year of the war.

³⁹ William Dehon's wife was Anne Manigault Middleton Dehon (1820-1876), daughter of Arthur Middleton and Alicia Russell Middleton. She was Sarah Trapier's cousin as well as her sister-in-law. According to the 1860 census, Rev. William Dehon had two children living in that year: William Russell Dehon, age eleven, and Mary B. Dehon, age thirteen.

and get up hungry but without a murmur, yea, with smiling faces, assuring us that they would be only the more healthy for going without sweet things for their country's sake, and sometimes they would amuse themselves with descriptions of the wonderful things they would enjoy when peace and independence were attained. Alas this year a great sorrow came upon them. The little band of "Us Four" was broken. Our Lillie, the darling of our hearts, sickened and died. Weeks of suffering and anguish, nights of burning fever, were appointed her. God bless the warm Southern hearts that helped us in this dark hour out their own scanty store! So generously! So unweariedly! Little cups of sugar, papers of tea, a few spoonfuls of arrowroot, little supplies of milk, pats of butter garnished with sweet flowers, would bring a faint smile to her wan face. Especially would we cherish with ever-fresh gratitude the readiness with which a gentleman, twelve miles from us, an entire stranger, offered us the free use of his private ice-house, into which he had collected at great trouble for the use of his own family and of sick and wounded soldiers, that most refreshing and rarest of comforts in the then condition of our Confederacy. Nor can we forget the kindness of our neighbours, who, knowing that we had no means of sending for it, placed their own servants and horses at our disposal, thereby affording to our dear child the very relief she had been longing for most, and relished most highly.

How hard it was to give her up! She had been with us in all our struggles; how sorely we should miss her when her hour of triumph came! Short-sighted affection! Her Heavenly Father knew better. Gradually He reconciled her to the parting. At first it was "Pray for me, Mamma, that I may be better. How can I give you all up! How can I go to the far distant land!" But towards the last a great change came over her. "I want to die." "Pray for me that I may continue His forever and daily increase in His Holy Spirit, more and more, until I come to His heavenly Kingdom." To that "better country"⁴⁰ she has gone, and now that we have no other country, and labour awaits those who remain, we know that "He doeth all things well."⁴¹

I now pass to the last year of the war. Our pecuniary embarrassments were greatly increased. No clothing could be procured but at an enormous expense. Early in the war we received from Europe through the kindness of a friend, a box containing cloth and the materials for making it up, which proved the greatest possible help to our large family. But this was now nearly exhausted, and the servants were greatly in need. I made coats of carpet for the women and managed to get a suit apiece for the men.

⁴⁰ Hebrews 11:16: "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."

⁴¹ From a ballad entitled "He Doeth All Things Well, or My Sister" (1847), lyrics by "F. M. E." and music by I. B. Woodbury; based on Mark 7:37 ("He hath done all things well").

Dark clouds now gathered round us. Instead of hearing of victories, the tidings were often of defeat. From the moment of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's removal from the command of the army of the West, our doom seemed sealed.⁴² As soon as Sherman got into the interior, the difficulty of procuring food for our armies became more and more serious. Our men, however, had learned endurance. They could have borne personal privations. But now a merciless horde were let loose upon the defenseless wives and children of our soldiers. Daily accounts were reaching them of these fearful raids, which left behind nothing but starvation, desolation and dishonour! Ah, little do you know the love, the veneration, the chivalrous devotion the Southern soldier feels for women! Throughout this war she has been his guardian angel, his tender nurse, her prayers strengthening him in his weakness, her sympathy soothing him in his sorrows, her patient example nerving him to self-denial and endurance, her voice encouraging him to deeds of noble daring. Now these loved ones were to be exposed, alone and helpless, to the insults of lawless ruffians, to the lusts of brutal negroes. Can it be wondered that his heart failed him, that his spirit was crushed? Outnumbered by many thousands, food failing, should he persevere in a struggle which must end in defeat, or should he flee to the protection of all he had now to live for?

Up to this time our family had not been visited by any of these fearful raiders. But about the month of January rumours came of their approach. About the same time we learned that our eldest son was ill in Columbia. After an examination by the Board of Surgeons there, he was sent home on a furlough of sixty days. He had been sick a long time, but had endured it patiently till a violent cold brought on a fever with derangement of the liver, spleen and stomach. We were shocked by his emaciation. But we nursed him tenderly, and he recovered slowly, not as on previous occasions of illness, for now the buoyancy of hope was gone.

About the 18th of February we heard of the evacuation of Charleston, then of the advance of the enemy upon Columbia. All day on the 20th we could hear the booming of the cannon, and the night of the 21st the sky was lighted up by the blaze from the conflagration of that beautiful but ill fated city, the smoke from which obscured the declining sun of the following day. With sad hearts we began to prepare for our turn, our suffering from the same ruthless savages, who had thus sacked and destroyed our capital.

⁴² General Joseph E. Johnston (1807-1891) was the commander of the Army of Tennessee. Confederate president Jefferson Davis was unhappy with Johnston's strategy of withdrawal before the army of General William T. Sherman and replaced him with General John B. Hood, just before the fall of Atlanta in July 1864. Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray: Lives of the Confederate Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 161-162.

Hastily we gathered together what we valued most, and set ourselves to conceal these in the dead of night; and night after night, when all others were asleep, did my husband and son and nephew, steal out, as if on dark deed intent to secure what of right was theirs, or entrusted to them, and groping their way, with scarcely light enough to see where they were, endeavoured to hide in the ground the silver and jewelry which they knew would be tempting to the cupidity of the marauders, who were soon to be among us. Especially they had to be cautious, as the negroes, it was known, were on the lookout to appropriate to themselves, or discover to the enemy, what would else have escaped the closest search of the latter. We live on the outskirts of the town of Camden, and unfortunately next to a family of Jews of very bad character. They kept a grocery store in the town, where they had large quantities of liquor. This they had been wagoning in open day to their yard, and burying in a large pit within sight of, and with the help of, their negroes. Thus was a new and horrible danger added to our fearful anticipations.

The question pressing most heavily upon us was as to what was to be done with our son. He was feeble. If he stayed he might be carried off as a prisoner, or shot. There was no hospital here for him to go to, and as it was expected that the enemy would approach in one direction, and perhaps not in very large force; it was determined, on the advice of military men, that he should go out on horseback, and conceal himself in the woods, until the advancing army should have passed by. One of our slaves, a boy who had been brought up with him, and who, he trusted, would prove faithful, was to accompany him and take charge of the provisions for themselves and horses. But what a change! From the tender nursing of mother and sisters to cold and rain, privation and fatigue, and harrowing anxiety about us all! Poor boy! I remember well how worn and sad he looked when, on the afternoon of that very day of his leaving us, he threw himself on the bed beside me and exclaimed, "How I should like to rest here for a year!" Alas, he had not rested an hour when the servants came rushing in, crying out, "The Yankees are in the town!" He jumped up, and we all ran downstairs with him. His father was out on one of the horses trying to find out in what direction they were coming. But the other horse was soon saddled. The haversack and blankets were placed on it, and with one hurried kiss and a "God bless you" he went towards the stable. His faithful nurse followed him, and on his return she said, "Poor fellow! He was so weak he had to be helped on the horse." He left word for his father that he would wait in an adjoining wood for the boy with the provisions. In about half an hour his father returned and reported that the Yankees were in Camden. Hurrying the boy off, he joined him in the wood. Here, after making such arrangements as he could for our son's comfort, his father with a heavy heart parted from him commending him to his God and to the care of the servant who seemed to be greatly alarmed.

What a sad circle gathered round the fire that evening! Before we retired to bed, however, we were somewhat relieved by hearing that the report of the enemy's being in the town was false; they were still a few miles distant. The next morning everything seemed tranquil. My little Edith, however, was quite sick, and several of us were in the chamber with her, when about 2 o'clock one of the little girls, going to the window, exclaimed, "Why here is Teedy (Theodore) coming back!" "No," said another, "that man has a blue coat."

"The Yankees! The Yankees!" we all cried out. The children rushed downstairs to their Papa, while I stayed a few minutes to soothe the sick child, who became very much agitated.

When I reached the parlour, I found my sister (Mrs. Dehon), my four grown daughters, my niece and the younger children assembled. Not the slightest symptom of fear or agitation appeared. Several armed men were in the room demanding weapons. "By what authority do you demand arms of women and children?" said my eldest daughter. "By authority, Madam, of the United States," said the officer, apparently a sergeant in command. "I have seen," he added, "many Confederate women, who would as soon shoot a Yankee as eat a dinner." Just then, my husband came in. He had been taken at the gate, to which he had gone to meet the first of this troop, and they had at first spoken of taking him to the general. But, after whispering together for a while, they had told him he must come with them into the house and give up whatever arms were there. He had told them that he had no arms about him, meaning on his person, and they now accused him of lying, when they found there were arms in the house. He repelled the accusation indignantly, but they persisted in it more and more rudely.

When all the weapons of every sort that we had were produced, they took them to the front of the house, and broke the barrels of the guns by striking them on the post of the piazza excepting a very superior double-barreled fowling piece of my nephew's, which the sergeant took a fancy to and carried off. "This is the way," they said, "we do with the arms of rebels."

We were now all assembled in the piazza, ten helpless women and children, my husband standing bare-headed on the steps, his grey hairs, and noble, dignified and fearless mien our only earthly protection. Crowds of soldiers, mostly on horseback, without any order, and apparently under no control came pouring in. One man as he looked up and saw so many girls, said in a tone of peculiarly impertinent inquiry, "Seminary?" "No," said I, "a private house." "Very nice place," said the fellow, "should like to live here myself." "Yes," added another, "very good looking girls too."

An officer, as he rode by, inquired of my husband how many men there were in Camden? "You do not expect me to answer that question, do you?" said my husband. "No," said the officer, "and if you were I should not believe you." "You seem to take me for a Secessionist," said my husband, "and I am neither ashamed nor afraid to say that so I have been and I am. But

I am a clergyman, with ten helpless females under my care. I ask a guard for their protection." "You should have thought of that," was the reply, "four years ago," and bidding his men to follow him he rode off, leaving us to the tender mercies of any who might come after him.

As he rode off with most of his squad, one of them lingering a little behind, came up to my husband and presenting his musket, demanded Mr. T's watch. "If you take it," said my husband, "you will be stealing, for I heard your captain just now bid you to go with him." "Say that again," exclaimed the fellow, "and I'll blow your brains out." Whereupon he seized the watch and went off.

Men were now surrounding the house, coming in at the back of it and in front, calling aloud for wine and whiskey. My husband assured them we had no whiskey, as we had not been able to procure any for some time, even as medicine, and that the only wine in the house was for the Holy Communion. One of the officers insisting on our bringing this, we broke and poured out of the window, one of the only two bottles we had, and gave him the other, which he drank the most of and gave the rest to his men. They demanded the key of the cellar saying they didn't believe we had so little and that they would search for themselves. They crowded accordingly into the basement of the house, where we had a pit, in which we used to put ice. They evidently suspected that we had silver there, for they thrust their bayonets down as deep as they could into the sand at the bottom of it, and did in fact come within a few inches of a box containing the chief part of our silver, which as we have learned from our son, he had buried there, under the side of the same pit.

At the same time others in the yard were chasing the pigs, wringing off the necks of the fowls and turning out the cow (which in consequence we lost as also most of our poultry) and doing in short every sort of mischief. It was now near dinner-time. All the morning I had been alternately with the family, witnessing these scenes, or with the sick child, soothing her, and availing myself of the solitude of the chamber to commit them all to the care of Him without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground. About this time the information of the abundance of liquor next door, began to spread. The inferior officers let the men know that they could get an abundance of it, and with buckets and cans and jugs and tubs they crowded over to the Jews. This gave us a brief respite, and we availed ourselves of it to eat a few mouthfuls of dinner, knowing that we should need all the strength we could get.

We had hardly finished before the current set in again for our house, now more violently than ever. They now clamoured for provisions, coming in at the basement, they dashed right through the windows, shivering not only the panes of glass, but kicking to pieces the sashes, and even the venetian blinds. They evidently were expecting to find in so large a house, an abundant supply, and when on entering the store-room they saw only 4 hams, a 1/2 barrel of rice, and a couple of barrels of corn, they suspected us of

concealing the bulk of our food. Our seampstress remonstrated with them about taking from a clergyman with a large family the little that remained to him. I too reminded them who had said, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him."⁴³ Some of them seemed abashed, and a young lad said he couldn't bear it as his mother had taught him differently. They took nothing from the store-room, but seeing a barrel of wheat flour in another room, "We'll send the commissary's wagon for this tomorrow," said one of them. We congratulated ourselves that our chief supply of corn (about 75 bushels), which we had put into bins in a room adjoining the stable, was thus far undetected.

A systematic search was now commenced by them for silver and jewelry. Beginning in the lower rooms they now ransacked every sideboard, press, bureau, trunk and drawer. The silver forks and spoons used at dinner, and taken into the pantry to be washed, were soon pocketed. We had asked some of the men for a guard, and we have every reason to believe that the set, who at this time were rifling us, had orders to keep out others, in order that they might carry on their depredations the more methodically and thoroughly, for while they were about this, one or two stationed at the doors, warned off others, and another calling himself a lieutenant, conducted the movements of the rest. They threatened to break open the locks, if the keys were not instantly forthcoming, and one of them, betraying with what practices he was familiar, said, "If I only had a piece of wire, I could open every lock in your house." "I don't doubt it," said my husband, and the man smiled with satisfaction at his recognition of his accomplishment in roguery.

Wherever they went, they were accompanied by my husband and daughters and niece, and sometimes, methought they quailed beneath the steady gaze, the flashing eye, and curling lip of these brave, because innocent and patriotic Southern girls. Thus they saw on the center table in our drawing room two very handsome Bibles in morocco cases richly gilt. These they took up, but laid down again, while the eyes of those in the room were upon them, but when the light was carried out, (it was now night) they whisked off the Bibles, and when we next looked, both books were gone.

As they were going into one of the rooms, "this," said my husband, "is the chamber of one of my daughters." "What of that?" said one of them, "do you think a woman's room is better than any other?" And in they rushed, opening every drawer, tumbling up the dresses, etc. which were in it, and making offensive remarks on them as they threw them on the floor. They did the same in all the chambers. In my sister's room, they insisted upon her opening her desk, from which they took all the Confederate money they found there and some pictures of value. They made my niece open her

⁴³ Romans 12:20: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink."

dressing-case and carried off from it all it contained. "We're only taking this to the quartermaster's," said one of them, as he gathered his spoils into his handkerchief. "You'll have it all back again tomorrow." "You must think us very simple," said my husband. The man smiled, and now Gen. Sherman, we see by the papers, avows that such were his orders.

At length they had gone through all the rooms excepting the one where my sick child was in bed already exceedingly nervous with agitation at what she knew was going on. As the men drew near to the door of that room, my husband remonstrated. But they persisted in their purpose and would go in. As they were about to take up the bed-clothes, he renewed his endeavor to dissuade them. But one of them said, "You can take her up," and the men actually were lifting the covering, when the poor child became violently agitated, and on my husband's exclaiming, "Don't you see how the child is troubled?" as she burst into tears, one of them relented, and said to the others, "Well, let her alone." They went, however, over every other part of that chamber, all round the bed, and peeped under it, and drew out a trunk which was there and opened it. In another trunk they saw a cap of my sons. "Whose is this?" asked one of them. We told him. "Your son's in the artillery," he remarked, "a bullet for him," he added, as he put the cap on his own head.

It was now night: the last room was searched. The ruffians at length were out of the house. The house was quiet; and the sick child slept. I was alone, but as I gazed from my window at the camp-fires so near to us, and knew that hordes of drunken revelers were at that time filling our kitchen and out-houses, my heart sank within me at the thought of the appalling night before us. My young daughters so delicately nurtured, so tenderly cherished! I pleaded with intense earnestness that their Heavenly Father would spread His sheltering wings around them. Descending after a while into the parlour I found them all collected, hovering over a little fire, as we did not dare go out of doors to bring in more fuel, they were talking over the events of the day, when suddenly there was a tramp of footsteps, the doors were thrown open and in rushed several armed men. One who seemed to be in command turning to the others said, "Guards stand at the doors!" They lowered their muskets and obeyed.

My husband was at that moment in another room, soothing the younger children, but he came in on hearing the noise; and all the grown people of our household were thus assembled. The officer inquired if such was the case and on our replying in the affirmative, the fellow threw himself with an insolent air into a chair, saying, "Well, we are Northern vandals, we know you have silver and jewelry. We intend to have it, and if you don't hand it up, we will search your persons and burn your house." Of course, we began immediately to take off our finger-rings, ear-rings and brooches. They insisted that we had other valuables elsewhere, whereupon one of my daughters said, "I have a few coins upstairs." My husband, at my sugges-

tion, remonstrated against her going alone with the soldier, and with difficulty obtained leave to follow her under charge of another of these men. During their absence the remaining one employed himself in lecturing us upon the sin of secession, but was so intoxicated that he had at times to support himself by holding on to the back of a chair.

On the return of those who had gone with my daughter, they demanded who next was ready, and my sister went to her room attended in like manner by one of the banditti, and her valuables left from the previous inspection of her room, were now seized. They then asked my husband if he hadn't any watches. He told them his had been stolen by one of their men a few hours before. "Soldiers don't steal," said the inquirer, "they confiscate. But haven't you any more watches?" On my husband replying that there was an old one, a family watch in his study, the most villainous-looking of the creatures, a young man of peculiarly forbidding countenance and coarse and rude beyond even the others, bade my husband show him the way. He made him open every drawer of his escritoire, from which he took whatever was of the least pecuniary value, among other things a seal. As he took it up, my husband [said], "That was the seal of my grandfather." "Isn't it gold?" was the only inquiry, and on being told that it was, he coolly put it into his pocket. As he was coming out, he said, "You're a clergyman, you tell me. I was once a minister's son, but now I'm a prodigal."

Alas what a history those few words reveal! When this man came back into the room where the rest of us were, they resumed their demands for silver and jewelry. They renewed their threat to search our persons, and as I had on their entrance unclasped a brooch to which I attached peculiar value, I now told them frankly I had it on and would hand it to them as soon as I could find it. They became very impatient and violent, saying we had plenty of jewelry still. The "prodigal" taking the candle from the table said, "Here's the torch," and at the same time taking out his watch and holding it in his hand, he added, "We give you five minutes. Let's have the rest of your jewelry, or we will either search you or burn your house. Now is the day of your salvation."⁴⁴

These last words of blasphemy he uttered with a laugh of scoffing, and a look of fearful audacity, winking to the officer, who professed to be a pious Baptist, and had boasted repeatedly that he was "as good as anybody else." At this crisis we rose in a body, declared that, rather than submit to be searched, we would let the house be burned and with one consent we moved toward the door. They asked "what we were after." "Going for blankets," said my sister, "to protect us from the weather," as it was cold and rainy. This decision seemed to startle them, as they had (according to what we

⁴⁴ 2 Corinthians 6:2: "Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

afterwards learned) permission to burn only uninhabited houses. Just then I found the brooch, and as I handed it to one of them, remarked that it was a wedding gift and contained the hair of my father, a Bishop of the Church to which I belonged. He tried to get out the hair, but not succeeding asked, "What are these things?" "Pearls," I said, with which it was set, whereupon he pocketed it.

As we were on our way again towards the door, the "pious Baptist," reeling with liquor, began to assume the part of protector, and said, "They shan't burn your house. They must march over my dead body first," and turning to his associates remarked, "Well they're honest," whereupon he opened one of the doors and they marched out. What a relief to listen to their retreating footsteps! God had indeed proven Himself the "Hearer of Prayer,"⁴⁵ and under the shelter of His wings we were protected. They betook themselves to the kitchen where they became so beastly drunk, that profound slumber soon overpowered them all, and thus did the restraining power of God keep us in safety during the long hours of that horrible night! The frightened servant girls ran to us for protection and slept all night in our nursery.

Never shall I forget that night! We separated into two parties, one keeping watch in the parlour, the other in the room of the sick child. The little children, huddled together, wrapt in blankets on the floor, forgot their sorrow in uneasy slumbers. It was raining incessantly, and as our fires burned out and we did not dare to go for more wood, those of us who were in the parlor suffered from cold. The poor children had gone supperless to bed. I would have given anything for a cup of tea or coffee. Of the latter we had a little, but unfortunately the milk curdled, and was not drinkable. Our lights failed, but fortunately we made a discovery of a little flower-trellis. This we broke into small fragments, and the flame we thus kindled gave us a little light and warmth.

Towards morning at my husband's persuasion, while he watched I threw myself on the bed and slept from sheer exhaustion. I awoke at daylight, and hastened to the window. Not a vestige of the enemy was to be seen. But flames rising in different parts of the horizon, shewed how they were employed. Mills, depots and private dwellings were on fire. About breakfast-time kind enquiries from the neighbours with sad, sad accounts of robbery, insult, and drunkenness poured in. How much cause for gratitude! We had been protected from personal violence and injury. Most of our jewelry and silverware had been undiscovered and though our losses were distressing to us, they were nothing compared to those of some others. Our year's supply of corn was as yet untouched. Around our family altar we gathered with thankful hearts, while my husband poured out in fervent

⁴⁵ Psalm 65:2: "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come."

prayer our united tribute of praise to Him who had thus far watched over us.

About 9 o'clock, stragglers began to make their appearance in our yard, and as they seemed bent on mischief, asking the servants for that "d——d old rebel" (my husband), we persuaded him to stay in the house. Watching them from my chamber window, we saw them to our dismay break open our corn-room. One of them had a horse, and as he entered the carriage-house and drew out the buggy, we inferred of course, that he intended to carry off the corn. But after trying to put their horse with our harness, we heard them breaking the wheels of the buggy. Leaving it thus rendered useless to us they returned to the corn room and after remaining in it a few moments came out and to our great joy rode off. We advised my husband as soon as they had disappeared to nail up the corn-room that its manifestly unprotected condition might not expose it to robbery. This he did.

And now came our greatest sorrow! I had thrown myself on the bed for a few minutes to rest, when I saw the Irish girl already mentioned enter the room, and looking anxiously at me, whisper something to one of my daughters who started up with an exclamation.⁴⁶ I instantly conjectured what had happened. "Theodore has been captured," I said. "Yes," said one of them, "William (the servant who had gone with him) is below and is telling his father all about it."

We all ran downstairs and what a sad sight greeted us. My poor husband! Bravely and nobly had he borne up through all the scenes so torturing to his Southern spirit. But this last was too much. He was weeping bitterly! Bending before him, clasping his knees and sobbing as if his heart would break, sat the poor faithful slave who had just come in.

"Oh, Sir," he said in disjointed words. "I did all I could for Mas Teeah. We wandered about all night in the rain. No one would take us in. About the middle of the night I got Mas Teeah to lie down in an old barn and I covered him with both blankets because he was so sick and needed them more than I did. I watched while he slept. The next day we set out again, but lost our way and about 2 o'clock as we were in an empty house, where we had stopped to dry our clothes; just as we were eating a piece of bread, I heard him call out, 'William, the Yankees,' and sure enough five soldiers were coming around the corner. He called to me not to shoot but to give up the arms. Then they took everything from him, blankets, clothes, food, pocket-book, horse, all except the clothes he had on. They did the same to me, taking even to my tooth-brush and comb. I told them how sick Mas Teeah was and begged them to let me go with him, but they wouldn't. An officer took him one way while the men carried me another. And Oh, Sir, they made me drink about a quart of whiskey, and did all they could to make me stay with them.

⁴⁶ Sarah Trapiier is referring here to the family's "seampstress." See p. 113.

One took me into his buggy, and told me I should do nothing but attend to him, have \$10 a month and be free. But I told him I wanted to go home; and so, as soon as I could, I got off, and I've walked 20 miles today, and had to sneak under the house lest they should catch me again."

This was, as well as I can remember it, his sad tale. What a stricken group we were! My husband soon recovered composure sufficient for prayer, and we all knelt down around him, while he poured out our sorrow to Him, whose ears are ever open to unto the prayers of His humble servants, and commended our sick and captive son to His covenant care, entreating Him that he would raise up friends to him and strengthen and sustain him in his feebleness and imprisonment.

We rose comforted, and were just leaving the room when someone ran in crying out, "The stable and corn-room are on fire!" 'Twas too true! The wretches had concealed in the fodder a slow match, which was doing its work. My husband rushed out followed by all the children. But what could they do! William, still suffering from his intoxication, was the only male, besides my husband on the premises, able to render any aid. Their efforts to extinguish the flames were entirely unsuccessful. The whole pile of buildings was in a few moments one mass of flame. Fences were communicating it to other outbuildings, but with great presence of mind, the female servants under the direction of our daughters, broke these down. Flakes too were falling on the roof of the piazza of our dwelling house. But I stationed a servant girl out of my chamber window with a bucket of water, with which she extinguished the flakes as fast as they fell. The work of destruction was soon over and, ere night closed in, our chief stock of provisions for the rest of the year was a heap of blackened cinders. We remembered the promise of Him who "feedeth the young ravens when they cry."⁴⁷ And fully has this promise thus far been fulfilled.

Not a month had elapsed before the sympathy, not of word but of deed, replenished our store-room, if not with abundance, yet with sufficiency. I could fill pages with accounts of the misery which these raiders left in their track. Their treatment of the slaves for whose sake the war was professedly entered into, was atrocious. A gentleman in our neighbourhood assured us that not a female slave on his plantation (with a single exception) was allowed to retain that which should have been dearer to her than her life. This exception, a brave married woman, stood at the door of her house with a log of wood in her hand, and said she would dash out the brains of any man who came near her.

⁴⁷ Psalm 147:9: "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." Sarah Trapier uses the translation given in the Book of Common Prayer, which includes the Psalter, or Psalms of David.

The raiders left Camden on Sunday Feb. 26th, and most devoutly did we pray that we might never see another such set of ruffians. But not two months had passed before another under Gen. Potter (son of the Bishop of Pennsylvania!) was upon us. He brought a large body of negro troops and his special object was to entice away, or carry off by force, our servants. Fortunately a body of our militia were in the town, and another body of our regular army approaching, so that the raiders dared not venture far from their main body nor stay beyond a single night.⁴⁸ The next morning, however, numbers of families awoke to find themselves without a single servant, their cooks, chambermaids, washers and men-servants all gone, and many a delicate female, tenderly nurtured and educated in refinement, was obliged to go into the kitchen and betake herself to the wash tub.

But to return to our own family. None of our servants left us. For a month we heard nothing more of Theodore. Our anxiety was intense. At last we learned that he was with Sherman's army, marching rapidly through North Carolina, that the prisoners were on foot and with little to eat. After several more weeks we heard from him from Newberne.⁴⁹ What a tale of suffering. Forced marches of from 20 to 30 miles a day, always on foot, the latter part of the journey without shoes or stockings, prisoners' fare, never a word of comfort or sympathy; but if in his feebleness he lagged behind, a threat instead to shorten all his troubles quickly. From day to day and week after week no change of clothing! What wonder that he lived in a kind of stupor until all his sorrows and exposures brought on extreme illness and he was taken to a hospital in Newberne. There they cut off his hair, and plunged him into a cold bath. Then taking away all his clothing, they left him only a blanket to wrap around him, made him walk thus across the yard to a tent where they laid him on a straw mattress, to remain there for four days with no other covering.

There he was found by some benevolent ladies, the spark of life nearly extinct, such treatment having greatly aggravated the disease (dysentery) from which he had long been suffering. The excellent ladies, in the warmth of their true Southern hearts, obtained leave, after great difficulty from the indifference and opposition of those in authority, to take him home and nurse him with the tenderest care. Thus strikingly were our prayers answered! This account we gained little by little at long intervals, as he recovered strength and had opportunities of writing by private conveyances casually occurring; there being at that time no mails even after the surrender of Lee and Johnston's armies, through which Confederates were

⁴⁸ Potter's troops departed Camden hurriedly after a stay of only one night, due to the threat presented by the home guard in the area, which had been joined by a force of about five hundred Kentucky cavalry troops. Kirkland, *Historic Camden*, 174.

⁴⁹ New Bern, on the North Carolina coast.

allowed to communicate with each other. It is not easy to conceive that painfulness of our suspense as months passed by, leaving us still uncertain whether he was dead or alive.

In the meantime public affairs grew darker and darker. Lee's army, it was rumoured, would be obliged to surrender. At first we refused to believe this. But soon accounts reached us of rations being reduced to half a pint of meal a day, and of numbers of men deserting for the protection of their families. Soon after the worst was confirmed. Lee's army surrendered. That of Johnston followed, and we knew that we were a subjugated people. All our sufferings for naught! All our hopes crushed! Everyday by bitter experiences are we made to feel that liberty and independence for us as a people are gone, perhaps forever.

As a family we are nearly ruined. All our business papers were destroyed by Sherman's raiders. Half of our capital, invested in Confederate securities, is gone. The other half, chiefly in Rail Road Bonds, even if recovered, will be almost if not quite valueless, so that the house we live in, with the few acres of land around it, is all we know of that remains to us, except the silver we secreted.⁵⁰ But we have one another to love and cling to, willing hands to work, brave hearts to endure, and above all a Heavenly Father to look to, who has promised never to forsake the seed of the righteous. And blessed be God that this is our portion! For truly may I say

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth
"From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth
"But higher far my proud pretensions rise:
"The child of parents passed into the skies."⁵¹

⁵⁰ The family of General James Conner fled to Camden after the evacuation of Charleston, and while there in March 1865, his sister wrote that "Camden has suffered terribly . . . Poor Mr. Trapier and his family were insulted, and lost everything." Mary Conner Moffett, ed., *Letters of General James Conner, C.S.A.* (Columbia, S.C.: R. L. Bryan Co., 1950), 161-162.

⁵¹ Lines from a poem entitled "On the Receipt of His Mother's Picture Out of Norfolk," by the English poet and hymnodist William Cowper (1731-1800).