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THE CIVIL WAR DIARY OF
ELIZABETH HATCHER SIMONS:
LIFE AND HARDSHIP IN TEXANA, TEXAS

A Thesis

By

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ABSTRACT

The Civil War Diary of Elizabeth Hatcher Simons:

Life and Hardship in Texana, Texas

(August 1999)

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Elizabeth Hatcher Simons married Maurice Kavanaugh Simons, a Mexican War veteran, on July 1, 1857 in New Madrid, Missouri. The couple later moved to the small community of Texana, Texas where the rest of the Simons family resided. On October 8, 1861 Maurice left Elizabeth and their small daughter to serve in the Confederate Army. Elizabeth Simons, like many women during this time, was left with the responsibility of caring for her home and small child. In agreement with her husband Elizabeth kept a diary detailing daily events on the home front. Through her diary Elizabeth expressed her constant worry about her husband and other family members fighting in the war. On the flyleaf of her diary, Elizabeth listed all the “unladylike” jobs she had to attend to while Maurice was away. Elizabeth began her diary on August 31, 1862 and the last entry was December 31, 1862. Maurice returned home to Elizabeth and his daughter in October 1863. Their happiness was short-lived for Maurice died of typhoid in 1867. Shortly after his death Elizabeth and her two children moved to Goliad where she resided until her death in 1910.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I: ELIZABETH SIMONS AND THE SIMONS FAMILY	8
CHAPTER II: THE LAST DAY OF AUGUST AND THE RAINY DAYS OF SEPTEMBER	20
CHAPTER III: THE SAD DAYS OF OCTOBER	35
CHAPTER IV: THE DARK DAYS OF NOVEMBER	50
CHAPTER V: DECEMBER: THE END OF A LONG YEAR AND NOTES	63
CHAPTER IV: HOMECOMING AND LIFE AFTER THE WAR	78
BIBLIOGRAPHY	89
VITA	94

Introduction

The Civil War brings many images to mind, numerous bloody battles, brave soldiers laying dead on the battlefields, and famous generals who led their men into war.

However, there were many people in both the North and South who did not fight on the frontlines but played a critical role in the War Between the States. Not totally forgotten, but not often remembered as playing a critical part in the war, were the brave women who fought the war at home. Not only did women wait anxiously for their loved ones to come home, if at all, but they also were faced with numerous changes in their daily lives. These changes were far more significant for Southern women than for their counterparts in the North.¹ Elizabeth Archer Hatcher Simons of Texana, Texas, the young wife of a Confederate soldier, experienced and endured the changes brought about by the war. In her wartime diary Elizabeth recorded her daily experiences, hardships, and fears. Like many other Southern women, Elizabeth Simons had to change not only her lifestyle but also her entire way of life. These changes, though often difficult, prepared Southern women like Elizabeth Simons for their future roles in Southern society. Ultimately, the romantic image of the “Southern belle” diminished with their participation and contributions they made during the Civil War and the years following the war.²

In the North and South women made significant contributions to the war effort. Women were anxious to help their men in battle by working long hours diligently sewing

The journal model for this thesis is *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*.

¹ Philip N. Racine, “Emily Lyles Harris,” in *American Portraits*, eds., Stephen G. Weisner and William F. Hartford (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1998), I, 292-305.

² Ibid.

uniforms and flags, knitting socks, raising funds for the armies, and providing food. At the early phase of the war over twenty thousand aid societies were established to help equip both armies, but as the war went on many Southern aid societies had to disband due to Union invasion and scarcity of food and supplies.³ Besides providing necessities for the armies, some women worked in hospitals caring for the sick and wounded. Some courageous women even took the risk of working as spies. Rose O'Neal Greenhow, a leader in Washington society and a devoted secessionist who spied for the Confederacy, was imprisoned and later exiled to the Confederate States for her activities.⁴ Women aided the war effort in various ways, but no matter what role they played during the war, they were all important.

Why and how did the Civil War impact Elizabeth Simons and other Southern women differently than Northern women? In the Antebellum South women lived in a patriarchal society. Their lives centered on their families and home. Even if Southern women were educated, they were not encouraged to look for occupations outside the home, unless they were absolutely forced to do so. In the North middle-class values were the norm where occupations for women such as teaching were much admired.⁵ Once the Civil War broke out Southern women were forced to take care not only of their families and homes, but they also had to assume the duties of their husbands, fathers, and sons, most of which

³ Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Women in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 31-32.

⁴ LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 54; and "Rose O'Neal Greenhow Papers: An On-line Archival Collection, May, 1996, <<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/collections/civil-war-women.html>> (5 January 1999).

⁵ Christi Anne Farnham, *The Education of the Southern Belle* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 4.

they were unaccustomed. Despite unfamiliarity with their new found responsibilities these women did what they had to in order to protect and care for their families and homes, even if they were overcome with despair.⁶

Life in the South was not easy for women during the war years, especially for those who lived in rural areas. Women who lived on plantations had slaves to perform manual labor and overseers to help manage the plantations. However, women who lived on small farms had to do most of the work themselves.⁷ Elizabeth Simons and other women, in the rural South did just that. In the flyleaf of her diary Elizabeth lists a number of “unladylike chores” of which she had to attend while her husband Maurice was away. Those chores included: tending the animals, fixing broken equipment, and keeping up the grounds.⁸ Although many of the tasks were difficult and wearisome, Elizabeth managed with little complaint.

Southern women not only had to take care of their families and homes plus the added burden of performing the duties of their men, but there were other worries and concerns as well. There was the constant threat of invasion by the Union Army, and many women had to contend with the enemy right on their doorstep. The problem of scarcity of food and supplies proved difficult for many women especially when there were many mouths to feed. Although Texans did not suffer to the same extent as other southern states due to trade with Mexico, and most of the battles took place east of the Mississippi River, the

⁶ Minrose C. Gwin (ed.), *A Women's Civil War: A Diary with Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 3.

⁷ Massey, *Women in the Civil War*, 210.

⁸ Elizabeth Simons Diary, South Texas Archives, Kingsville, Texas, Box 658, Folder, 1. Hereafter cited as STA.

women of Texas did have to conserve and deal with scarcity to a certain extent.⁹ They also had to deal with life on the Texas frontier; in some cases there was the constant threat of Indian raids and for all loneliness was a major problem as their loved ones were far off fighting in the war.¹⁰

Aside from exhausting physical chores that had to be performed, and the problem of loneliness due to the absence of loved ones, women also had to struggle with the constant worry of wondering if their loved ones would return home. Most often during the war women did not complain or show their feelings openly; rather they recorded their feelings in the diaries many of them kept. There were thousands of women who wrote about their innermost thoughts and feelings in diaries, journals, and letters during the war without any intention of having them published, and many were not until long after the writer had passed away.¹¹ One of the most famous journals published was that of Mary Chesnut, and like many women she never intended to have her diary, or journal as she called it, published.¹² However, it has become one of the most read diaries of the time period. It is most likely that Elizabeth Simons kept her diary for personal reasons and to record daily events to inform her husband about what had taken place during his absence.¹³ Elizabeth

⁹ Daniel E. Fox, *Traces of Texas History: Archeological Evidence of the Past 450 Years* (San Antonio: Corona Publishing Company, 1983), 249.

¹⁰ Ralph A. Wooster (ed.), *Lone Star Blue and Gray: Essays on Texas in the Civil War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1995), xiv-xvi.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² C. Vann Woodward (ed.), *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), xvii.

¹³ Gwin, *A Women's Civil War*, 4. Cornelia McDonald's husband who had served in the Confederacy had asked her to record daily events to keep him informed of what had taken place while he was gone.

had also urged her husband Maurice to keep a diary while he was away at war.¹⁴ Diaries like Elizabeth Simons' give us a more accurate picture of what life was really like during the Civil War for those who were left behind to care for home and family. The diary of Elizabeth Simons is a typed manuscript housed at the South Texas Archives in Kingsville Texas. It is not known what happened to the original diary.¹⁵ It is assumed that the late John E. Connor, who was a professor of History at Texas College of Arts and Industries in Kingsville, Texas, typed the manuscript from the original diary that may now be in the hands of one of the many descendents of the Simons family.

The question that still remains is why reproduce the diary of Elizabeth Simons? The answers are quite simple. First of all, there will be an additional source for historical researchers and the public other than the archival copy. In addition, there are volumes of Civil War diaries written by men in comparison to women. Wealthy women who lived on large plantations authored most of the published diaries written by Southern women during the Civil War. Elizabeth's diary is unique, not so much because it tells of what life was like on the home front during the war, but the fact that Elizabeth was conscious of her new role as head of the household while Maurice was away. This is evident in the list of chores she had to attend during his absence. Another important fact is a middle class woman who lived in a rural community wrote this diary. There is no doubt that the diary of Elizabeth Simons will be an important contribution to the study of women's history.

¹⁴ Maurice Kavanaugh Simons Journal, 1863, Box 659, Folder, 1, STA.

¹⁵ Maurine Simons Miller, interview by author, 23 November 1998, Kingsville.

The typed manuscript of the diary is fifty-six pages in length with notes on the last two pages that are retyped from the flyleaf of Elizabeth's diary which describes the many "unlady-like jobs" of which Elizabeth attended. There are also notations made by Thomas Archer Simons, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Simons. These notations include important dates such as the day when Maurice went off to war, daughter Lizzie's birth date, the date of Elizabeth's mother's death in New Madrid, Missouri, and the relationship of Willie Wood, Aunt Jud, and Kate Hatcher to the writer.

Elizabeth's diary is relatively short; it begins on August 31, 1862 and ends on December 31, 1862. It is most likely that Elizabeth continued her diary; however, no other entries have been located. Throughout the diary Elizabeth's thoughts are full of emotion; at times she's enthusiastic and full of hope and at other times she seems melancholy and lonely for the loss of loved ones either through death, or for those gone off to war. In most of the entries Elizabeth discusses her daily routine of tending to chores and caring for her daughter Lizzie. Often the entries concerning Lizzie are worrisome, for the child was sick quite often. Going to church and reading the Bible was also part of her everyday routine as was visiting friends and relatives, some of whom were sick and dying. Correspondence with her husband and her brothers was an important part of Elizabeth's life during the war. She was constantly waiting for letters and news from Maurice, and when Elizabeth received a letter or paper from him she was quite willing to share the news with family, friends and neighbors. Overall, the diary gives a realistic view of what life was like on the home front in rural Texas, feelings about the war, and the constant worry about loved ones and friends fighting in the war.

Presumably, the transcription of the original diary was intentionally typed with grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors that were made by the diarist. For instance, at the beginning of a new sentence the first word is not often capitalized. Other capitalization errors are prevalent. Grammatical errors such as “they do not mentions Bro’ destination” are continuous throughout the diary entries. Elizabeth also abbreviated words and people’s names, most of which are identifiable. Insertions have been included when necessary for clarification. Numerous people are mentioned in the diary that are identified and footnoted. Many of the people in the diary are identified through a list compiled by Professor Conner with the assistance of Thomas Archer Simons, Sr. Utilizing footnotes, I will also clarify events mentioned in the diary to complete the story. I have only changed the placement of the dates to make the diary easier to read.

Chapter I: Elizabeth Simons and the Simons Family

Elizabeth Archer Hatcher Simons was a Southern lady from birth, being born the tenth child to Archibald and Elizabeth Nicholson Dibrell Hatcher in Lynchburg, Virginia on June 8, 1834. Elizabeth came from a large family; she had eight brothers and three sisters. Elizabeth's father Archibald was born in 1789 and her mother Elizabeth Nicholson Dibrell was born in 1798. The couple married in 1819.¹ Eventually, the family moved to New Madrid, Missouri. When or why the family moved to New Madrid is not known.

The Dibrell side of the family was of French ancestry; the name was spelled DuBreuil in France. Since the reformation the Dibrells had been French Protestants known as Huguenots.² In 1598, King Henry IV signed the Edict of Nantes, which gave the French Huguenot's freedom of worship. After the Edict was revoked in 1685 the Huguenots were forced to live in exile again as they had earlier. It was at that time many of the DeBreuils came to Virginia and intermarried with people of English ancestry.³ Elizabeth Archer Hatcher Simons was a deeply religious woman throughout her life.

Elizabeth first met her future husband Maurice Kavanaugh Simons when she was sent by her family to care for her ailing brother Richard H. Hatcher in Corpus Christi,

¹ Henry N. Barroll (ed.), "Dibrell Genealogy," (Washington DC, 1915), 13, Private Collection; and Mexican War Pensions, General Services Administration, National Archives and Records Service, RG 2660. Hereafter cited as NA

² Ibid.

³ Barroll, "Dibrell Genealogy," 3; and Philip Lee Ralph, Robert E. Lerner and ets., *World Civilizations* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.), 104.

Texas. Elizabeth's brother Richard had volunteered for the army in 1846 and was stationed in Corpus Christi, where Richard and Maurice had become friends. When Richard became ill he was unable to move with Zachary Taylor's Army to Brownsville.⁴ At the time the Hatcher family was notified that Richard had fallen ill Elizabeth was the only one available to make the trip to accompany him home. At the young age of twelve, Elizabeth made the trip alone down the Mississippi River by boat to New Orleans, and from there took a steamer to Corpus Christi.⁵ It was at that time that Elizabeth met Maurice Kavanaugh Simons, the friend of her brother, for the first time. It was not until the 1850s that Elizabeth and Maurice met again. This time the meeting became a romance leading to marriage.⁶

On July 1, 1857 Maurice Kavanugh Simons and Elizabeth Archer Hatcher exchanged vows, becoming man and wife eleven years after their first meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas.⁷ Elizabeth Simons married into a prominent and highly respected family from Texana, Texas. Maurice Simons' father, Captain Thomas Simons, was born on May 26, 1794 in Durham England. When he was twelve years old Thomas Simons decided to become a seaman. Eventually his father, Joseph Simons, agreed to let Thomas

⁴ President Polk ordered Zachary Taylor and his troops to Corpus Christi in an effort to pressure Mexico into ceding lands in its Far North. On May 9, 1846 Zachary Taylor and his army moved into the disputed territory along the Rio Grande near modern-day Brownsville. During skirmishes with the Mexican cavalry, Taylor reported that sixteen of his men had been killed or wounded. It was at that point, Polk delivered his war message to Congress. Robert A. Calvert and Arnoldo De León, *The History of Texas* (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1990), 94.

⁵ Notes by Thomas Archer Simons, Jr., Box 658, Folder 2, STA. Mr. Simons noted that Elizabeth Simons was fourteen years of age at the time she made the trip to Corpus Christi, however in 1846 Elizabeth was twelve, and would have turned thirteen that June.

⁶ Douglas Lee Braudaway, "The Life and Civil War Journal of Major Maurice Simons, A.C.S. Together With an Account of His Life" (M.A. thesis, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, 1994), 12.

⁷ Notes by Thomas Archer Simons, Jr., Box 658, Folder 2, STA; and NA.

go to sea as a common seaman where he sailed the world for several years. After his son gained sufficient experience, Joseph Simons purchased his son a ship called the *Adeline* at the urging of Thomas' captain. At that point Captain Simons began sailing and trading between Liverpool, England and Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Thomas family, who had been friends with the Simons family in England, resided in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. At Cape Breton Captain Simons met fifteen year old Susan Thomas. The couple married on July 15, 1817 in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Eventually the couple had fourteen children. Maurice (pronounced Morris) was born the fifth child on March 4, 1824 in Halifax, Nova Scotia where his parents resided for several years.⁸

In 1834 Captain Simons decided to take his family to Brazil to set up a colony. On the way to South America Simons stopped in New Orleans, Louisiana for supplies. At the same time the city of New Orleans was experiencing a severe outbreak of yellow fever. Several members of Captain Simons' crew and passengers contracted the disease, as did two of the Simon's children, Pheba the eldest child and Robert the eighth born. Neither of the children survived. During the family's stay in New Orleans Captain Simons encountered his cousin Henry Simons, who told him about the colonization efforts in Texas. Subsequently, Captain Simons changed his mind about colonizing in Brazil and set sail with his family for the Texas coast. In late 1834 Thomas Simons landed at the mouth of the Lavaca River approximately three miles from Fort St. Louis,

⁸ Ida Campbell and Mary Hamilton, *Oh, Strange New World* (Austin: Nortex Press, 1986) 101-102; and T. A. Simons, "The Simons Story," based on recollections as told by his mother Elizabeth Hatcher Simons, Private Collection, 1. Hereafter cited as Simons Story.

the first French settlement in Texas.⁹ Thereafter, the Simons family settled in Texana, Texas.

Dr. Francis F. Wells and his sister-in-law Pamela McNutt Porter established the small town of Texana, Texas in 1832. Originally, the town was named Santa Anna, but the residents voted to have it renamed Texana during the Texas Revolution.¹⁰ Captain Simons and his family settled in their new home in Texana. Even though their house was located several miles from the coast, Captain Simons continued operating his ship. He was also a surveyor for the Republic of Texas and later he became a general merchant as well. However, Captain Simons eventually lost his ship through “nefarious practices” when he leased his ship to a party destined for New Orleans.¹¹ Henceforth, Captain Simons became a merchant in Texana, setting up a partnership with his son Maurice Kavanaugh entitled Simons & Son.¹²

Captain Simons and his eldest son Joseph were active participants in the Texas Revolution. As a reward for their services both were granted land from the Republic, some of which was located in Goliad County.¹³ However, Joseph met his fate on November 14, 1843 when he died as a prisoner in the castle of Perote, Mexico. As a

⁹ Simons Story, 1; Art Leatherwood, “Lavaca Bay,” *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/>> (6 February 1999).

¹⁰ Texana, Texas is no longer in existence. In 1883, the residents of Jackson County voted to have the county seat changed to Edna. Some of the county buildings were either moved to Edna or sold. By 1884, Texana was more or less a ghost town. I. T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 89, 90-92; and Stephen L. Hardin, “Texana, Texas,” *The Handbook of Texas Online* (6 February 1999).

¹¹ Simons Story, 2.

¹² Campbell, *Strange New World*, 102; Simons Story 2; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 434.

¹³ Ibid.

member of the Mier Expedition Joseph was lucky enough to escape execution by drawing a white bean, but not lucky enough to be released from prison alive.¹⁴

The Captain and Susan Simons had already lost an infant at birth while still living in Nova Scotia in 1819, and two children to yellow fever in New Orleans on their way to South America. On July 21, 1835 the couple lost another child, William, in Texana and later Joseph in a Mexican prison on November 13, 1843. Once again tragedy struck the Simons family. On July 18, 1844 Captain Thomas Simons again had to bury a loved one, this time it was his wife Susan. The following year, Captain Thomas Simons married Mrs. Judith Ann Dibrell Hatcher. Judith was Elizabeth Simons' aunt who was first married to Nelson Hatcher, the nephew of Archibald Hatcher, Elizabeth's father. Judith was also the sister of Elizabeth Nicholson Dibrell Hatcher, Elizabeth Simons' mother.¹⁵

When hostilities intensified between the United States and Mexico Maurice Kavanaugh Simons and his younger brother Thomas joined American troops in February 1846 under the command of General Zachary Taylor. At the time Taylor's troops were temporarily stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas.¹⁶ An acquaintance of the Simons family, George Washington Trahern who had previously fought in the Texas Revolution and was

¹⁴ Out of the 300 Texans who crossed the Rio Grande and attacked Mier, 176 of them were taken prisoner. Santa Anna ordered 1 out 10 prisoners be executed. 159 white beans and 17 black beans were placed in a jar, whoever drew a black bean was executed. Those who drew the white beans were taken to Mexico City and imprisoned. Calvert, *History of Texas*, 91; Campbell, *Strange New World*, 102; Simons Story, 2; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*.

¹⁵ Barroll, "Dibrell Genealogy," 34; and Campbell, *Strange New World*, 103. It is apparent that Elizabeth did know of the Simons family through the marriage of her aunt to Captain Simons; however, Elizabeth and Maurice did not actually meet until 1846 in Corpus Christi when she was sent by her family to accompany her ill brother, Richard home.

¹⁶ Campbell, *Strange New World*, 103; J. E. Conner and T. A. Simons, Sr., "Foreword," written for the unpublished book, *The Civil War Diary of Major M. K. Simons*, part of the research notes Conner had compiled, Box 658, Folder, 2, STA; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 431.

a Mier prisoner along with Joseph Simons, also joined Taylor's army in Corpus Christi. Trahern had come to Texas in 1839 and had temporarily lived in Texana before settling in Port Lavaca with his sister and brother-in-law.¹⁷

By April 1846 Zachary Taylor left Corpus Christi and moved south, crossing the Nueces River into the disputed region and positioning his forces on the Rio Grande. Maurice and Thomas Simons, and "Wash" Trahern, moved south with Taylor's forces.¹⁸ On April 16, 1846 Maurice Simons joined up with Samuel H. Walker's company of Texas Rangers, serving as a scout along with his brother Thomas and Trahern. Maurice not only participated in the Battle of Palo Alto on May 8, 1846 but also in the Battle of Resaca de la Palma on May 9, 1846. During the latter battle Maurice served as a guide to the left wing of Taylor's army.¹⁹ Later, in September 1847, both Maurice and Trahern participated in the capture of Monterey as well.²⁰

On February 21, 1847 Maurice Simons and Wash Trahern joined the company of Texas Rangers under the command of Ben McCulloch.²¹ The Battle of Buena Vista took

¹⁷ Braudaway, "Maurice Kavanaugh Simons," 7; and A. Russell Buchanan, "George Washington Trahern: Texan Cowboy Soldier from Mier to Buena Vista," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LVIII (July, 1954), 60.

¹⁸ Campbell, *Oh Strange New World*, 104; Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 2, STA; and Walter Prescott Webb, *The Texas Rangers* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1935), 91.

¹⁹ Miller interview; Foreword, Box 658, 2, STA; and Webb, *Texas Rangers*, 94. Two years after the battles, Helen Blair Chapman visited both battlefields, she comments that there was no evidence that there had been battles there. "Only occasionally you see the bleaching bones of horses on the grass, and probably some of the men..." Caleb Coker (ed.), *The News From Brownville* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992), 28.

²⁰ Buchanan, "George Washington Trahern," 72; Foreword, Box 658, 2, STA; and Webb, *Texas Rangers*, 109 and 110. According to Mrs. Maurine Miller, Thomas Simons was listed among those who served under Captain Sam Walker of the Texas Rangers. However, there are some discrepancies surrounding his death. Sources indicate he died of smallpox. Both Campbell and Taylor claim that he died in Mexico on June 4, 1847.

²¹ Buchanan, *Ibid*, 73, Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 2, STA; and, Maurice K. Simons to the Senate and

place the day after Maurice signed up with McCulloch. At one point during the battle the enemy surrounded the American forces. General Taylor was in need of some heavy artillery and many unsuccessful attempts were made to communicate this need to General Thomas Marshall in Rinconda who was in charge of the artillery. It was such a dangerous mission that Taylor asked for volunteers. At that point Maurice Simons volunteered for the mission along with Trahern. Though it was a dangerous mission with some close calls, the two young men completed it successfully.²² In a letter to Captain Thomas Simons, General Taylor described what the success of the mission meant to the outcome of the battle. Taylor also offered a five hundred dollar reward for Maurice's services, but he refused to accept it because "it was a duty required of a soldier, and not an act performed for pecuniary reward."²³

Since he volunteered for military service in Corpus Christi, Maurice had been assigned to the commissary with Wash Trahern. When the two were not carrying dispatches they were supplying the troops with food. Two months after the successful mission Maurice was fighting for his life. On April 27, 1847, while under the orders of Commissary Captain A. B. Eaton, Maurice and Wash were on the road between Monterrey and Cerralvo near Papagallos when they were fired upon by a company of twenty Mexican Guerrillas.²⁴ Wash was lucky enough to escape without injury, but Maurice was not so lucky.

House of Representatives of the United States, n.d., Maurice Kavanaugh Simons Collection, Box 1, Folder 12, STA.

²² Buchanan, *Ibid*, 73-77; and Foreword, Box 658, Folder, 4, 2-3, STA.

²³ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 3, STA.

²⁴ Braudaway, "Maurice Kavanaugh Simons," 10; Foreword, 3; and Letter from Elizabeth Simons to

Maurices's horse ran into a thicket and fell dead and he fell from him. That was ten o'clock in the morning and no relief came until sun-down. Wash has escaped and came with soldiers to look for him. When the surgeon saw how badly he was hurt, he said there was no chance to save his life but to take off his leg. Maurice said he would rather die and the Dr. gave it up for he said he didn't think he could live anyway, but after Wash had begged him to have it taken off he consented. The surgeon said he had no surgical instruments and Maurice told him to saw it off with a butcher saw, which he did. He cut the flesh with a butcher knife and the bone with a meat saw. When the operation was done he fainted and they all thought he was dead, and they went and sat around the campfire.²⁵

When Maurice finally woke up a while later, the physician said "there is one chance in a hundred for him to live." The day after the operation, Maurice's chance of survival was still questionable, for he had contracted smallpox.²⁶

Since there was no hospital nearby, some Mexican women nursed Maurice Simons back to health for eighteen months following the operation. Previously, on November 13, 1847, special arrangements were made to transport Maurice back home by the army. The order read:

The Qr. Mas. Dept. will furnish all necessary facilities for the removal to New Orleans of M. K. Simons who was wounded while in the employment of the Dept. and disabled in May last. By order of General Taylor.

This order bears an endorsement:

Hd. Qrs. Upper Rio Grande, Mier, November 15, 1847. Capt. Brent will make the necessary arrangements for removing Mr. Simons To this port and forwarding him to the Brazos. E. G. W. Butler, Col. 3rd Div., Commanding.²⁷

Virginia McChesney, daughter of Rachel Simons, Maurice Simons sister, July 2, 1902, Goliad, Texas, 8, Private Collection. Hereafter cited as Simons Letter.

²⁵ Simons Letter, 8.

²⁶ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 3-4, STA; and Simons Letter, 9.

²⁷ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 4, STA.

Simons did not make the trip. Why he did not make the trip is not certain, but it is most likely that Maurice was not well enough to travel that distance at the time the orders were endorsed. Subsequently, the Simons family made and paid for the arrangements to have Maurice brought home to Texana.²⁸

When he was home in Texana Maurice was able to make a full recovery with the help of two operations; the last one was in 1853 to remove a bullet near his hip. Once Maurice was healthy enough he returned to the family business working as a merchant until the Civil War.²⁹ When Captain Simons died of cholera in 1852, Maurice continued to run the family business.³⁰ Like his father, Maurice became involved in Jackson County politics, and on August 5, 1850, "Morris" K. Simons was elected as County Treasurer, a position he was elected to again in 1852.³¹

After the marriage of Elizabeth and Maurice Simons on July 1, 1857 in New Madrid, Missouri the young couple settled in Texana, Texas. Elizabeth became pregnant with the couple's first child, but the pregnancy ended in stillbirth. Finally, on October 10, 1860 Elizabeth and Maurice became the proud parents of a healthy daughter, Elizabeth, the couple nicknamed "Lizzie."³² The Simons lived a comfortable life in Texana. By 1860 their real estate was valued at three thousand dollars and their personal estate at twenty

²⁸ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 4, STA; and Simons Story, 3.

²⁹ Foreword, Box 659, Folder 4, 5, STA.

³⁰ In 1849, a cholera epidemic swept through South Texas. Helen Blair Chapman, who survived the deadly disease, described the symptoms in a letter to her mother. "The rapid decline of strength in the patient is much more alarming than the violent spasms and cramps. Indeed, it is generally the case that those who die suffer the least." Calomel was part of the treatment. Coker, *News From Brownsville*, 119-120.

³¹ Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 279, 281 & 430.

³² Braudaway, "Maurice Kavanaugh Simons," 12; Miller Interview; and Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 4, STA. Notations made by T. A. Simons.

thousand dollars.³³ Although life was good to the Simons family their lives changed dramatically the following year when Maurice enlisted in the Confederate Army.

After the Election of 1860 and the news that Abraham Lincoln had won the election, the South Carolina legislature called a convention to secede from the Union. On December 20, 1860 the vote was 169-0 in favor of secession. That was just the beginning. The Texas legislature also voted in favor of secession 166-8 on February 1, 1861.³⁴ The news of the firing on Fort Sumter reached Austin April 17, 1861, and Governor Edward Clark began to prepare for war. By the first of November Governor Clark announced that “twenty thousand Texans are now battling for the rights of our new-born government.”³⁵ Maurice Kavanaugh Simons was among those who had volunteered their services to the Confederacy.

When war was declared Maurice Simons assisted in recruiting men in Texana to fight for the Confederacy. On October 8, 1861 Elizabeth Simons said goodbye to her husband Maurice as he rode off to enlist in the Confederate Army in Galveston.³⁶ When the volunteers reached the recruiting station in Galveston, the recruiting officer at first refused to accept Maurice Simons because he had only one leg. The men who had accompanied Simons refused to be “mustered” in without him, saying they had

³³ *Census of the State of Texas*, National Archives Microfilm Publication of the United States, 1934; 1860, Jackson County, 438. Hereafter cited as Texas Census.

³⁴ James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*, (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1992), 131.

³⁵ Louis J. Wortham, *A History of Texas: From Wilderness to Commonwealth* (Fort Worth: Wortham-Molyneaux Company, 1924), 348-350.

³⁶ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 5-6, STA; and, Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, 1, STA. Notes made on the flyleaf of her diary by he son Thomas Archer Simons.

“volunteered for service under him and only him.”³⁷ Finally, the recruiting officer relented and Colonel John C. Moore mustered in the men from Texana, including Maurice Simons. They became part of Company K of the Second Texas Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America.³⁸

Elizabeth Simons was on her own to take care of her home and young daughter Lizzie. Now, the only form of communication Elizabeth had with Maurice was through the writing and receiving of letters. Less than a month after Maurice left for Galveston, he wrote to Elizabeth explaining the living conditions and the daily routine of the company. More importantly, he expressed his concern of not receiving a letter from home.

Why is-is that I can get no letter from you the lass that I received was dated the 22 and was received ten days ago. I am very anxious to know how you are getting on an to hear something from my dear little pet I hope she is entirely restored to health ____ this a hour I do want to see both of you I don't know which I want to see worst little or big Lizzie. There would be glad hearts if we could fly with our thoughts and meet if only to embrace each other for a short time but when we will permitted to do so God only knows. Let us wait pationetly & put our trust in him. I know is will all turnout all right – as lass Sunday is the longest day of the seven to me for I think of the “loved one at home” perhaps more _____ in thought than at any other time and O how I would like to spend it with them. But why dwell on this dos no good here must wait our time. We are not the only ones are thus separated on account of this war...³⁹

Maurice was not only concerned about not receiving any news from home but he deeply

³⁷ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 6, STA.

³⁸ Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 6, STA and; “Muster Roll of Company K, Second Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America and Explanatory Notes,” Box 350, STA.

³⁹ Letter from Maurice Simons to Elizabeth Simons, November 3, 1861, Galveston, Texas, Box 658, Folder, 3, STA. Simons called his daughter Lizzie “my little pet.”

missed his young wife and daughter as well. It is quite possible Elizabeth may not have written because her mother passed way in New Madrid, Missouri on October 16, 1861, and she was probably still grieving from her loss.⁴⁰ Another possibility could have been delays in the mail delivery. Maurice depended on those letters from home not only for information from the home front but to know that his loving wife and daughter were okay in his absence. Whatever the case may be, written communication to and from home was vital to both parties.

After Maurice's letter to Elizabeth on November 3, 1861, he took the oath of office as First Lieutenant on November 18, 1861 in Galveston. Before Elizabeth began writing her diary Maurice took part in the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862, and on April 14, 1862 he was appointed as Assistant Acting Quartermaster of the regiment. On May 26, 1862 was appointed as Captain and Assistant Commissary of Subsistence, and on July 1, 1862 he was promoted to Brigade Commissary Major.⁴¹ Despite Major Simons' handicap he served the Confederate Army with distinction. Two months after Maurice's promotion Elizabeth began her diary by agreement with her husband.⁴²

⁴⁰ E. H. Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder, 1, STA.

⁴¹ Janet B. Hewett, (ed.), *Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1998), Vol. 68; Part II, 542; Foreword, Box 658, Folder 4, 6, STA, and Simons Story.

⁴² Elizabeth agreed to keep a dairy to keep her husband informed about events at home as well as business affairs. John E. Conner, Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 350, STA.

Chapter II: The Last Day of August and The Rainy Days of September 1862

Elizabeth Simons began her diary approximately eleven months after Maurice left for the war and after the death of her beloved mother. Elizabeth kept herself busy with caring for her daughter Lizzie, church activities, household duties, and visiting friends and relatives. She found happiness and peace when she received letters from her husband and her brother Richard. Elizabeth was more than willing to share the letters she received with those around her in Texana. Family was very important to Elizabeth and her thoughts were constantly filled with loved ones fighting in the war and family members in far off New Madrid, Missouri. The loss of her dear mother deeply affected Elizabeth and she desperately missed her. Despite her melancholy moods, Elizabeth felt confident that the war would end relatively soon.

August 31st 1862

To day I rec'd enclosed in a letter of Maurice's a diary of Hints that she has been keeping since she & Brod. parted.¹ it is such a treasure to Kate² & I even, so what must be it him who takes a deeper interest in her than in aught other on earth. And I am fill' with regret that I have not chronicled my thoughts during the past year, the most eventful of my life, now this sabbath evening

¹ Hinton (Hint) Marr Hatcher was the wife of Richard H. Hatcher, brother of Elizabeth Simons they lived in New Madrid, Missouri. Elizabeth refers to her brother as Bro D. or Brod. Henry N. Barroll (ed.), "Dibrell Genealogy," (Washington, DC, 1915), 13; and John E. Connor, Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

² Kate or K was the younger sister of Elizabeth. Catherine James Hatcher was the youngest child of Archibald and Elizabeth Nicolson Hatcher, born on March 27, 1840, Barroll, 13. Kate probably moved to Texana sometime in 1861. In a letter written to Maurice from Richard H. Hatcher, he spoke of the situation in South Carolina and that Kate would be ready to leave in a few days. Richard worried about her safety since "war has broken out & the blockade of the Mississippi is threatened there is no knowing whether or not it will be safe for her to undertake the journey." Letter from Richard H. Hatcher to Maurice Simons, __14, 1861, New Madrid, Missouri, Private Collection.

Augt 31st 1862 well this has been one of my days when the clouds show a "silver lining". soon after breakfast, W³ bro't the mail. The first thing produced was a letter for me from Maurice. His letters, (even if they are long in coming) always fill me with joy which after the first outburst settles down into a feeling of calm satisfaction which lasts 2 or 3 days. His letter enclosed one from Bro D. to K. also Hs diary. I am very very glad Bro D is near Maurice but so sorry my dear Bro⁴ is gone. if they could only stay together during our troubles, (my two loved Bro's & my Maurice) it would be a source of great satisfaction to me. They do not mentions Bro' destination. I almost know tho that it is Chattanooga as he is aid to a Tenn Gen⁵—My letters occupied so much time that I concluded not to go to S S.⁶ but Mollie & Jimmie came by & I went. After S S stopt at Roses⁷ to hear her letter but she was gone. Mrs Sanford⁸ came home with me to hear Ms

³ William Wood a relative of the Simons family, he lived with the Simons family. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

⁴ Robert A. Hatcher another brother of Elizabeth Simons from New Madrid, Missouri, she refers to him as Bro. or Bro. B. Robert also enlisted in the Confederate Army. Barroll, "Dibrell Genealogy," 13; Notes for Elizabeth Hatcer Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder, 9, STA and "Muster Roll of Company K, Second Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America and Explanatory Notes," Box 350, STA.

⁵ On June 27, 1862, Robert A. Hatcher was appointed as 1st lieutenant and Aide de Camp to General A. P. Stewart. *Confederate Veteran*, V. III, NO. 1, (Nashville), January, 1895, 261; Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA and Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

⁶ SS is Sunday School. Elizabeth was very religious and religious services were part of her daily routine. The Simons family belonged to the Texana Methodist Church, and the oldest church in Jackson County." Jesse Hord one of the founders of Methodism in Texas, established the first Methodist congregation in Texana sometime between December 23, 1838 and April 15, 1839. He was appointed to form a circuit in the Houston area, which included Texana. Norman W. Spellman, "Jesse Hord," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/>> (16 January 1999); and I. T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 203.

⁷ Rose Bankhead was married to Zack Bankhead a private in Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA; *Census of the State of Texas*, National Archives Microfilm Publication of the United States, 1934; 1860, Jackson County, 3; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 185.

⁸ Mother of John A. Sanford a member of Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA; and *Texas Census*, 1860, 4.

[Maurice's] letter she always comes to hear his letters says they are so cheering. They inspire her with fresh hope. We all went to church even the little ones Blanche⁹ & Lizzie by the way they both behaved. Both soon went to sleep consequently kept quiet. Mr. Fisher¹⁰ preached from the text relating to "laying up treasures in Heaven" God knows I want my heart & treasure to be there. Mr. F. Mollie and Nannie¹¹ came with me to dinner. Had a hard rain about dinner time from that time till 3 we were all busy reading the late papers & each others letters. Then Nannie and Mollie went to class meeting I felt that I ought to go, but I don't love to go tho I know that is no reason at least not sufficient. then I wanted to read a paper which belonged at Rachel's¹² & I wanted to read it before twas carried away, & then I hadn't read any in my bible & I feel like tis a sabbath lost when I don't read any in that tho it sometimes happens. When I have a good deal of company, but I always blame myself. When I don't, for I might get up early & read before breakfast. So I finish reading the paper, & the book of James. After supper went to church heard a good sermon from Mr F text "cast thy burden on the Lord & he shall sustain thee" how blest we are in having a kind Father who careth for us. What would I have done without that are sure support during these sad and troubled times---

⁹ Blanche was a niece of Elizabeth and Maurice. Maurice's sister Elizabeth Simons Garrett had a daughter named Blanche. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary; Box 658, Folder 9, STA; and T. A. Simons, "The Simons Story," based on recollections as told by his mother Elizabeth Hatcher Simons, 6, Private Collection.

¹⁰ Reverend O. A. Fisher, minister of the Methodist Church in Texana and was married to Mollie (Mary Francis) Simons, a sister of Maurice. Ida Campbell and Mary Hamilton, *Oh, Strange New World* (Austin: Nortex Press, 1986), 102; and Simons Story, 6.

¹¹ Nannie (Phoebe Ann) was a sister of Maurice. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

¹² Rachel was a sister of Maurice. Campbell, *Strange New World*, 102; and Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

after preaching Kate & I read Hints diary (we had only had time to glance over it thro' the day) oh how my heart burned with indignation, when I read of the insults & indignities our loved ones are subject to & how the tears flowed when I learned that amidst all these sore trials, Fannie's¹³ little darling was called to be an angel in Heaven. How often I have thought of our happiness & pride when we could compare babies. When we finished reading & commenting twas very late & we retire with sad hearts. Sept 1st The first day of Autumn the first bright sunny day weve had in 2 weeks. Well the summer went by heavily, drearily marked mostly by the letters rec'd & the news we would get. This morning my heart is full of hope I feel like we will have peace before the last of Octr blessed blessed Peace! With what joy we will hail you.¹⁴ Got Willy to look for the sorrel horse want to go & see Mrs. Wilson or Mrs. Woolfork¹⁵ don't know hardly which are both sick. couldn't find the horse (Im afraid he's gone off as he did last spring) so I didn't make either visit after supper Marg't Probst¹⁶ & Amanda Welsh came by for Kate to go over to Rose's to spend the evening, & M & Lee¹⁷ were staying all night at Rachels I didn't care about staying by myself so I went too, & had some hearty laughs at the girls assembled there quite a crowd of them & all full of fun

¹³ Fannie was Elizabeth's sister who lived in New Madrid, Missouri. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Dairy, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

¹⁴ People in both the North and South felt that the war would be a short one. James M. McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1992), 168.

¹⁵ Mrs. Woolfork was the wife of a doctor in Texana. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Dairy, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

¹⁶ Mrs. Probst was a mother of a soldier in Company K. Ibid.

¹⁷ M was Milam the younger brother of Maurice who married Lee Anna Staples on December 20, 1860. It is most likely that Lee mentioned throughout the diary is Lee Anna Milam's wife. Simons Story, 5; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 431.

Sept 2nd Day dawned in the midst of a hard storm & as the pattering of the rain sounded so pleasant we took the liberty of lying in bed til most unreasonably late hour. It rained in torrents til 10 a m when it ceased tho the sun didn't come out. After dinner continued showery & gloomy M & Lee got back before dinner. I mended 2 skirts & a dress & read the rest of the day. "Henry St John" a splendid story of the Revolution. Jimmie & Minta O came in late in the afternoon. J. prectis M had a romp with Lizzie. Lizzie said quite a long sentence "Dizzie ball down bokey head gight dare" interpretation thereof is, "Lizzie fell down & broke her head right there" pointing with her finger to the broken place.

Sept 3rd had another hard rain just at daylight. My first thoughts on waking were that I had dreamed of Fannie thought we talked about her little darling boy that died had 2 or 3 more showers, thro' the day but more sunshine than we've had lately. busy sewing. In the evening gathered the peaches off the tree at the parlors window. (the only tree that has any fit to eat) I pared 7 weigh them for preserves. Have only 7 ½ lbs with the stone in. after supper all went to prayer meeting but me K wanted to stay with Lizzie & let me go, but she staid & let me go sunday night so I insisted on her going after they left, as I sat on the gallery in the moonlight, singing to my Lizzie my thoughts wandered off till I felt sad sad thinking of my darling mother resting in her quiet grave Oh if the dear departed are permitted to look down & sympathize with loved ones here, she knows that her child would give years of her life to have her back again yet I am selfish enough to recall her from her Heavenly home.

Sept 4th cloudy all day sewing all morning. Lizzie got a piece of palmetto & commenced twisting it up. & said "Lizzie pat a hat" I said "who for"? she says "Lizzie" says I "oh you ought to plat papa a hat" "no papa gon to de war" but she finally consented & says

now she's "going to pat Papa a hat". In the afternoon Mrs D Coleman¹⁸ & I went to see Mrs Woolfolk she's quite sick, came round by Rachels stopped a few minutes to see how she stood the trip to Goliad.

Sept 5th quite a shower before breakfast then it cleared off & Kate & I busied ourselves about our trip to Mrs Burnetts,¹⁹ clouded up again about 10 begun to think our trip dubious but it cleared up & we started about 2 P M. K, Willie Lizzie & I. they all seemed glad to see us. spent a pleasant evening

6th Oh the horrors of last night! The baby and I were in close warm room, mosquitoes very bad, no bars. After making several attempts to sleep I sat up & kept them off poor little Lizzie (who had fever) as long as I could I slept not 2 hours put together. L. is bright enough today. went to church heard an excellent sermon from Mr D. the P E. came back to Mrs. B's to dinner. in the afternoon Kate Amanda & I went to Mrs Scruggs staid til 4 oclk preaching. went over & heard one of Bro Cooks good old sermons went back to Mrs B's.

Sept 7th Spent a much better night last night slept in a cooler room mosquitoes didn't trouble me. Kate & I went to love feast,²⁰ but they had prayer meeting I do hope God will bless & strengthen my heart during this meeting. a rain came up about 11 A M had to move the seats from under the arbor into the house such a large crowd that there was scarcely room in it for the women & children twas so warm the children so noisy & my

¹⁸ Mother of a soldier in Company K. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

¹⁹ Mrs. Burnett was probably the mother of David Burnett a soldier in Company K. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary; Box 658, Folder 9, STA; and Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

²⁰ Love feast is a Christian meal or gathering "characterized by friendliness and good feeling." *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, rev. ed. (1983), s.v. "love feast."

own kept me so busy trying to keep her quiet the sermon did me very little good. every family brought dinner I took dinner with Mr Mac' Whites family. his girls made a great fuss over Lizzie they kept making her sing "huyaw bonny bue fag" (hurrah for the bonny blue flag) when they'd ask her what shes going to do for Papa she'd say "doin pat Papa a hat" (going to plat Papa a hat) had preaching again in the afternoon after preaching Mrs White, Mag & the little girls beg us to go home with them. Mr Myers begs us to go with them & Mrs S & her sister with them but I was so anxious to get home this evening I declined all. but in coming to Mrs B's I found the rain this morning had ruined the roads cant possibly get to town this evening. regret so much not having gone to Mr Myers they think hard of us. Will try & spend the day there tomorrow but I dread that creek they say it is almost impassible.

Sep 8th Lizzie was so unwell last night I must get home as soon as possible I bitterly regret not going to Mr Ms last night I know they are hurt. left Mrs. B's directly after breakfast, roads so heavy had to ride slowly Lizzie poorly, I not well had a silent ride not a dozen sentences exchanged along the way. We stopped once for Willie to catch a rabbit for Lizzie. thought we'd stop at Rachels an hour or two Mollie came to the gate said no one at home but her. Lee's sick so we came right on Lee better, still in bed Rachel spent the day. Nannie & Kate spent the day & Dr Wells,²¹ Molle & Mr F came in in the evening staid a little while. I got a long letter from M K. got one from Bro D. When night came on I felt so thankful I was at home with my poorly little one

²¹ Dr. Wells was one of the founders of Texana. Father of Flora Wells Simons who was married to George Simons, Maurice's brother. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 429.

Sept 9th busy all morning put up corn butter, a jar of fruit & some sweet pickles. After dinner read the Mobile papers M sent me finished Kates band & sleeves. Sent Lizzie to see Aunt Jud²² Kate went too. Mr Starr & Tignall Jones called to see Kate

10th spent the day at Mrs Harris' (Kate & I) had a very pleasant time. Went over to Dr Wells in the afternoon. Wanted to go to prayer meeting, but Lizzie was too poorly

11th busy all morning setting drawers to rights sunning trunks &c after eleven o'clock, Mrs. Ward Rach & Nannie & 5 children came to take dinner & spend the rest of the day with me 'twas too late to kill chickens or hunt up anything to eat, but I didn't feel so much ashamed of my poor dinner as I would have done if I'd they were coming or if they'd come earlier after dinner we all went to Mrs D Colemans & spent the afternoon K went up to Mr. Milbys²³ with M White

12 undertook to dye some damaged calico we gave 50 cts a yd for in Victoria, didn't have logwood enough & before I could get live oak bark & boil it down commenced raining had to put it off till tomorrow. Several hard showers during the afternoon. I knit some & read more, in that vile abolition book²⁴ that helped bring on this war (Fanny

²² Aunt Jud or Aunt J was Judith Dibrell, the widow of Captain Thomas Simons, Elizabeth's Aunt. Campbell, *Strange New World*, 103; and Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

²³ There was a Benjamin Milby living in Texana owner of Benj. Milby and Company-Manufacturer of Bee Hives in 1880. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 91.

²⁴ Elizabeth was probably reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* written by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Over 300,000 copies of the book were sold in one year. Southerners were infuriated by Stowe's book. Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Women in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 15. Mary Chesnut was also a reader of the book and comments in her diary of Stowe's imagination and hypocrisy, "How delightfully pharisaic a feeling it must be, to rise superior and fancy we are so degraded as to defend and like to live with such degraded creatures around us." C. Vann Woodward (ed.), *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 307.

Hunter) sat up til late night to give Lizzie quinine.²⁵ Mr Dulin called in the morning just discharged from the Rio Grand army

13th set about dying didn't do well & asked Mrs Edwards about it she reminded me to put in the Copperas.²⁶ did so & got along very well. was interrupted by several showers. Aunt Mily in the puts all day yesterday & to day I wish I had more patience with her— heard India Edwards & Tim Burk ran away & were married at Victoria poor India what a flase step! Sat up late again to give my little darling quinine. oh she is such a blessing to me it makes me so uneasy when anything is the matter with her

14th The morning passed of dull & rainy my little darling fretful, no S S. & too muddy for me to go to preaching got two letters from M of the 19th and 24 ult 2 from Bro L to K. & a Mobile paper besides the Houston Telegraph Oh I feel that my Bible was neglected this morning about noon Lizzie taken with a violent fever I fear she has pneumonia oh it will go hard with her & she teething had to send 6 miles to Mr Breckenridges²⁷ for Dr Woolfork he got here about sun down I believe he thinks she's

²⁵ Quinine was used during this time to treat fever. Terry Headlee, "Disease, not Bullets, Killed More Soldiers," *Civil War-Antietam Archives*, 10 September 1992, <http://www.antietam.com/antietam/little_known_facts/dis> (28 February 1999).

²⁶ During the war women made their own dye using "homegrown indigo, walnut hulls, roots, bark and schrubs." To set the color "copperas was obtained by soaking metal in a kettle of water." Bell Irvin Wiley, *Confederate Women* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1975), 168.

²⁷ John Adams Brackenridge moved his family to a ranch near Texana in 1853 where he also owned a mercantile business. Brackenridge was a Union sympathizer and refused to accept Confederate money, but would except cotton as a medium of exchange. However, Brackenridge did have three sons that served in the Confederate Army. Another son George W. Brackenridge like his father was a Union sympathizer and was forced to leave Texas sometime during the Civil War. After the war George moved back to Texas moving to San Antonio where he established the San Antonio National Bank and the San Antonio Loan and Trust. John Adams along with his daughter Eleanor were among the founders of the Presbyterian Church in Texana. Eleanor also taught many of the young women in Texana to read and write. Eleanor later became a prominent figure in San Antonio founding the Women's Club of San Antonio in 1898. Ann Fears Crawford and Crystal Sasse Ragsdale, *Texas Women: Frontier to Future* (Austin: State House Press, 1998), 85-87; "Brackenridge, George Washington," *The Handbook of Texas Online* (16 January

very sick said he'd call after supper Nannie, Sarah & Ant J came up staid to supper went to prayer meeting. K got home before dark. bro Cook came home with Milam from church to stay all night

15 had to sit up with my little darling. Bro C. sat up with K & I til 12 then I got K to lie down at 2 the mosquitoes as bad as possible. I gave the last dose at 4 & laid down but didn't sleep half an hour got up at 6 the little one had fever till 8 then commenced getting better was playful and lively all day Mrs Taylor called also Flora.²⁸ the Dr came again early. I tried to sleep after dinner but Mr F came in to say that the mail would close this evening so I got up & wrote to Maurice

16th L still better, Dr called seem to consider her well or nearly so I feel so thankful that our God has spared her to us oh what anguish would have been ours had he taken her. Mrs. Labone died to day oh her poor girls have met with a loss which they can only appreciate as years go by & show them how they need her Bro F came in a little while—mosquitoes are unparalleled

Sept 17 Went down to Mr Labones sorrow and death reign there. Went over to Mrs Harris' took Lizzie with me staid an hour or two. after dinner went to Remshells bought a glass jar, a slate for Lizzie & pr of gloves for some poor soldier.

Sept 18 Spent the day at Mr Smiths, or at least spent the morning went over to see Mrs. Ford. Mrs Coleman Lee & I went great rejoicing the flour has come so long looked for,

1999); Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 55-56 and 80-81; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 217, 380-382.

²⁸ Flora Wells Simons was married to George Simons, Maurice's brother. Campbell, *Strange New World*, 102; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 428.

now for biscuit the flour is \$16 hun'd.²⁹ how many who look'd forward to its arrival as anxiously as any of us are unable to pay so great a price, but cornbread is right expensive eating now corn \$1 ½ bushel here & 2 ½ \$ up the country.

Sept 19 Mrs Wells came up & staid an hour or two. after dinner I was busy fixing a shirt for Willie said to myself I'll go to prayer meeting if Mrs C calls for me. I was anxious to finish my shirt & felt like I didn't want her to call & yet I hoped she would but she didn't. finished my shirt

20 let Aunt Miley³⁰ go home on a visit depending on Green³¹ to help me went to look for him he was gone to haul corn for Rachel. I had the tallow³² to melt & dinner to get fe[l]t badly almost sick. L fretful wanting me to take her all the time I had a fit of the blues took a good cry, then asked God to disperse the clouds that were around me felt better. found time after dinner to mend my hoops. thought I'd get early supper have it over in short order. had just got one "frugal meal" prepared when M. came in & said Mr Scrugs & Mr Burnett would be up to supper had to fly around considerably Lee made up some biscuit for me. Kate had gone to stay all night with Aunt Jud soon had a nice

²⁹ On April 19, 1861, President Lincoln ordered a blockade of the Southern coast, which made it difficult to obtain goods. However, there were blockade-runners that would slip into Southern ports, consequently prices of goods increased during the war. McPherson, 179; Ralph A. Wooster (ed.), *Lone Star Blue and Gray: Essays on Texas in the Civil War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1995), 152.

³⁰ According to another transcription of Elizabeth's by Professor Conner Aunt Mily was a slave. Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 350, STA.

³¹ The Simons were slaveowners. Maurice purchased Green at age 13 for \$700.00 from John Barwards of Lavaca County on December 17, 1855. On December 27, 1855, Maurice purchased a female slave for \$1,000.00 from B. Douzer of Jackson, County. Green had accompanied Maurice to Galveston in 1861 apparently Green went back to Texana after Maurice left Texas. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658 Folder 9, STA; and Maurice K. Simons, Diary Support Materials, Box 658, Folder 2, STA.

³² The making of tallow candles was common during the war. Jo Ellas Powell Exley (ed.), *Texas Tears and Texas Sunshine* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), 145.

supper. They as well as we are waiting so anxiously for the mail they went down after supper to watch for it, but its after 9 P M & it hasn't come been hearing such good news lately, that Lee & Stonewall Jackson have routed Pope & Mclellan & are marching on to Washington³³ oh how glorious if true

21st bright beautiful sabbath cool & pleasant in perfect contrast to last Sunday. soon after breakfast Willie appeared with the mail a long letter for me from Maurice containing a little one from Papa to "Dizzie" the little one seemed to understand what it was & packed it around til she almost wore it out & after dinner took one of our letters & spread it out & commenced scratching it with a pin I asked her what she was doing, she said, "iten Papa a etter" Kate was made happy by a letter from bro Dick Nannie also got one from him & M sent Lizzie 1 & 2\$ bills & me some Mobile & Memphis papers³⁴ I read my letter with all dispatch & was sorely tempted (as twas so late) to stay home from S S & read my papers but I resisted the temptation, & I went. Nannie & Mollie came home with us. went to the presbyt'n church³⁵ heard a good sermon. Rachel, Dr. Dodd³⁶ & Wm Sayle took dinner with us after dinner N & Mollie came up from Mrs Colemans N & K went to Mr Breckenridges to preaching Mollie, Rachel & Lee went down to Mrs Harris' I preferred staying home to read read the Telegraphs because we don't take it

³³ Elizabeth was probably referring to the Second Battle of Bull Run that took place on August 29 and 30 1862 and the events that took place after. Days after the battle Lee was leading his army across the Potomac for an invasion of the North, but McClellan's army was ready to defend Washington. Lee knew this and decided against an invasion of the city. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 529-534.

³⁴ Maurice participated in the Battle of Iuka in mid-September 1862, so he was able to obtain the papers he sent to Elizabeth. McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 521-523; and Simons Story, 4.

³⁵ The Texan Presbyterian Church was organized on September 30, 1855. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 216.

³⁶ The Dodds were members of the Presbyterian Church. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 217.

now & Rachels were here knew I wouldn't have a chance at them tomorrow. N & K got back about dark all went off to prayer meeting, I alone with little L got her to sleep & read some in my bible

22nd twas so cool I moulded some candles succeeded pretty well was reading all the afternoon reading my papers M sent me

23 wrote to Maurice. Mrs Sanford & Mrs Wm Coleman called to know what M said about their boys getting a discharge.³⁷ My little darling took fever was sick and fretful had to nurse her all day Mrs Harris came to hire the buggy to send to Victoria lent it to her. Nannie came in the evening she & K invited to a party at Rose Bankheads both say the're not going—both went got back after 11 oclk I still up with L we sat & talked a long time & I ate some candy they brought. they went to bed at 12 I a little after

24th L had a high fever all night I sent for Dr Woolfork early this morning at Milams request had breakfast by daylight. didn't intend to wake K & N. but Margaret had them up before I knew it, as twas Milams birthday Lee & I made a cake. I went in the house when the Dr came they let the cake burn almost past redemption Mrs. Frank White & Mary W. came to spend the day also Rachel & Nannie & after they had been here an hour or two Mrs Dr Chriers & Jimmie Bonnie. had quite a lively time. Rachael staid to supper & went to prayer meeting I didn't go Lizzie too unwell tho better such splendid news has come that Washington is taken oh if it was only true but it comes in too doubtful a form to be relied on much tis amusing to see how its re'cd. the croakers says

³⁷ There was a W. H. Coleman and John A. Sanford listed on the Muster Roll of Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 185-186.

“its impossible to know its not so” the hopeful, “I hope its so” the enthusiastic “I know its so”

25th busy knitting all the morning went down town after dinner got Lizzie a pair of little shoes best I could. Went to see Bro F quite sick giving Lizzie medicine all day to keep of her fever

26th The Dr called to see L. said the mail had come I hurried off Green off for ours. I got 2 from my “old man” K one from Bro D several others were rec’d Im sorry to find theyre to leave Zupels sorry too that Willie Coleman & J Sanford cant get discharges—went to prayer meeting

27th Mrs. Amin spent the day with us Mr Allen came up to dinner another mail in the evening 2 more letters for me the report about Washington not confirmed

28th went to S S feel discouraged about going have but 1 scholar & my attendance there breaks into my morning reading went to church heard Bro Rogers I never like his sermons can hardly listen to them. I wish it was not so I know the fault is with me. No co for dinner after dinner read the last papers M sent me then wrote to M. after the rest went to prayer meeting got L to sleep & read over all of M’s last letters & a goodly number of these were. The ladies have resolved go to work in earnest to make clothes for our dear ones in the camp,³⁸ determined to get up early in the morning & go to work.

29th first thing I hear at daylight is, Aunt Mily sick & I must get breakfast quite a damper. get tho as well & quick as possible & set down to knitting. What slow work for

³⁸ Women all over Texas worked many hours sewing and knitting for the soldiers. Exley, *Texas Tears*, 150; and Ruth Winegarten, *Texas Women* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1986), 30.

me, & how vividly rises before me the rapid way in which my dear mother made the needles fly K staid all night at Mr Sanfords

30th hard at work for the soldiers cut up my blanket shawl to make shirts,³⁹ Aunt Mily still stick Milan gone cow driving⁴⁰

Elizabeth kept busy throughout the month of September, especially caring for sick little Lizzie. The Federal blockade of the Southern coast was felt through the rising prices of necessities such as flour and corn. Elizabeth was thankful that it was still affordable for her family unlike others in the community. Dying cloth with homemade dyes became a common activity during the war because of the shortages and high prices. Elizabeth was not alone and did have help with the chores. There was Green the slave who Maurice had purchased in 1855, and Aunt Mily. It is apparent that Milam, Maurice's younger brother, and his young wife Lee Anna were living with Elizabeth and Lizzie as well as Kate, Elizabeth's younger sister.

Despite the hard times and anxiety Elizabeth felt about Maurice and her brothers fighting in the war, she was still willing to sacrifice for the war effort. Along with other women in the community Elizabeth began to work in earnest making clothes for the soldiers. Her strong religious beliefs and activities helped Elizabeth to remain strong and hopeful that all would turn out well and the war would end soon.

³⁹ Women were willing to sacrifice whatever they had to help supply the troops. Undergarments, dresses and old clothing was used to make shirts for the soldiers. Frances Butler Simkins and James Welch Patton, *The Women of the Confederacy* (Richmond: Garrett & Massie, Incorporated, 1936), 28.

⁴⁰ Milam became a well-known and respected cattle rancher in South Texas. Later his son Maurice K. would follow in his footsteps. Simons Story, 5.

Chapter III: The Sad Days of October

October was a month of celebration, reflection, and sadness for Elizabeth. First of all, it had been one year on October 8 since Maurice went off to war. Two days later she put her sad and gloomy feelings aside to celebrate Lizzie's second birthday. Once again sadness enveloped Elizabeth as she reflected on the death of her mother who died one year ago on October 16. The arrival home of Wiley Coleman from the war brought joy to Elizabeth when he brought her a package from Maurice. The next day the news of the bloody Battle of Corinth arrived. That was a frightening time for Elizabeth and she almost welcomed not hearing any news about or from Maurice. Like the old adage, "no news is good news" was probably how Elizabeth felt.

Oct 1st another month has sped away & "the month of falling leaves" dawns upon us. K & I were going to Mrs Burnets, but Aunt J came to stay with us so Kate gave her music lessons¹ to day that we may go tomorrow. We had a pleasant day. K. made a cake & coffee in the afternoon. K & I both went to prayer meeting in the evening I felt inexpressibly sad during the meeting. Bro Cook led it & I never see him without thinking of my loved mother

2nd started bright & early to Mrs B's met her about 4 miles from town she made us go on said Amanda was by herself. Mrs B. got home before 2 oclk & we has a pleasant day we can think of nothing but our plans of sending clothing to our dear ones in the army. I even knit on the way up there.² Lizzie seemed brither then she had been for several days. We thought we'd start home time enough to get to town by dark, but their clk was

¹ Kate Hatcher was a teacher and never married. Henry N.Barroll (ed.), "Dibrell Genealogy," (Washington, DC, 1915), 13; and John E. Conner, Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

² Women worked hours on end knitting and sewing it was common to see women "knitting while riding in carriages, walking the streets, attending social functions, and even conducting classes." Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Women in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 35.

a great deal too slow & we forgot how short the days are getting & the first thing we knew dark overtook us 8 miles from town, but the moon shone & we asked our Father to bring us home safely & He did so. twas 8 oclk. when we got home. We found letters waiting for us one for me from Maurice containing \$1,000 one from Bro D. to K. he is the only one one she gets letters from & I always felt badly when all the rest were getting letter & none for her

3rd got up at daylight to go work for my soldiers. but after breakfast Mrs Coleman came in & threw cold water over my plans says Mr Boleyn who has just got back from the army says, that our men don't need anything. that what we send would be in the way. that they would throw them away, that he took socks for them & had to bring them back & offered them some of his shirts & they wouldn't have them. oh if I could only know what to do! the idea of their being in that cold climate poorly clad is distressing Mrs Owens³ baby died this morning I intended going to female prayer meeting but Mrs Coleman didn't come by for me.

4 went to the funeral at Dr Wells. came home finished my perserves commenced yesterday. went to Rachels (K & I) in the afternoon. Rachl poorly.

5th went to S S. mail came no letter no news only a rumor that Buells army is defeated by Bragg⁴ went to church took L. she got to talking sent her home Bro F preach Aunt J

³ Mrs. Owens was possibly a relative of Captain Clark L. Owens of Company K, he was killed at Shiloh on April 6, 1862. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA; "Muster Roll of Company K, Second Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America and Explanatory Notes," Box 350, STA; and I. T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 185.

⁴ In late August and early September, 1862 Braxton Bragg, the commander of the Confederate Army of Mississippi along with Kirby Smith successfully invaded Kentucky in an effort to draw Buell out of Tennessee. The plan worked, Buell with his army tried to get to Louisville before the Confederate Army, but failed. James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1992), 287-288.

came with us to dinner I intended going to class meeting but got sleepy laid down & didn't go commenced writing to Maurice after supper when the others went to prayer m'g. Wrote to Bro Dick & added more to Ms letter

6th finished Ms letter sent it down by Willie it got there too late for the mail boiled preserves over that I made saturday.

7th set another sock for M. finished the flannel over shirt commenc'd last week L fretful had to nurse her a good deal deal & whilst doing so read Mad Leverts travels. Wrote another page to M letter after supper.

8th one y'r to day my lovd husband left home & friends to embark in his countrys cause oh how sad is the retrospect! How many gloomy hours, how many heart aches are recorded on its pages. what will the records of another year unfold! still I feel deep gratitude ought to thrill my heart to day for how many of those brave ones who left us one y'r ago to day, have pined away & died in hospitals, while some have fallen on the battle field, and others have told the weary hours in northern prisons, but thus far my loved one has been blessed with health, whilst his promotion from L't to Major shows that his services have been appreciated. late in the evening Willy went down & brought the mail no letter for me. no other news in the paper than that Galveston is attacked⁵

Mrs Sanford took tea with us went to prayer meeting

9th knit busily on my sock. the idea now is to send them⁶ by Tim Burk who is going to

⁵ The Union had been planning to possibly take possession of Galveston Island since December 1861 according to memo sent from Benjamin F. Butler to Major General George B. McClellan. The Union captured Galveston in early October 1862. *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), Vol. LIII; Series I, 507-507; and Ralph A. Wooster (ed.), *Lone Star Blue and Gray: Essays on Texas on the Civil War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1995), 65.

⁶ Interlineation: "rained hard all day"

join the co. Lee & I made some cake cut out M's⁷ pants

10 My little darlings birthday!⁸ oh how I thank God that he has still spared her to us, what a treasure she is! I dressed her birthday cake with flowers & set it on the table before her she seem'd delighted. I asked her who she was going to give a piece to—thinking mabe she'd say "Ta tey" or more like herself, but no she answered promptly "Papa" she seems to know that Pappa is an important individual. this is the fast day that precedes our qr'ly meeting. God help us all to humble ourselves in the dust of humility. the day has been very cold, a hard norther blowing. Kate, Lee & I sat by the fire in Lee's room (Milam still out branding) sometimes we chatted pleasantly & sometimes sat long time in silence. Mrs C. came for me to go to female prayer meeting I felt so bad from a severe cold, I didn't go. Aunt Jud called on her way from prayer meeting. I made a pr of pants for Maurice.

11th still very cold Kate went to church I didn't go busy making a flannel shirt for Maurice. Mrs Burnett & Wm came Mr & Mrs Sanford came with K from church all staid to dinner. Bro Fisher & Bro Davidson P E took supper with us. K & Willie went to church with the preachers I didn't go. wrote some more in the letter to M. that I commenced on Lizzies birthday (yesterday) K and W came in almost frozen

12th very cold, the sabbath of our quarterly meeting couldn't go to love feast went to church heard a good sermon the church seemed full. oh how I thought of my loved one when we knelt at the table of our lord! Rachel & Mrs Jno Menniffee⁹ & Lucy M came

⁷ Interlineation: "tried to make L say her prayers--failure"

⁸ Marginal note: "L. cried with the earache put landanum in it to ease it & the worm crawled out."

⁹ Mrs. Jno. Menefee mentioned was probably the wife of John Menefee, who owned a merchandise store in Texana since 1835 was called, John Menefee and Company. The Menefee family also belonged to the

taken. Miss L. will go with us. I forgot to record yesterday that I commenced Lizzies education. Yesterday, the monday morning after she was 2 yrs old. mail came in no letters. I have b'n so oppress'd with gloomy foreboding yesterday & today that I felt glad there were no letters so much was I afraid of bad news. the papers says Price defeated Rogancrantz at Iuka.¹² Bro F came by to read the news to us & take the paper home with him

15. Mrs H came directly after breakfast to know if I was willing to put off the trip till Monday. I consented. she staid an hour or 2 Milam & Mr M. came in for their breakfast about 9. after they got thro. Mrs. H. Kate & I took a cosy cup of coffee together & after dinner I went to see Mrs Burrell. I spent the afternoon with her. Mrs Tatem & Miss K Ware were there twas more pleasant after they left. poor Mrs B. dying of consumption & surrounded by so many little ones I have felt sad all evening thinking of her. how I reproach myself that I have not been to see her oftener! for she loves company, & gets very sad sometimes when alone. Miss K Ware says that the lint & bandages we made last summers for Breckenridges co. insulted them as they had no idea of getting into a fight & thought we were making sport of them to send them lint & bandages. after supper K & I went to prayer meeting. K went to stay all night with Nannie. tis late. at night I am the only soul awake on the place & I shall soon be in the land of dreams made Lizzie say her letters again to day it amuses me to see her looking so earnest & trying to pronounce the letters she is using the card Judie sent her. oh how I wish I could write Fannie, & tell her these things

¹² In mid-September Rosecrans occupied the town of Iuka and was attacked by Price on September 19th. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 291.

16th Nannie came down with K. she & I went to the store to get some embroidery that was left after the sale. got some went to Oppenheims.¹³ got back home about dinner time. After dinner K & N got ready to go see Mrs. Burrell. just as they were starting Mr A. came for N to go to Mrs O's they all 3 went off together. Lee & M went riding & I was left alone with my little darling. there was something in the atmosphere of this mild, soft O^d evening evening that made me feel sad my thoughts went back to the sad scenes enacting in our far distant home just one yr ago & but for the sweet prattle of my little one as she ran in occasionally I know not how far my feelings would have carried me, but she soon had me out in the garden picking "buck beans" as she calls butter beans. twas nearly dark when K came she seemed fretted about something & I tried to remonstrate with her which only fretted her more. oh how I wish she had a happier disposition for she is very dear to me. but tis late at night all in the house are asleep, but I who am sad sad just 1 yr ago this night our loved Mother left us, & went to her home on high. oh how hard it does seem that K & I should have been far away. so unconscious of that heart crushing scene, perhaps sleeping peacefully at that terrible moment when they whispered "she is dead" but oh we little dreamed of it we didn't even know she was sick, & alas "The golden bowl was broken and the silver cord unstrung. E're our hearts received a token Of the grief that o'er us hung" how vividly these words rise in my mind when I was all unconscious of any greater sorrow hanging over me than that my Maurice has gone far from me. then came those words which seem burnt in my brain "your Mother is dead".

¹³ There was a Zack Oppenheimer in Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

I was interrupted by someone knocking at the door I thought of course any one coming at such a late hour must be coming for K to sit up with Texane Edwards as she is very sick but on asking who's there found twas Jim Coleman something happened down there I thought & asked "whats the matter but lo! Wiley¹⁴ has come & J handed me a package M. sent by him. as I took my seat again how different were my feelings, for as I had not heard from M for nearly 3 weeks, "when I used to hear every week" I had begun to be desponding, & indulge gloomy forebodings about him, but here was a letter from him direct. Well I shed a few tears to begin with & opened the package it contain'd 2 letters from M. & a neat portfolio containing 2 packets of note paper & envelopes (the latter having on them great pictures & matters about the Union!) folio & paper all captured at Iuka where they had just had a fight, & thus has closed a day of heartache & sadness!

17 went down directly after breakfast to see Wiley 1st one & then another came in to see him til the room was crowded twas pleasant to look at any one who had so lately looked on the face of my Maurice. Aunt Jud came up with me to hear our letters & see the captured papers portfolio & C. I awoke K this morning by telling here I had a letter for her. she would hardly believe me but her face brightened when I gave her brother Dicks letter. pretty soon W. sent her the bundle of "dessicated vegetables" Bro D. sent her quite a curiosity to us all. sewed all the afternoon getting M... [illegible] ready for the trip to V. didn't go to f. prayer meeting because Mrs C didn't call for me.

18th Mrs Sutherland spent the morning with us after dinner busy sewing on L's cloak. After supper Mrs Taylor & Mrs Medden came in staid til bed time gave so[me] com's

¹⁴ Wiley Coleman and his brother William were in Company K. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary; Box 658, Folder 9, STA; Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 185.

to Victoria. Mr Coleman called 7 p'd me \$155 Maurice lent Wiley. Milam came up at bed time with the mail no letters sad news. our men driven back from Corinth.¹⁵

Maury's Div'n cut to pieces. Oh I dread to get letters now! Who, who are the victims 13th went to S S. after twas over Sarah Smith read Ralphs¹⁶ letters he had just been exchanged. his sufferings in the penitentiary in Ill were great.¹⁷ went to church Bro Shipman preached a splendid sermon. he came home with us to dinner also Nannie Mollie & Rachel. he is stopping with us. after dinner Mollie & N went to Aunt Jud. & pretty soon R. K. Charlotte A & I went she was so mad beause M, N & R didn't go there to dinner & med with me because I didn't invite her home with me, that I was truly sorry Id gone. thought how much better twould have been if I'd staid at home & read my Bible & written to M. Charlotte came back & took supper with us. we went to preaching. heard another excellent sermon Bro S came home with us expecting to stay all night but M. N. & Rawls took supper at Mrs H's (with Aunt J) came by & he went home with them as soon as they left wrote to M. just finished his letter & it is after eleven oclck.

20th got up long before day to get ready to start to Victoria to do some shopping & have Ls picture taken. Bro S came down early to hurry us but we were ready & 2 hours before

¹⁵ On October 3, 1862, the Confederate forces under Price and Van Dorn attacked Union forces under Rosecrans in Corinth driving them back. The next morning, as Price and Van Dorn attacked the Union again they were "cut to pieces" by Roscrans forces. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 291.

¹⁶ Ralph Smith was a private in Company K. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 186.

¹⁷ Ralph Smith was wounded during the Battle of Shiloh and taken prisoner. He was first sent to a hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. He was later taken to the penitentiary in Alton, Illinois, and after about three months Ralph was exchanged. During the war there were four prisons located in Illinois: Alton Penitentiary, Camp Butler, and Camp Douglas. The fourth prison Rock Island located in Illinois was not built until 1863. "Civil War Prisons in Illinois," *Illinois in the Civil War*, 11 November 1995, <http://www.outfitters.com/illinois/history/civil/cwprisons.html>, (28 February 1999); and Ralph J. Smith, *Reminiscences of the Civil War: And Other Sketches* (Waco: W. M. Morrison, 1962), 6-8.

the others. delay after delay occurred, got of at 10 A M very warm & dusty got to the Gar site about 1 oclk stopped for dinner made coffee, had a pleasant time Bro F the life of the crowd. My spirits damped by L feeling poorly. strongly tempted to go back. Miss L. Berton joined us, came on got to V just after dark. after we got in town our horse got frightn'd & came near breaking the buggy all to pieces. Stopped at Ingrams no room came on to Mrs Shirkys heard first thing that the yellow fever is at I's glad they had no room for us. then heard there was a case across the stree from where we are oh if we were safe at home, but my first thought was "confide ye aye in Providence". After tea my little darling very sick oh then how long'd for home, how my heart ached. Gaverher medicine that quieted her Mrs S very kind. tis now near 12 all is quiet in the house & the town while Im sitting alone thinking how far my little is far from home & the Dr in whom I have more confidence than any other, thinking too of the yellow fever man across the street may our God still be merciful & take us home safely.

21st L slept but little & I less, tho I laid down at 12. got up this morning determined to get home to night. all try to dissuade me but I thought I wouldn't endure the anguish I did last night for the world. started at 8 to get L's picture taken. M. took Blanch & I, L & started to the artists whilst Aunt J Mrs Coleman, Mrs Harris, Miss Barton & K. went shopping we went to the filthiest hole I ever saw. couldn't take it til after dinner had to give up all hope of seeing home tonight. went shopping. everything high what mesbit calico now \$1. Bought domestic gave 85^{cs} coffee \$1.25 lb (didn't get it) got to Mrs S. at 11 ½ tired bad headache. went to the artists again so disappointed, as that was the very object of my trip we intended going to the Gar site to night but Bro F didn't come till so

late, gave it out poor L. so restless took riding in evening L still very poorly, had wretched head ach all the evening going to bed early

22nd started home early L. very poorly looks badly. had a hot dusty ride stopped at Mr Walkers to dinner had nice, strong coffee. got home about 4 P M. L. quite sick wanted to send for the Dr immediately. Dr W sick, Baylor gone. Mrs Coleman & Mrs Clarey came up Mrs C. made blue mass pills for L. gave her the last after 10, but she's so fretful had to be up with her til 12.

23 L. became so fretful about 1 oclk. this morning I got up soon found she was very sick. I became frighten[e]d about her I almost took a chill. I trembled so twas impossible to keep still. mad Green make a fire & go Dr. Woolfork. he's so poorly. I wrote a note telling her symptoms that he might send medicine if he couldn't come. oh how long the time seemed while G was gone how my very soul went out to God "in agony of prayer" it does seem impossible for me to see that little form laid in the grave to miss the patter of her little feet & her smart little words but oh how much harder it would be while her father is gone! to my great relief Dr W. came got here at 4 A M. staid till after breakfast she seemed better towards dinner time. he called 3 times thro' the day I think she is out of danger very fretful have to nurse her a good deal Mrs Sanford called in the evening they say the yellow fever is in town. All who have friends in the 2nd Tx. filled with gloomy forebodings no letter since the battle. M. went to gather up his beeves wont be back til monday.

24 L. much better. stage came in last night. send down to get the mail. Dr W. came in said the mail didn't come. now that L is better, & my heart is relieved of that great anguish, I am sad & troubled about our loved ones in the army. my heart is filled with

gloomy forebodings as if some great calamity is about to burst upon me. sometimes I feel that is my loved brother D. that has fallen. then my heart tells me tis my soul idol my Maurice. Im thinking continually of a little circumstance that happened monday. as we were riding along (going to V) L. had been asleep & waked & after sitting still a few minutes said "Mama, Papas dead" I was startled & said "what" & she repeated Papa's dead & then said as if plagued at what she had said, "Papa gone a war" (gone to the war) it mad me feel strong all day & Ive thought a great deal about it since

25th last night a hard norther blew up. very cold all day M & Green still out collecting beeves troubled about getting wood cut as I sit by the fire my heart goes out sadly towards the loved ones shivering over their camp fire perhaps poorly clad & dejected & desponding. Stage came in at 4 could hardly wait til Willy & Jack got back. a letter for me directed in Bro D's hand, oh the suspence of that one moment that I took to tear open my letter, but there was M's letter enclosed in Bro D. merely a hurried note saying he was safe Bro D's an interesting account of the defeat & retreat, & the casualties. Lt Haynie¹⁸ killed shot all to pieces, Gen Bolyn mortely wounded. Capt Goff, Col Rogers & Gen Moore killed¹⁹ sad sad record. Willie Sanford came to hear of Jno. his among the missing²⁰ Dr Wells came to hear the news. thinking continually of the desolate hearts &

¹⁸ Hayne was listed as a second lieutenant in Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

¹⁹ At Corinth the Confederates lost 4,233 men and the Union lost 2,520 men. J. Cutler Andrews, *The South Reports the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 246.

²⁰ John Sanford was reported as missing after the Battle of Corinth but later rejoined Company K. Douglas Lee Braudaway, "The Life and Civil War Journal of Major Maurice Kavanaugh Simons, A.C.S. Together With an Account of His Life." (M.A. thesis, Texas A&M University Kingsville, 1994), 40; and Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

homes in our midst. sat up late to finish pr socks for Charley Barroll. Bro D says Charley is safe thank God.

26' very cold last night ice this morning. great many came to hear my letter. Mr Haynie's servant came. I wrote the poor old man a note told him his son was kill'd old Mr Boleyn came to hear the letter Mrs Harris spent the afternoon Mr Allen called & many others great excitement about the Gunboats being at Lavacca. the cow boys called out M came home collecting beeves. Mr Medden children got yellow fever too cold for it to spread Milam sold all the beeves for \$20 K & Mrs Coleman gone to sit up with Mrs Amelia. no S S preaching to day very cold all day

27th got up at day light. M starts out after beeves again. Commenced Maurices comfort. Nanny came down she & K went down town came back to dinner Mr Scruggs called to hear something of D Burnett—staid to dinner. Mrs Amelia died—Nannie K & Mrs C. went down there. L fretful begging all the time for something to eat great excitement about the yankees—reported that they've taken Powderh'n.²¹ after supper Nannie & Mollie & Bro F came didn't stay long—say they're going to run when the feds come. I say Im going to stay at home—Nearly 11. P M L poorly & fretful

28 finished Greens shirt by 10 A M knit industriously on M's comfort great excitement about the yanks Milam co gone to Caranchua bay scouting.²² Militia ordered out, go to

²¹ Elizabeth may have been referring to Indianola. In 1849 Charles Morgan rebelled against port charges at Lavaca and built Powderhorn. "which grew into Indianola and was a chief port." On October 26, 1862, Indianola was bombarded by the Union occupied and then looted. Brownson Malsch, "Indianola, Texas," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook.online/>> (7 March 1999); and "Morgan Lines," *The Handbook of Texas* (7 March 1999).

²² Milam was not only sheriff of Jackson County during the war, but also served in the Texana Home Guard. Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 36-37; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 432.

Lavacca. reported that Kastenbine to be shot for disertion. I went down to Mrs C after dinner. sent for to come read my letter to Mrs Sanford poor unhappy woman. says why is it that they're so much harder on Jno than any one else" P Amelio got here just in time to see his wife buried. our theme all day & all the evening as we sit round the table at work is the Yankees.

29th beautiful day the cold gradually passed off L played out all day & is so much better & not near so fretful Dr W. called to see her. Knit steadily on Ms comfort. feds left Lavacca gone towards Matagorda Milam still gone no mail last night. heard all sick at Dr Wells, went down staid an hour or so stopped at Marks' got a pr drawers for Bro D. went down to Dr Wells' in the evening several sick there. K & Lee went to prayer meeting. K & I sat up late knitting on our comfort.

30th beautiful day. Mollie, Nannie Bro F & Aunt J spent the day with me Rachel came down after supper poor Nastenbine is dead dont know whether shot or died.

31st went down to get L some medicine. Met Mrs Sanford & Mrs W Coleman, the latter coming to hear my letter they came on. I went on to the drug store stopped few minutes at Mrs White's. found Mrs S & C here when I got home. after they left K. went down to Mrs Colemans to spin L went to Rachels I left alone Mr Wm Menniffee & Flora about 10 took dinner with me. they left soon after dinner & I prepared to go to prayer meeting but I waited for for Mrs C. till twas too late. went to Mr Taylors several sick there for 2 hours before dark heard heavy firing direction of Lavacca²³ Aunt Jud is with us Milam

²³ Captain Renshaw with two Federal ships appeared off Port Lavaca and demanded that Major Daniel D. Shea surrender the harbor. Shea refused and was given ninety minutes to evacuate the town of all women and children. After the time allotted elapsed, Renshaw began a bombardment of the town. Shea's batteries returned fire, however the bombardment continued on November first. That afternoon the Federal ships pulled up anchor and sailed towards Indianola. Keith Guthrie, *Texas Ports Forgotten* (Austin: Eakin Press,

came home to get provisions all gloomy & sad Aunt J & K almost sick with fear. I feel very very badly but try to be cheerful to reassure the others. May God help us I fear we are to be sorely tried this winter amid all the confusion & trouble cant helping thinking of one y'r ago to day when I heard of my darling Mothers death oh the anguish of that day & the many days that succeeded.

Elizabeth and the community of Texana not only worried about the military events that took place far from home, but now the war was on their doorstep. First there was news that Galveston had been attacked early in the month and then, the firing on Port Lavaca. Elizabeth not only had to tend to a sickly child but her worries multiplied with the latest news. Elizabeth knew the next the few months would be filled with anxiety and fear . The month of October was indeed filled with sadness from the news about Corinth and the sickness and death of both of both family and friends at home and on the battlefield surrounded the small town of Texana, Texas

1988), 168; and Robert S. Hoekstra, "The Historical Study of the Texas Ports in the Civil War" (M.A. thesis, Texas College of Arts and Industries, 1951), 68-69.

Chapter III: The Sad Days of October

October was a month of celebration, reflection, and sadness for Elizabeth. First of all, it had been one year on October 8 since Maurice went off to war. Two days later she put her sad and gloomy feelings aside to celebrate Lizzie's second birthday. Once again sadness enveloped Elizabeth as she reflected on the death of her mother who died one year ago on October 16. The arrival home of Wiley Coleman from the war brought joy to Elizabeth when he brought her a package from Maurice. The next day the news of the bloody Battle of Corinth arrived. That was a frightening time for Elizabeth and she almost welcomed not hearing any news about or from Maurice. Like the old adage, "no news is good news" was probably how Elizabeth felt.

Oct 1st another month has sped away & "the month of falling leaves" dawns upon us. K & I were going to Mrs Burnets, but Aunt J came to stay with us so Kate gave her music lessons¹ to day that we may go tomorrow. We had a pleasant day. K. made a cake & coffee in the afternoon. K & I both went to prayer meeting in the evening I felt inexpressibly sad during the meeting. Bro Cook led it & I never see him without thinking of my loved mother

2nd started bright & early to Mrs B's met her about 4 miles from town she made us go on said Amanda was by herself. Mrs B. got home before 2 oclk & we has a pleasant day we can think of nothing but our plans of sending clothing to our dear ones in the army. I even knit on the way up there.² Lizzie seemed brither then she had been for several days. We thought we'd start home time enough to get to town by dark, but their clk was

¹ Kate Hatcher was a teacher and never married. Henry N.Barroll (ed.), "Dibrell Genealogy," (Washington, DC, 1915), 13; and John E. Conner, Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

² Women worked hours on end knitting and sewing it was common to see women "knitting while riding in carriages, walking the streets, attending social functions, and even conducting classes." Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Women in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 35.

a great deal too slow & we forgot how short the days are getting & the first thing we knew dark overtook us 8 miles from town, but the moon shone & we asked our Father to bring us home safely & He did so. twas 8 oclk. when we got home. We found letters waiting for us one for me from Maurice containing \$1,000 one from Bro D. to K. he is the only one one she gets letters from & I always felt badly when all the rest were getting letter & none for her

3rd got up at daylight to go work for my soldiers. but after breakfast Mrs Coleman came in & threw cold water over my plans says Mr Boleyn who has just got back from the army says, that our men don't need anything. that what we send would be in the way. that they would throw them away, that he took socks for them & had to bring them back & offered them some of his shirts & they wouldn't have them. oh if I could only know what to do! the idea of their being in that cold climate poorly clad is distressing Mrs Owens³ baby died this morning I intended going to female prayer meeting but Mrs Coleman didn't come by for me.

4 went to the funeral at Dr Wells. came home finished my perserves commenced yesterday. went to Rachels (K & I) in the afternoon. Rachl poorly.

5th went to S S. mail came no letter no news only a rumor that Buells army is defeated by Bragg⁴ went to church took L. she got to talking sent her home Bro F preach Aunt J

³ Mrs. Owens was possibly a relative of Captain Clark L. Owens of Company K, he was killed at Shiloh on April 6, 1862. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA; "Muster Roll of Company K, Second Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America and Explanatory Notes," Box 350, STA; and I. T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 185.

⁴ In late August and early September, 1862 Braxton Bragg, the commander of the Confederate Army of Mississippi along with Kirby Smith successfully invaded Kentucky in an effort to draw Buell out of Tennessee. The plan worked, Buell with his army tried to get to Louisville before the Confederate Army, but failed. James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1992), 287-288.

came with us to dinner I intended going to class meeting but got sleepy laid down & didn't go commenced writing to Maurice after supper when the others went to prayer m'g. Wrote to Bro Dick & added more to Ms letter

6th finished Ms letter sent it down by Willie it got there too late for the mail boiled preserves over that I made saturday.

7th set another sock for M. finished the flannel over shirt commenc'd last week L fretful had to nurse her a good deal deal & whilst doing so read Mad Leverts travels. Wrote another page to M letter after supper.

8th one y'r to day my lovd husband left home & friends to embark in his countrys cause oh how sad is the retrospect! How many gloomy hours, how many heart aches are recorded on its pages. what will the records of another year unfold! still I feel deep gratitude ought to thrill my heart to day for how many of those brave ones who left us one y'r ago to day, have pined away & died in hospitals, while some have fallen on the battle field, and others have told the weary hours in northern prisons, but thus far my loved one has been blessed with health, whilst his promotion from L't to Major shows that his services have been appreciated. late in the evening Willy went down & brought the mail no letter for me. no other news in the paper than that Galveston is attacked⁵

Mrs Sanford took tea with us went to prayer meeting

9th knit busily on my sock. the idea now is to send them⁶ by Tim Burk who is going to

⁵ The Union had been planning to possibly take possession of Galveston Island since December 1861 according to memo sent from Benjamin F. Butler to Major General George B. McClellan. The Union captured Galveston in early October 1862. *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), Vol. LIII; Series I, 507-507; and Ralph A. Wooster (ed.), *Lone Star Blue and Gray: Essays on Texas on the Civil War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1995), 65.

⁶ Interlineation: "rained hard all day"

join the co. Lee & I made some cake cut out M's⁷ pants

10 My little darlings birthday!⁸ oh how I thank God that he has still spared her to us, what a treasure she is! I dressed her birthday cake with flowers & set it on the table before her she seem'd delighted. I asked her who she was going to give a piece to—thinking mabe she'd say "Ta tey" or more like herself, but no she answered promptly "Papa" she seems to know that Pappa is an important individual. this is the fast day that precedes our qr'ly meeting. God help us all to humble ourselves in the dust of humility. the day has been very cold, a hard norther blowing. Kate, Lee & I sat by the fire in Lee's room (Milam still out branding) sometimes we chatted pleasantly & sometimes sat long time in silence. Mrs C. came for me to go to female prayer meeting I felt so bad from a severe cold, I didn't go. Aunt Jud called on her way from prayer meeting. I made a pr of pants for Maurice.

11th still very cold Kate went to church I didn't go busy making a flannel shirt for Maurice. Mrs Burnett & Wm came Mr & Mrs Sanford came with K from church all staid to dinner. Bro Fisher & Bro Davidson P E took supper with us. K & Willie went to church with the preachers I didn't go. wrote some more in the letter to M. that I commenced on Lizzies birthday (yesterday) K and W came in almost frozen

12th very cold, the sabbath of our quarterly meeting couldn't go to love feast went to church heard a good sermon the church seemed full. oh how I thought of my loved one when we knelt at the table of our lord! Rachel & Mrs Jno Menniffee⁹ & Lucy M came

⁷ Interlineation: "tried to make L say her prayers--failure"

⁸ Marginal note: "L. cried with the earache put landanum in it to ease it & the worm crawled out."

⁹ Mrs. Jno. Menefee mentioned was probably the wife of John Menefee, who owned a merchandise store in Texana since 1835 was called, John Menefee and Company. The Menefee family also belonged to the

home with us to dinner. Mr Hester buried to day. after dinner the company all left & K & I had settled ourselves in the parlour to read the papers when Bro D. came in said he came to rest so we gave up the parlour to him as there was a good fire in it he laid down on the lounge & said afterwards he had a good rest & good chance to read. Nannie took supper with us all have gone to church. twas so cold & I had such a bad cold & Lizzie so poorly I staid at home I've attended but once during the meeting but I know I enjoy'd that—finished M's letter

13th Monday morning bright & beautiful. I set about my duties with brighter hopes & better resolutions. Bro's D. & K called to see about the church key. Mr Menniffee branding with M. took dinner with us. I felt sad to think how different twas a y'r ago. What a great lot of them we'd have to dinner whilst branding here. now some are on the battle field far away, while others, hale, hearty young men full of life & animation are now filling "strangers graves" Lee & I spend the afternoon at Rachels. Mrs Crosland came to see if R wanted to send Susan¹⁰ anything. weather still so cool moulded some candles sat up late after all were in bed got feeling sad

14 still bright busy all the mor knitting one pr sock I comm'ed monday for Charley Barrott¹¹ poor boy I wish I could send him all that he needs to make him comfortable this winter. took L. & spent the afternoon at Mrs Harris' Miss L. Barton was there had a pleasant time. We made up trip to Victoria to go thursday to have our babies picture

Texana Methodist Church. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 89 & 204.

¹⁰ Rachel Simons Rogers had a daughter Susan. Letter from Elizabeth Simons to Virginia McChesney, daughter of Rachel Simons, Maurice Simons sister, July 2, 1902, Goliad, Texas, 10. Private Collection.

¹¹ Charles E. Barroll from New Madrid, Missouri was a nephew of Elizabeth Simons. He is listed on Company K's muster roll as Charles C. Barrall. Barroll, "Dibrell Genealogy," 46; Maurice K. Simons, Diary Support Materials, Box 658, Folder 2, STA; and Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

taken. Miss L. will go with us. I forgot to record yesterday that I commenced Lizzies education. Yesterday, the monday morning after she was 2 yrs old. mail came in no letters. I have b'n so oppress'd with gloomy foreboding yesterday & today that I felt glad there were no letters so much was I afraid of bad news. the papers says Price defeated Rogancrantz at Iuka.¹² Bro F came by to read the news to us & take the paper home with him

15. Mrs H came directly after breakfast to know if I was willing to put off the trip till Monday. I consented. she staid an hour or 2 Milam & Mr M. came in for their breakfast about 9. after they got thro. Mrs. H. Kate & I took a cosy cup of coffee together & after dinner I went to see Mrs Burrell. I spent the afternoon with her. Mrs Tatem & Miss K Ware were there twas more pleasant after they left. poor Mrs B. dying of consumption & surrounded by so many little ones I have felt sad all evening thinking of her. how I reproach myself that I have not been to see her oftener! for she loves company, & gets very sad sometimes when alone. Miss K Ware says that the lint & bandages we made last summers for Breckenridges co. insulted them as they had no idea of getting into a fight & thought we were making sport of them to send them lint & bandages. after supper K & I went to prayer meeting. K went to stay all night with Nannie. tis late. at night I am the only soul awake on the place & I shall soon be in the land of dreams made Lizzie say her letters again to day it amuses me to see her looking so earnest & trying to pronounce the letters she is using the card Judie sent her. oh how I wish I could write Fannie, & tell her these things

¹² In mid-September Rosecrans occupied the town of Iuka and was attacked by Price on September 19th. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 291.

16th Nannie came down with K. she & I went to the store to get some embroidery that was left after the sale. got some went to Oppenheims.¹³ got back home about dinner time. After dinner K & N got ready to go see Mrs. Burrell. just as they were starting Mr A. came for N to go to Mrs O's they all 3 went off together. Lee & M went riding & I was left alone with my little darling. there was something in the atmosphere of this mild, soft O^d evening evening that made me feel sad my thoughts went back to the sad scenes enacting in our far distant home just one yr ago & but for the sweet prattle of my little one as she ran in occasionally I know not how far my feelings would have carried me, but she soon had me out in the garden picking "buck beans" as she calls butter beans. twas nearly dark when K came she seemed fretted about something & I tried to remonstrate with her which only fretted her more. oh how I wish she had a happier disposition for she is very dear to me. but tis late at night all in the house are asleep, but I who am sad sad just 1 yr ago this night our loved Mother left us, & went to her home on high. oh how hard it does seem that K & I should have been far away. so unconscious of that heart crushing scene, perhaps sleeping peacefully at that terrible moment when they whispered "she is dead" but oh we little dreamed of it we didn't even know she was sick, & alas "The golden bowl was broken and the silver cord unstrung. E're our hearts received a token Of the grief that o'er us hung" how vividly these words rise in my mind when I was all unconscious of any greater sorrow hanging over me than that my Maurice has gone far from me. then came those words which seem burnt in my brain "your Mother is dead".

¹³ There was a Zack Oppenheimer in Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

I was interrupted by someone knocking at the door I thought of course any one coming at such a late hour must be coming for K to sit up with Texane Edwards as she is very sick but on asking who's there found twas Jim Coleman something happened down there I thought & asked "whats the matter but lo! Wiley¹⁴ has come & J handed me a package M. sent by him. as I took my seat again how different were my feelings, for as I had not heard from M for nearly 3 weeks, "when I used to hear every week" I had begun to be desponding, & indulge gloomy forebodings about him, but here was a letter from him direct. Well I shed a few tears to begin with & opened the package it contain'd 2 letters from M. & a neat portfolio containing 2 packets of note paper & envelopes (the latter having on them great pictures & matters about the Union!) folio & paper all captured at Iuka where they had just had a fight, & thus has closed a day of heartache & sadness!

17 went down directly after breakfast to see Wiley 1st one & then another came in to see him til the room was crowded twas pleasant to look at any one who had so lately looked on the face of my Maurice. Aunt Jud came up with me to hear our letters & see the captured papers portfolio & C. I awoke K this morning by telling here I had a letter for her. she would hardly believe me but her face brightened when I gave her brother Dicks letter. pretty soon W. sent her the bundle of "dessicated vegetables" Bro D. sent her quite a curiosity to us all. sewed all the afternoon getting M... [illegible] ready for the trip to V. didn't go to f. prayer meeting because Mrs C didn't call for me.

18th Mrs Sutherland spent the morning with us after dinner busy sewing on L's cloak. After supper Mrs Taylor & Mrs Medden came in staid til bed time gave so[me] com's

¹⁴ Wiley Coleman and his brother William were in Company K. Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary; Box 658, Folder 9, STA; Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 185.

to Victoria. Mr Coleman called 7 p'd me \$155 Maurice lent Wiley. Milam came up at bed time with the mail no letters sad news. our men driven back from Corinth.¹⁵ Maury's Div'n cut to pieces. Oh I dread to get letters now! Who, who are the victims 13th went to S S. after twas over Sarah Smith read Ralphs¹⁶ letters he had just been exchanged. his sufferings in the penitentiary in Ill were great.¹⁷ went to church Bro Shipman preached a splendid sermon. he came home with us to dinner also Nannie Mollie & Rachel. he is stopping with us. after dinner Mollie & N went to Aunt Jud. & pretty soon R. K. Charlotte A & I went she was so mad beause M, N & R didn't go there to dinner & med with me because I didn't invite her home with me, that I was truly sorry Id gone. thought how much better twould have been if I'd staid at home & read my Bible & written to M. Charlotte came back & took supper with us. we went to preaching. heard another excellent sermon Bro S came home with us expecting to stay all night but M. N. & Rawls took supper at Mrs H's (with Aunt J) came by & he went home with them as soon as they left wrote to M. just finished his letter & it is after eleven ocik.

20th got up long before day to get ready to start to Victoria to do some shopping & have Ls picture taken. Bro S came down early to hurry us but we were ready & 2 hours before

¹⁵ On October 3, 1862, the Confederate forces under Price and Van Dorn attacked Union forces under Rosecrans in Corinth driving them back. The next morning, as Price and Van Dorn attacked the Union again they were "cut to pieces" by Roscrans forces. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 291.

¹⁶ Ralph Smith was a private in Company K. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 186.

¹⁷ Ralph Smith was wounded during the Battle of Shiloh and taken prisoner. He was first sent to a hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. He was later taken to the penitentiary in Alton, Illinois, and after about three months Ralph was exchanged. During the war there were four prisons located in Illinois: Alton Penitentiary, Camp Butler, and Camp Douglas. The fourth prison Rock Island located in Illinois was not built until 1863. "Civil War Prisons in Illinois," *Illinois in the Civil War*, 11 November 1995, <http://www.outfitters.com/illinois/history/civil/cwprisons.html>, (28 February 1999); and Ralph J. Smith, *Reminiscences of the Civil War: And Other Sketches* (Waco: W. M. Morrison, 1962), 6-8.

the others. delay after delay occurred, got of at 10 A M very warm & dusty got to the Gar site about 1 oclk stopped for dinner made coffee, had a pleasant time Bro F the life of the crowd. My spirits damped by L feeling poorly. strongly tempted to go back. Miss L. Berton joined us, came on got to V just after dark. after we got in town our horse got frightn'd & came near breaking the buggy all to pieces. Stopped at Ingrams no room came on to Mrs Shirkys heard first thing that the yellow fever is at I's glad they had no room for us. then heard there was a case across the stree from where we are oh if we were safe at home, but my first thought was "confide ye aye in Providence". After tea my little darling very sick oh then how long'd for home, how my heart ached. Gaverher medicine that quieted her Mrs S very kind. tis now near 12 all is quiet in the house & the town while Im sitting alone thinking how far my little is far from home & the Dr in whom I have more confidence than any other, thinking too of the yellow fever man across the street may our God still be merciful & take us home safely.

21st L slept but little & I less, tho I laid down at 12. got up this morning determined to get home to night. all try to dissuade me but I thought I wouldn't endure the anguish I did last night for the world. started at 8 to get L's picture taken. M. took Blanch & I, L & started to the artists whilst Aunt J Mrs Coleman, Mrs Harris, Miss Barton & K. went shopping we went to the filthiest hole I ever saw. couldn't take it til after dinner had to give up all hope of seeing home tonight. went shopping. everything high what mesbit calico now \$1. Bought domestic gave 85^{cs} coffee \$1.25 lb (didn't get it) got to Mrs S. at 11 ½ tired bad headache. went to the artists again so disappointed, as that was the very object of my trip we intended going to the Gar site to night but Bro F didn't come till so

late, gave it out poor L. so restless took riding in evening L still very poorly, had wretched head ache all the evening going to bed early

22nd started home early L. very poorly looks badly. had a hot dusty ride stopped at Mr Walkers to dinner had nice, strong coffee. got home about 4 P M. L. quite sick wanted to send for the Dr immediately. Dr W sick, Baylor gone. Mrs Coleman & Mrs Clarey came up Mrs C. made blue mass pills for L. gave her the last after 10, but she's so fretful had to be up with her til 12.

23 L. became so fretful about 1 o'clock. this morning I got up soon found she was very sick. I became frighten[ed] about her I almost took a chill. I trembled so twas impossible to keep still. mad Green make a fire & go Dr. Woolfork. he's so poorly. I wrote a note telling her symptoms that he might send medicine if he couldn't come. oh how long the time seemed while G was gone how my very soul went out to God "in agony of prayer" it does seem impossible for me to see that little form laid in the grave to miss the patter of her little feet & her smart little words but oh how much harder it would be while her father is gone! to my great relief Dr W. came got here at 4 A M. staid till after breakfast she seemed better towards dinner time. he called 3 times thro' the day I think she is out of danger very fretful have to nurse her a good deal Mrs Sanford called in the evening they say the yellow fever is in town. All who have friends in the 2nd Tx. filled with gloomy forebodings no letter since the battle. M. went to gather up his beeves wont be back til monday.

24 L. much better. stage came in last night. send down to get the mail. Dr W. came in said the mail didn't come. now that L is better, & my heart is relieved of that great anguish, I am sad & troubled about our loved ones in the army. my heart is filled with

gloomy forebodings as if some great calamity is about to burst upon me. sometimes I feel that is my loved brother D. that has fallen. then my heart tells me tis my soul idol my Maurice. Im thinking continually of a little circumstance that happened monday. as we were riding along (going to V) L. had been asleep & waked & after sitting still a few minutes said "Mama, Papas dead" I was startled & said "what" & she repeated Papa's dead & then said as if plagued at what she had said, "Papa gone a war" (gone to the war) it mad me feel strong all day & Ive thought a great deal about it since

25th last night a hard norther blew up. very cold all day M & Green still out collecting beeves troubled about getting wood cut as I sit by the fire my heart goes out sadly towards the loved ones shivering over their camp fire perhaps poorly clad & dejected & desponding. Stage came in at 4 could hardly wait til Willy & Jack got back. a letter for me directed in Bro D's hand, oh the suspence of that one moment that I took to tear open my letter, but there was M's letter enclosed in Bro D. merely a hurried note saying he was safe Bro D's an interesting account of the defeat & retreat, & the casualties. Lt Haynie¹⁸ killed shot all to pieces, Gen Bolyn mortely wounded. Capt Goff, Col Rogers & Gen Moore killed¹⁹ sad sad record. Willie Sanford came to hear of Jno. his among the missing²⁰ Dr Wells came to hear the news. thinking continually of the desolate hearts &

¹⁸ Hayne was listed as a second lieutenant in Company K. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA.

¹⁹ At Corinth the Confederates lost 4,233 men and the Union lost 2,520 men. J. Cutler Andrews, *The South Reports the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 246.

²⁰ John Sanford was reported as missing after the Battle of Corinth but later rejoined Company K. Douglas Lee Braudaway, "The Life and Civil War Journal of Major Maurice Kavanaugh Simons, A.C.S. Together With an Account of His Life." (M.A. thesis, Texas A&M University Kingsville, 1994), 40; and Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

homes in our midst. sat up late to finish pr socks for Charley Barroll. Bro D says Charley is safe thank God.

26th very cold last night ice this morning. great many came to hear my letter. Mr Haynie's servant came. I wrote the poor old man a note told him his son was kill'd old Mr Boleyn came to hear the letter Mrs Harris spent the afternoon Mr Allen called & many others great excitement about the Gunboats being at Lavacca. the cow boys called out M came home collecting beeves. Mr Medden children got yellow fever too cold for it to spread Milam sold all the beeves for \$20 K & Mrs Coleman gone to sit up with Mrs Amelia. no S S preaching to day very cold all day

27th got up at day light. M starts out after beeves again. Commenced Maurices comfort. Nanny came down she & K went down town came back to dinner Mr Scruggs called to hear something of D Burnett—staid to dinner. Mrs Amelia died—Nannie K & Mrs C. went down there. L fretful begging all the time for something to eat great excitement about the yankees—reported that they've taken Powderh'n.²¹ after supper Nannie & Mollie & Bro F came didn't stay long—say they're going to run when the feds come. I say Im going to stay at home—Nearly 11. P M L poorly & fretful

28 finished Greens shirt by 10 A M knit industriously on M's comfort great excitement about the yanks Milam co gone to Caranchua bay scouting.²² Militia ordered out, go to

²¹ Elizabeth may have been referring to Indianola. In 1849 Charles Morgan rebelled against port charges at Lavaca and built Powderhorn. "which grew into Indianola and was a chief port." On October 26, 1862, Indianola was bombarded by the Union occupied and then looted. Brownson Malsch, "Indianola, Texas," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook.online/>> (7 March 1999); and "Morgan Lines," *The Handbook of Texas* (7 March 1999).

²² Milam was not only sheriff of Jackson County during the war, but also served in the Texana Home Guard. Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 36-37; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 432.

Lavacca. reported that Kastenbine to be shot for disertion. I went down to Mrs C after dinner. sent for to come read my letter to Mrs Sanford poor unhappy woman. says why is it that they're so much harder on Jno than any one else" P Amelio got here just in time to see his wife buried. our theme all day & all the evening as we sit round the table at work is the Yankees.

29th beautiful day the cold gradually passed off L played out all day & is so much better & not near so fretful Dr W. called to see her. Knit steadily on Ms comfort. feds left Lavacca gone towards Matagorda Milam still gone no mail last night. heard all sick at Dr Wells, went down staid an hour or so stopped at Marks' got a pr drawers for Bro D. went down to Dr Wells' in the evening several sick there. K & Lee went to prayer meeting. K & I sat up late knitting on our comfort.

30th beautiful day. Mollie, Nannie Bro F & Aunt J spent the day with me Rachel came down after supper poor Nastenbine is dead dont know whether shot or died.

31st went down to get L some medicine. Met Mrs Sanford & Mrs W Coleman, the latter coming to hear my letter they came on. I went on to the drug store stopped few minutes at Mrs White's. found Mrs S & C here when I got home. after they left K. went down to Mrs Colemans to spin L went to Rachels I left alone Mr Wm Menniffee & Flora about 10 took dinner with me. they left soon after dinner & I prepared to go to prayer meeting but I waited for for Mrs C. till twas too late. went to Mr Taylors several sick there for 2 hours before dark heard heavy firing direction of Lavacca²³ Aunt Jud is with us Milam

²³ Captain Renshaw with two Federal ships appeared off Port Lavaca and demanded that Major Daniel D. Shea surrender the harbor. Shea refused and was given ninety minutes to evacuate the town of all women and children. After the time allotted elapsed, Renshaw began a bombardment of the town. Shea's batteries returned fire, however the bombardment continued on November first. That afternoon the Federal ships pulled up anchor and sailed towards Indianola. Keith Guthrie, *Texas Ports Forgotten* (Austin: Eakin Press,

came home to get provisions all gloomy & sad Aunt J & K almost sick with fear. I feel very very badly but try to be cheerful to reassure the others. May God help us I fear we are to be sorely tried this winter amid all the confusion & trouble cant helping thinking of one y'r ago to day when I heard of my darling Mothers death oh the anguish of that day & the many days that succeeded.

Elizabeth and the community of Texana not only worried about the military events that took place far from home, but now the war was on their doorstep. First there was news that Galveston had been attacked early in the month and then, the firing on Port Lavaca. Elizabeth not only had to tend to a sickly child but her worries multiplied with the latest news. Elizabeth knew the next the few months would be filled with anxiety and fear . The month of October was indeed filled with sadness from the news about Corinth and the sickness and death of both of both family and friends at home and on the battlefield surrounded the small town of Texana, Texas

1988), 168; and Robert S. Hoekstra, "The Historical Study of the Texas Ports in the Civil War" (M.A. thesis, Texas College of Arts and Industries, 1951), 68-69.

Chapter IV: The Dark Days of November

Life was not easy in the small community of Texana. There was much anxiety with the Union bombardment of Lavaca and the rumor of slave insurrections. Elizabeth wondered whether to stay or evacuate. The fear of a slave insurrection was so real to her and the rest of the family that Kate decided to leave for awhile. The November nights were "dark and lonely" for Elizabeth. With all that was happening, Elizabeth depended on prayer and reading her Bible. Her faith in God also gave her hope and strength during those trying times.

Nov 1st heavy firing again this morning; all anxiety to hear the fate of Lavacca. the militia are at Kendricks place fortifying call it fort Crosland.¹ Aunt J staid with us last night & staid til after dinner she & K almost sick with fear I feel miserable but try to be cheerful on account of K.

2nd Sunday mail in last night no letter no news northern papers insinuate theres to be an awful insurrection thro the south² so Bro F tells me. I didn't go to S S felt so gloomy all thro' the service at church could hardly keep tears back the idea of an insurrection is horrible to me cant get it out of my mind Lavacca has not fallen yet a strong norther to day makes against the feds. Milam still gone. am severely annoyed by the fellow Bill Bates³ coming about so often. went down after dinner to see Mr Coleman about getting

¹ A Confederate military camp near Texana also known as Kendrick's Military Camp. John E. Conner, Notes for Elizabeth Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

² During the war there was the constant fear of slave revolts throughout the South. This fear was prevalent especially among women who were left to tend their homes while their loved ones were fighting in the war. One women in South Carolina wrote in her diary, "What I fear most is not the Yankees but the Negroes..." There was a genuine fear that would continue after the war ended. C. Vann Woodward (ed.), *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 44; Bell Irvin Wiley, *Confederate Women* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1975), 154; and Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Women in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 287.

³ There is the assumption that Bill Bates was possibly a slave. Simons Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

rid of the nuisance from there to Mrs Edwards to see the new baby then on to Mrs Harris' hadn't been there long when K came to tell us C Dibrell had come. hurried home Aunt J came too. we are truly glad to see him. he urges us to leave here offers to send his wagon & carriage & help move us. all went to church after supper but he & Aunt J & I we spent a pleasant evening. (Bro F & Mollie took supper with us) Rachel Nannie Mollie called after church Coy C says K must go home with him, that his sister Mrs Whitfield told him not to come back without her. after they left & C went to bed K. Aunt J & I sat by the fire & talked it over. Lizzie has high fever K hates to leave her sick 3rd L had fever all night Kate concluded to go. All hands busy helping her they got off at 10 A M. in a nice large carriage K in fine spirits for we will not be seperated long if the feds stay away I'll send for her if the come Ill go to her. what a kind friend he is. before they left Mrs B & Amanda came, took dinner with us. after they left, Lee & I went down to Mrs Colemans staid a little while. Dr came in the morning to see L. came again after supper found B Bates here. went off to get the patrol tried to whip him he ran away. Dr Woolfork came I mightly excited.⁴ Said he knew he wouldn't be back to night, as soon as the patrol left he came again L & I feel badly & have to sit up with L 4th set up til 3 L hed hot fever. Lee & I had a lonely night of it. Aunt J came up in the morning. Mollie & Mr F staid an hour or 2 Rachel stepped few minutes L had a miserable night. D didn't come called off. gave L. quinine on my own responsibility she missed her fever. Went down to Mrs Hs get some yarn to finish comforter Dr came

⁴ Interlineation: bought 10 lbs coffee of Dr Woolfork \$1 lb.

after supper L playful but looks badly. Lee went to bed early. I sat up & wrote to mail Maurice feel lonely & sad send Ms letter to Cushing⁵ Aunt J wrote to Br D sent by Old Mily very mad all day⁶ mail in no letters. Old Mr Boleyn called to see if I got one--

5th strong north wind all day nothing from the yank's Lizzie had fever in the night & again this afternoon. very fretful Mrs Coleman came sat an hour or 2 Aunt J came few minutes in the morning Old Mily left. Im almost distracted don't know what to do whether to stay or buck up & leave Milam got home after dark

6th rather cold not so much as has been twice this fall Lizzie poorly finish'd K's comforter. Nannie & Mollie came in the afternoon staid a little while got 10 lbs coffee of Dr Woolfork \$1 lb. began pr stockings for Lizzie M killed beef afraid to pickle much think we'll have to leave soon. the militia came nearer to town fortifying at Dupree's. 2 boats reported in the river the other day & Gen Crosland called for a rattail file looks like he dont intend to fight

7th L good deal better but fretful. marked the things for our soldiers Nannie spent the day. Aunt J came in the afternoon Mrs C came for me to go to female prayer meeting didnt go L too fretful Med pr of drawers for Maurice, Milam left late in the evening it seemed to lonely after he left. he had been about the house all day and when he went off just after twilight a lonely hour anyhow L & I felt very lonely & I felt sad.

⁵ There was an Ernest Hopkins Cushing who established a pony-express route from Houston to Army Headquarters in Louisiana with correspondents at important points. Donald E. Reynolds, "Ernest Hopkins Cushing," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook.online/>> (8 March 1999), Notes for Elizabeth Hatcher Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA.

⁶ Professor Conner made a note "remember Bill Bates." There may have been a connection between Aunt Mily and Bates. Elizabeth Simons Diary, Box 350, STA.

8th busy dying some things to send to the soldiers hear they are to be sent in a few days
 had trouble with my dye & night found me tired. tired in addition to dying made pr
 flannel drawers fro Bro Dick fully expect a letter but no mail came—no letters for any
 one, no news thats good, our army have left Ky that dont seem cheering. my very soul
 is sad these times. sat up long after Lee & Lizzie were in bed sewed finished drawers &
 wrote to Kate. L seemed well played out all day keeps saying “her Katey” “tocky took
 Tatey aye”

9th a pleasant sabbath. intended going to S S. but such a strong wind arose & blew from
 the east I concluded not to go. Wind has been from the north all the week strong enough
 to prevent the yankee gunboats from getting over the bar. so all is quiet at Lavacca. did
 not go to church wrote to Maurice. after dinner wrote to Bro D. then L & I went to Mrs
 Burnetts to see them make syrup the cane so blighted can make no sugar got there just
 before dark. L slept all the way & so was fretful after supper & wouldn’g to to sleep til
 late. I never left home with such gloomy foreboding so much afraid of fire that I took
 some small valuables with me & Mrs Coleman to take my case of hair work home with
 her & keep it for me I fear there are 2 persons bad enough & who dislike me enough to
 set fire to my house.⁷

10th Mrs B had us all up before daylight. went pretty hard with me. some delay
 occurred so that no cane could be ground. I mede Willie p’r pants. Mrs B gave me stuff
 for a dress for Merg’t. had pleasant day L play’d out all day didn’t see her half dozen
 times. she came in so tired. soon went to sleep.

⁷ Elizabeth may have been referring to Bill Bates because she obviously feared him.

11th Compelled to come home to get M's clothes for Mr Pumphry. had to leave before they commenced grinding had an unpleasant ride, facint strong south wind, found all right at home feel thankful to a kind Heavenly Father mail came in before dinner got a letter from Maurice at last date 26th ult. His account of the suffering of the poor soldiers induced me to cut up my carpet to make blankets for some of them.⁸ Mr Sanford & Mills came to hear my letter also Mr Danzy Mrs Sanford & Flora. Aunt J spent the afternoon Milam got home before dark raining all evening.

12th norther blew up about daylight. cold rain falling for an hour or two very busy getting my soldiers clothes ready to send down to Mr Starr. blanket soaking wet had trouble drying it. wrote to Charly & Maurice put the letters in the pocket of the over shirt's also Bro D's commenced Sunday finished last night. got my bundle off late in the evening gave 30\$ towards paying expenses. Bro F. called. Mr Smith came to hear my letter also Mr Ewing and Pamela Logan.⁹ Dr Meddens little boy was buried this dark, November day. Lizzie very fretful badly salinated. I put burnt alum on her gums which are ulcerated & it made them bleed profusely & seemed to pain her very much. Milam left after dinner. It grieves me that another cold spell has come & our loved ones are without their nice woollen socks yarn comforters & warm blankets that are lying in Mr Starrs¹⁰ office for them

⁸ Since the blockade there was a shortage of materials in the South. It was commonplace for women to use whatever was available to provide for the soldiers. Carpets were made into blankets and blankets were made into shirts. Matthew Page Andrews, *The Women of the South in War Times* (Baltimore: The Norman Remington Co., 1923), 419; and Wiley, *Confederate Women*, 145.

⁹ J. L. Ewing, J. S. Logan and Ralph Smith were all in Company K. Logan however was listed as missing after the the Battle of Corinth. I. T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 185; and "Muster Roll of Company K, Second Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America and Explanatory Notes," Box 350, STA.

¹⁰ H. D. Starr was the Clerk of County Courts in Texana. *Census of the State of Texas*, National Archives

13th We fully expected a norther before day this morning, but it is warm & damp. Made a dress for Mergt. set things to rights in Kates trunk felt sad saw so many letters directed in that dear familiar hand which we shall never again see on this earth. Mr Boleyn came to see if M. said anything about his son.¹¹ Mrs Coleman came sat an hour or 2 with us. Lee had chill L. fretful with her sore mouth. sat alone after supper making L's night drawers, feel that God is very good to us in enabling us to rest quietly undisturbed by fear or dangers these dark lonely nights. No news from K yet. think of her so often as I sit at my work & always when we sit down to the table. Mr McDonnell sent to his friend to send him some money to come home. very sick

14th had a great fright about Lizzie fear she has caught cold in her mouth glands very swollen, also her face no salive running from her mouth as it has for several days. sent for Dr Woolfolk. he dont seem to think much of it, but I still feel uneasy Dr Maddens child died of dry salivation she seems fretful had to pet her a great deal. made her a sack. Milam came home. Co dispersed til Yankees make their appearance in the bay God grant that may never be. Jim Cook got here before dark. I finished L an apron after all went to bed. Oh how I pray God to deliver my darling little one from the horrors that seem to threaten her. truly she is the "child of many prayers"

15th Jimmy left soon after breakfast insisted on my coming up next week as they will be boiling sugar. want to go so much I do wish K was here, how she would delight in the trip¹² L's mouth about the same. I feel hopeful about it sometimes & again perfectly

Microfilm Publication of the United States, 1934; 1860, Jackson County, 3.

¹¹ There was a J. A. Bolling in Company K and was reported missing after the Battle of Corinth. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA; and Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 185.

¹² Interlineation: bought of Mr Scruggs 9 bu sweet potatoes \$2 bu

miserable. Made L calico apron tried to fix my dress didn't get it done. Mrs Burnett & Mrs Williams came staid a while went down town had dinner prepared for them but didn't get back to dinner. Aunt J & Bro F called in afternoon. Lee in bed all day keeping off the chill. after supper Rachel & Nannie came spent the evening. Mail came about 9 oclk I got letter & paper from M. letter from K so glad she is enjoying herself so much but think I cant do without her much longer Nannie got 2 or 3 letters from Henry.¹³ One, much later than mine

16th damp foggy sunday morning want to go to church as Bro Harris will preach, but dont like to leave L her face still swollen. I felt sad, the cares of the world & the little crosses of life, seemed to bear heavier on me than usual I tried to cast my burden on the Lord found some comfort but still felt sad, thought I would read the Chicago paper M sent me. it, & the Bible were lying together & I concluded to read some more in my Bible tho' I had been reading it awhile before, went in the parlor with both in my hand opened the Bible & commenced reading where I had left off. had not gone far when I saw a verse so suited to my case, that I saw my reading was Providential 1st Cor: 10th & 13. I felt comforted & after reading awhile longer took up my paper & had just finished it when they came in from church Aunt J. Bro F. Mollie, Nannie, Mr Garrett & several of the little ones. dinner passed off pleasantly. M & I went to see Rose. we staid to wait on her. I had to hurry back to L. then Aunt J went to see her. Bro F & M took tea with Mrs H. Rachel came & took tea with us. so foggy & dark concluded to stay with us & keep Blanche we got the little ones to sleep & went to see Rose. she seems to be dying. Ah!

¹³ William Henry Simons was the brother of Maurice. He enlisted in Company K on January 18, 1862 at Camp Bee. Muster Roll of Company K, Box 350, STA and; T. A. Simons, "The Simons Story," based on the recollections as told by his mother Elizabeth Hatcher Simons, 6, Private Collection.

how the cares & trials of life, yes, its hopes & plans fade away into insignificance. when stand by a dying bed. a few days ago R was as full of life and hope as any. we didn't stay long afraid the children would wake, but we brought solemn feelings away with us. L fretted & I took her up & fancied her face was swollen & had a purple spot on it. oh the anguish of my heart when my fears were once more aroused! Oh how I prayed that God would turn away from her such a loathsome agonizing death. then I remembered how that young wife & Mother lay dying & could I ask Him to spare my little one. but oh He knows how hard it is, for us to keep beseeching Him to spare our darlings when we fear they are about to be taken away. oh when the dark hour comes, how I plead with Him to spare me. how I promise to be better, to live more humbly, & to strive to glorify His name if he will only have mercy on me, & he answers my prayer He turns pityingly towards me, & then I forget all his goodness even as Isreal of old would forget His kindness & turn to their idols. oh if I could only live so as to let my light shine but at it is miserably hidden, & none seeing my good works glorify my Father in Heaven

17th damp & foggy first thing heard that Rose died a few minutes after Rachel & I left. after breakfast, went over to Rose's. good many there. staid an hour or 2 assisted about the winding sheet. poor Rose how strange to see her lying there cold & still & oh how it touches the heart to see her little children, & to think of her husband far away. Went to the funeral in after noon, Lee Aunt J & I went in the buggy Aunt J came back in Dr Baylors hack & after supper came up to stay all night with us. M went to the lodge but we 3 spent a pleasant evening my little darling seems to be doing very well Nannie & I spoke of going to Bro Cooks to morrow if no bad weather.

18 raining hard all morning, northr blew up soon after dinner. Aunt J staid with us,

made Lizzie red delain dress. I had had head ache all day. lay down after dinner didn't feel any better after got up. M went hunting killed turkey, duck, 4 squirrels. After supper wrote to Maurice, Aunt J still with us. L fretful & restless to night

19th quite cold hard norther blowing had nice turkey dinner Aunt J still with us & knit L. pr railroad stockings. I made L 2 pr drawers. so cold we didn't go to prayer meeting. N, R, M & Bro F. called on their way from prayer meeting & sat awhile with us Aunt J & I going up in the morning to R's to spend the day. 2 boats inside the bar militia & coast co called out.

20th so cold had to give out going to R's Aunt J went I made Lizzie pr shoes from piece of green morrocco off a boot top. Milam left us to go out soldiering again we miss him & Aunt J Lee, Willia & I have lonely evening I wrote to K. Lizzie has bed eruption & is fretfull. Mrs C. came in a few minutes. I moulded some candles.

21st fixing up an old dress didn't get half thro' when Mrs C came for me to go female prayer meeting. I went resolved if called on to pray I would take up the cross. oh how can I hesitate, when God is so good to me, but I was not called on & felt relieved that I was not. H mail in, no letter from K. oh how I do want to see her. there is a rumor of an Armistice, but I had my hopes raised once & so cruelly blasted that I hesitate now about believing any rumor of peace yellow fever broke out again¹⁴ at Powderhorn.

22nd sewed all morning went to see Mrs Taylors sick child after dinner found her at Mrs Madden with the child I had heard was very sick Milam came to get the news that might come in the mail. we sat up late waiting for the mail didn't come. Mailed a letter to K.

¹⁴ Outbreaks of yellow fever were common during this time. Andrews, *The Women of the South*, 416.

23rd Mail in got a letter from M dated 1st & 12th Oct. bright beautiful weather. didn't finish reading my letter in time to go to S S. Aunt J Nanny Sarah S called after S S Flora came to hear my letter also old Mr Boling. Milam left soon after breakfast. I didn't go to church wrote to M & Bro D had a time trying to get Tom or Willie to take the letters out to Mr P tis miserable the way those boys rove around on the sabbath day. it distresses me & yet I am utterly powerless to prevent it Lizzie went to see little sick coz Mattie,¹⁵ oh such wonderful tales she told when she got back about "Battie & Porah" i e Mattie & Flora, a week last night since I heard from K. oh how I want to see her this has been a quiet sabbath, in perfect contrast to the last, but I feel sad, hopeless, discouraged God help us, surely all our help must come from Him 6 gun & mortar boats at Sabine

24th foggy til 9 A. M. cleared off bright Lee & I spent day at Rachels had pleasant day

25th Miss L Barton & I went to D Mathews & took dinner, went after dinner to see Mrs Pumphrey's twins. Lizzie kept begging to go home wouldn't play with Ada M. nothing pacified her til Mrs P had some potatoes cooked for her. Aunt J & Nannie came to stay all night with us had a pleasant evening. L delighted to get home.

26th L had fever last night spent a bad night. Aunt J went home soon after breakfast N & Lee went to Dr Wells to spend the day left me alone with my little darling I made Willie shirt. Green ironed. L. so much livelier than she was yesterday. no letters. our army falling back from Holly Springs.¹⁶ all quiet on the coast bright & sunny but very

¹⁵ Mattie was the child of George and Flora Wells Simons. Simons Story, 5.

¹⁶ Holly Springs was in Mississippi and from September 17 to October 8 the Confederates unsuccessfully attempted three times to invade Union territory. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 521; and James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1992), 291.

cool. N came back with Lee. took supper & both went to p meeting I spent the evening alone gave L fodder tea got her in fine sweat about the time fever was to come on.

26th so bright & sunny Lee & I went to Mrs Sanfords to spend the day Aunt J. went too. didn't enjoy it quite so well as I have some times L acted just as she did tuesday. She wouldn't play. after got noticed she had fever gave her fodder tea again.

28th L spent a miserable night had a burning fever. saw such a running in direction of Mr Taylors, I ran over. Pattie had a spasm. I didn't stay long as I could do no good. after dinner commenced giving L. willow tea¹⁷ to keep off fever to night waited for Mrs C. to call for me to go to f. p. [female prayer] meeting didn't come so I didn't go as twas good deal past the time when I gave her out. went over to see Pattie, sat few minutes, went down to Mrs Harris' got Aunt J to come stay all night with us. Miss L Barton, came to get some buttons I promised her. Bro Fisher & Bro H got home, bro't us some oysters. M & Lee went to bed early Aunt J & I had a little oyster stew to ourselves. Green staid all night away from home last n't Aunt J & I had pleasant evening how we siwshed [wished] for K.

29th Aunt J left early this morning L had no fever last night rested well begin to have faith in willow tea soon after breakfast went to Colemans auction. Bought bottle expecton't & a green woolen shawl to make a dress for Lizzie came by Mrs Meddens she is sick in bed but missed her chill Mrs Ward was there, came home with me to dinner. A Burnett & H Probst came after dinner. went over to see Pattie in the evening. Wrote to K. no letter from her this week not last week. I am very uneasy so much afraid she is

¹⁷ Various medicinal drinks were made at home using various roots and herbs from fields and forests to treat illnesses especially fever and chill. Notes for Elizabeth Simons Diary, Box 658, Folder 9, STA; and Wiley, *Confederate Women*, 147.

sick. I hear too of troubles in H [Hallettsville] with the negroes several were hung.¹⁸ I know that makes K feel badly oh how thankful I would be if she were with me, but God knows what is best for us & if it is best he will surely bring us together again. They say a plot has been discovered in which negroes from Hallettsville to Lavacca are implicated God deliver us from the horrors of an insurrection! got a letter from M & one from Henry both dated 8th inst dear Bro D been sick again. Oh I feel sad sad to night. Anxious about Bro D uneasy about K gloomy about our country, oh what would become of me if I could not go to my kind Heavenly Father with all these troubles? Milam went back to camp. In taking an inventory of my weeks work fine that besides all my visiting, made L a sacque, a dress & apron (Aunt J made sleeves of the latter) made Green a shirt & Willie a shirt, & mended 2 formidable looking shirts for W.

30th very warm & cloudy early in the morning. didn't go to S S Aunt J. came after S S a strong east wind arose making it very disagreeable about going to church went, heard Bro Harris preach an excellent sermon. immediately after preaching class meeting. I staid thos twas a great cross & for the first time unless called on I spoke twas a great trial, but I felt that He was doing so much for me. & I could hesitate to get up & say I loved Him, & that I wanted to love him more? oh God grant that I may never again refuse to testify of His goodness & loving kindness toward me. Mrs Gayle & Nannie came home with me to dinner. after dinner N went home Mrs G. to Mrs Colemans & I wrote to Maurice. Let M. go to church & I had to attend to Lizzie. she walks lame

¹⁸ The rumor of slave insurrections since the 1850s led to the rise of the number of vigilantes in Texas. Insurrectionists were rarely given a trial. Without protection from law officers many slaves were subject to "frontier justice." Billy D. Ledbetter, "Slavery, Fear, and Disunion in the Lone Star State: Texans' Attitude Toward Secession and the Union, 1846-1861" (Ph.D. diss, North Texas State University, 1972), 160; and James M. Smallwood, "Slave Insurrections," *The Handbook of Texas Online* (7 March 1999).

yesterday & to day. cant see anything the matter, yet she's very lame. poor little thing gets out of one trouble into another M, N & Bro F called on way to night preaching Lee went, I staid & wrote to Bro D urging him to try Tex climate once more. when I allow myself to think, I am sad, sad, & gloomy, my only hope is in God & I do feel that I would be sunk in despair if I had not that hope.

Death and sickness surrounded Texana. Elizabeth prayed to God to spare Lizzie as she reflected upon the death of Dr. Madden's son. The death of her friend, Rose Bankhead, affected Elizabeth deeply as she remembered her friend alive and well a few days before, and suddenly Rose was gone. Despite the tragic deaths of friends and neighbors, Elizabeth continued to work hard sewing shirts and blankets for the soldiers. The letters she received from Maurice and Kate were a welcome relief. Sadness encompassed Elizabeth during the dark days of November.

Chapter V December: The End Of A Long Year and Notes

The last month of the year was no different than the previous months. Death and sickness still plagued the inhabitants of Texana. Elizabeth continued to worry about her sickly child as well as her brother Richard who had fallen ill while fighting in the war. The sudden death of her dear friend Mrs. Sanford was a shock to Elizabeth. She was not only concerned about those close to her at home and fighting in the war, but she continually worried about family members in New Madrid, Missouri, from whom she had not heard in a long time. Kate was sorely missed since her departure because of the threat of invasions along the coast, and when she arrived back home safe and sound Elizabeth rejoiced.

Dec'r another month ushered in & yet peace seems far off. A hard norther blowing all day. rain early in the morning, cloudy & gloomy all day. Milam came about 1 P M mended 2 flannel shirts for L. patched coat for Willie went over to Mrs Taylors in the evening took a little fresh butter to her sick child. saw Dr Baylor told him of L's lameness he asked immediately if it was the leg that rose & was lanced a y'r ago. sure enough it was & I had not thought of it before but have been miserable ever since. she was very lame to day & compla'd of its hurting her. M & L went to bed soon after supper. I got my little lame pet to sleep & sat here at my work more than 2 hours, alone with my thoughts. oh the cares that are pressing 'round my heart this night. My greatest anxiety, is of my little wounded bird, oh if it should prove serious, if the little aching limb becomes useless, if she is thus debarred from the pleasures of child hood, how sorely it would grieve us. Then the loved husband father far away. Bro. D sick & suffering perhaps on a hard pallet, & Bro, perhaps long since numbered among Braggs victims, the

loved ones in Madrid in an enemys land,¹ as it were, & my own Katy from whom I can hear nothing, perhaps sick or what is as bad home sick. I must send her this very week, but then tis pe[r]fect torture to me the idea of her being exposed to the insults of the enemy. God help me in this dark hour, for surely the clouds are dark & lowering.

2nd cold, gloomy & rainy, even more cheerless than yesterday, finished pr pants for Green before dinner (made one leg last night) Milam went back to camp. my little darling very lame can see no difference between that leg & the other rubbing with liniment wrote to M. after dinner, commenced a letter to H. Mrs Taylor came in sat awhile, finished Henrys letter after supper. Willie took them down & brought me a letter from M. & one for K from Bro D. feel so much better since I got the letter. have felt sad, sad, all day Lee read the paper & went to bed I sewed on Gar's dress & read the paper til 10.

3rd cold & cloudy. finished Marg'ts dress by dinner time Lizzie's leg same complains of it more than she did at first. drizzling rain all evening fixed my skirt for quilting Lee carded some bats for me L. so wakeful & fretful after supper, can neither sew or read. I must send for K but who can I get I am sorely perplexed about it.

¹ On January 5, 1861 in his inaugural address Governor Clairborne Fox Jackson announced that Missouri should "...stand by her sister slave-holding states." Jackson was backed by the lieutenant governor, speaker of the house and most of the legislature, which was controlled by the Democratic Party. However, at the state convention the Union element rejected the secession of Missouri. Jackson mobilized the pro-southern state militia in an effort to seize the arsenal in St. Louis. In an effort to keep Jackson from procuring surplus arms, Congressman Francis Blair and Captain Nathaniel Blair with Union troops transferred the arms across the river to Illinois. Despite the fighting between the pro-southern and Union troops, the Union maintained political control. On July 22, 1861, a secession convention declared all state offices vacant and abolished the state legislature. Meanwhile, Jackson called the pro-southern legislature into session on November 3, 1861 and enacted an ordinance of secession. Missouri was the twelfth state admitted to the Confederacy on November 28th. Jackson and the pro-southern legislature were forced out of the state. Consequently, the state of Missouri was controlled by the convention until January 1865. James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 290-293.

4th cold, drizzling rain all day Lee & I carded bats, (first I ever did) begun quilting at 11 A M finished before 4 P M. Milam came soon after dinner. Green commenced making soap. Mrs Sanford very ill, how strange it seems. we were there a week ago to day she spoke of how blessed she had been in regard to health, so much sickness & death around us, surely is enough to draw our thoughts from the fleeting things of earth. Mr Smith of Ky is here I must write to the loved ones at home & get him to mail it in Ky L been fretful all day went to sleep at dark, sleeps well. I made my quilted skirt

5th I stood by another dying bed to day how strange! So soon to after poor Rose' death, but Mrs Sanfords is even more sudden, went to bed well Monday night & died this morning. Oh what solemn warnings the lord is giving us how distressing to see that husband bow' down by the weight of sorrow, & then so many motherless ones.² I pray God that I may be brought into perfect submission to his will, for why should I expect so many favors at His hand when afflicts so heavily those that serve Him so faithfully. Lee & I got there an hour before she died; staid 2 or 3 hours. tis very cold hard norther blowing. afraid I caught cold yesterday whilst quilting have pain in my side. My little one still very lame & cries more with her leg than at first. I rub with volatile linament & when it hurts she begs me to "dit the iniment & yub it" sat alone after supper til 9 sewing. thinking that sudden death & oh so much of K. oh what must I do about her? so much sickness makes me afraid to send for her, but I want to see her & then I cant hear from her

6th still cold but bright went to the funeral came home with sad & solemn feelings sat

² The Sanfords had seven children and the eldest John A. was a member of Company K. *Census of the State of Texas*, National Archives Microfilm Publication of the United States, 1934; 1860, Jackson County, 4.

the bureau drawers in order & made pr stockings. M churned first butter made since monday. after supper finished L an apron & read awhile in Meline Levetts travels. Mr Smith came for M. to go patrolling. nearly 9 mail not in. Dr Woolfolk called to day to see L. leg thinks she has strained it. I do hope & pray it may be this is sisters birth day³ 7th had been in bed & asleep 2 h's last night when M. waked me. had 2 letters for me got up & read them. got very chilly as the fires covered up. After breakfast looked over them again read Bro D's to K also one from Bro to Bro D & one from sister to Charly. I have not seen letters in a long time that did me so much good that is, letters from my Bro's & sisters. my M's letters are dearer than any. I was so relieved to hear from dear Bro so long silent & sister, I wondered where she was sometimes thought her in Madrid sometimes in J. finished the letters read several chapters in my Bible commended myself & loved ones to our kind Fathers care, got ready for church Aunt J & Bro F. came by. had a time reading each others letters. Wm Burnett came to see if M spoke of D.⁴ went to church episcopal service. Mrs Lee sat by me offer'd her prayer book to me to look on I went at it, responded "as large as life" didn't like sermon much. Bro F. & R came home with me. Mollie already here. Nannie who got back from Mrs Owens found all gone, came down all took dinner with us also several of the children. M & N. went to afternoon preaching. R & I each wrote a long letter R's to Maurice, I to my loved sister in Madrid, sent to Maurice to send by private conveyance. Bro F. M & R took supper all went to church. I wrote Maurice short letter had so little time before mail

³ Elizabeth's younger sister Kate was born in March, so she was probably referring to either Fannie or Maria who were still living in New Madrid, Missouri. Henry N. Barroll (ed), "Dibrell Genealogy," (Washington, DC, 1915), 13.

⁴ David Burnett of Company K was the eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. Moses Burnett. There were three other children in the Burnett family. *Texas Census*, 1860, 9.

closes. My little darling more lame than she has been & cries so with her leg. I do hope God will restore the little limb to its wonted activity, twas pitiful to see her trying to run with Blanche reminds me of a little wounded bird

8th sewed on my merino dress til dinner. Miss L Barton called in the afternoon I went to see Aunt J & Mrs H. took L with me, Lee went too Mrs H. sick. good deal of company came in went drugstore got liniment for L's leg. twas closed got some at Colemans.⁵

After we got home Mrs C came in sat few minutes I commenced pr socks for soldier of yarn K spun. had head ache all day. still no letter from K. & the horses too poor to send for her. I am almost sick with anxiety about her

9th quite mild & pleasant went to Mrs Taylors settle my bills & get lining for her sacque sleeves Rach'l N & Mrs Ward came in R & N going visiting. I invited Mrs W to take dinner with me when she got thro shopping G. on dry creek cutting wood had to get dinner myself. Mrs W. came left soon after dinner. made Mrs Ts sleeves for Ant J. who is making her sacque Dr B. came bro't letter from K. at last. oh what relief she is well. rather homesick I think I wrote her a hurried letter to go by Victoria mail while writing it had to stop to give L the only spanking she's had since K left. W took letter to office am afraid now it will not go by V mail as I forgot to say "via V" when directed it, M came about 8 Houston mail in no letters no news in paper. Knit busily all evening. Got my sock out of the ribbing last night got it into the foot tonight. by knitting at odd hours to day.

⁵ The Simons had an account at Coleman & Brother, General Variety Store. Maurice Kavanaugh Simons Papers, Box 1, Folder 4, STA.

10th drizzling rain all day felt gloomy & sad sent down & got Mrs T's sacque & finished it for Aunt J. had a fine turkey for dinner that M killed yesterday. felt so bad after dinner couldn't help crying a little, felt better for it, went down to Mr Sanfords Irene sick. Mrs Clarey, Mrs Baylor there sat an hour or 2 by time I[t] started raining hard but looked so like rain I came on got very wet & muddy drive. changed clothes & went to knitting. still feel oh so sad but I try to cast my burthen on the Lord. finished my sock begun evening before last

11th still raining a cold drizzling rain begun a long letter to M. commenced my other sock. another turkey for dinner Milam busy boot making I mad nice cup of coffee for him. still sad but not as much as yesterday. read the 1st book of Petr felt encouraged to bear more patiently the ills, the cares & crosses that are mine.

12th still raining. went to Mrs Harris few minutes. they're going away read good deal in Mrs Lverts travels finished my other sock L still lame

13th cloudy, damp & very warm finished the letter to M begun on 11th felt so sad when I got thro' I bowed my head on the table & wept. begun pr socks for Bro.⁶ dear Bro I wonder if he will ever wear them K spun the yarn after dinner mended pr silk stockings made 2 pr stockings out of old ones. read some in Mrs Levert. tis now nearly 9 at night all are in bed I have been sitting alone a long time knitting, thinking of K wondering if she will be with me in 1 more week. the roads are so bad the mail not in. sweet little L improves so fast in talking! she took up my knitting this evening & said "Mama dis tolier

⁶ It is apparent that Robert Hatcher did receive the socks Elizabeth made for him. In a diary entry dated February 14, 1863 Robert wrote, "Valentine day. Rec'd mail today a comforter, pr. gloves and pr. Socks, Postmarked Vicksburg, but no letter or anything explaining, came with them." The items were sent to Maurice and forwarded to Hatcher. Elizabeth Simons Diary, Box 350, STA.

tock”)? (soldiers sock) she’d heard me speak of them I finished last night being for the soldiers.

14th Another rainy, gloomy day no S S, no church, very warm. after reading my Bible, read in Medina Ls travels. had my doubts about whether twas right, as I think Sunday should be devoted to religious reading. Madine L. kept me busy referring to the “Cyclopedia” read incy’p’dia hist’ Charlemagne & Cha’s Martel.⁷ Wrote to Bro D. felt gloomy & sad all day. Little darling so lively cant help being amused at her. The day seem’d very long. Willie staid at home all day. so much better than roving around with Tom.

15th a norther last night quite cold, but clear & bright delightful after 5 days rain. still felt sad, had L in my arms, & she, noticing the tears roll down my cheeks looked concerned & said “uv my Mama true tru true” M. killed beef let me have part, Rachel part finished Bro’s sock

16th bright, sunny, just cool enough to be pleasant. Lee & I went to Mrs H’s I invited Aunt J to live here. finally consented. helped Mrs H. with some collars before dinner L. staid all day we saw Mrs H’s babe baptized. after dinner went to see Mrs T Pattie sick again staid an hour or 2 finished sacque for Annie H. wrote to M. sent my letters P O. mail not in. moulded candles

17th very busy all morning getting the parlors ready for Aunt J. things. Bro H took dinner with us. I went to get W Broaden to go for K. he is not at home don’t know what to do. Bro H Ant J & Nannie came to supper. all went to p. meeting but Aunt J & I.

⁷ Charlemagne also known as Charles I was the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. His paternal grandfather was Charles Martel. Freidrich Heer, *Charlemagne and his World* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), 18 & 221.

After I was undress mail came in, set up & waited til Green came. a dear, long letter from my loved one.

18th went down to get Wily C to go for K. not at home Mrs C says he has big hunt on hand this week. went to the shop to get John A to go didn't see him, or his father. Sent word for him to come & see me. Bro Fisher & Aunt J came to dinner. Bro F moved Aunt Js things up. Mr Ford started away Jane & her children gone. S Kerr came to know what Henry said of her bro, Mr Bolyn, to know what M. said of his son. it so happened that he said a good deal of him & spoke of his noble qualities. tears in old mans eyes when I read it L Barton called sad & anxious about K. M. left for camp. Wily came after supper & offered to go if W B. don't ge home in time. I feel much relieved. J A came, said he would go if he could. We are alone Aunt J. Lee & I. no protector but our Heavenly Father but He will shield us with His strong, Omnipotent arm

19th mad Green help Aunt J set up her bed & fix her things in the parlour tried to knit, felt restless went to Mr C's to see of W. was going for K. found him ready to start feel so gratified that he put off his hunt to oblige me. he started soon after dinner. sent by him for oz quinine. if it is only \$25 oz. But a half oz at any price. Dr says he could have saved Mrs S. if he'd had plenty of quinine. Aunt J. Mrs C & I to prayer meeting. Good ma[n]y there oh how we miss Mrs S. I am sad to night our little pet sick again, dysentery. Aunt J went to sit up with Maurice Sanford. Willy L & I here. Dr Woolfolk sent me a fine turkey for Christmas gift. Mrs W. sent some sausage used last of the coffee bought before the blockade.⁸ Got letter from K. da 24th Novr sugar selling at

⁸ Due to the Federal blockade there were shortages of various supplies and goods. The shortage of coffee hit Texans particularly hard. With the loss of coffee Texans improvised by making their own concoctions. One such concoction became known as "Confederate coffee" this was obtained by mixing rye, meal, Indian

50th lb here

20th Aunt J. came back early. M. little better Aunt J. went with N & Bro F to old Mr Breckenridge's funeral.⁹ Bro H & family & M Dutart took dinner with me. invited Br H to stay here til they got off. they were busy packing all after noon got back at dark. Milam came up before dinner. finished my 2nd pr socks. L. fretful & poorly. I cleaned out the closet. keep thinking of K. Oh what joy

21st warm & cloudy. mail in no letters. Rumour of a battle at Grenada went to church, heard splendid sermon from McRae. no company after dinner finished the letter to M. begun last night Aunt J went to Dr Wells' Lizzie went with her when "twas almost dark K. came. oh how glad & grateful I am to see her looking so well Milam went back to camp Lee went to bed early & K & I were awake talking til late

22nd Went to drug store made some purchases. got 17\$ of Mr Sanford. K busy reading Bro D's letters come since she got back. I patched Willies pants. Bro H & wife gone Milam come to vote for judge¹⁰ Lee had chill & he didn't go back. Kate & I talked til late at night. Susan came in few minutes so happy at being home.

23rd damp & rainy Green ironed. Got me some live oak bark to dye some woollen gloves black. boiled the bark but too muddy to dye. I made a cap for Willie christmas

corn, and sweet potatoes. Other combinations used ingredients such as parched rye, peanuts, beans, peas, and cornmeal. Ralph A. Wooster (ed.), *Lone Star Blue and Gray: Essays on Texas in the Civil War* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1995), xvi.

⁹ Ill health was one reason John A. Brackenridge had moved his family to Texas from Indiana. In 1859, Brackenridge had become ill once again. After he passed away he was buried in the family cemetery near the family home somewhere on the banks of the Navidad River. His son George W. built a monument at the family cemetery in 1914 and the last Brackenridge was buried there in 1924. Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 3, 27 & 49.

¹⁰ Francis M. White was elected as Chief Justice on December 29, 1862. I T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 286.

gift. Susan stop'd few minutes Bro F called. Went down to Colemans to take the quinine we have in partnership. p'd \$40 for one oz. left it to be weighted & divided. Lizzie fretful begging for something to eat all the time. so wet she cant go out to play & it almost kills her. Milam not going down to night. tried to make Lizzie pr shoes. made one laughed fit to kill himself at it & quit. after supper knit on Bro's sock
 24th busy all day dyeing didnt succeed very well. Lee had very bad chill. Bro Shepard called few minutes. Very warm K little scared about the negroes got a letter from Maurice date 28th Novr

25th christmas day. went to preaching took L. with me & consequently could not give sermon my undivided attention. she looked beautiful in her dress K worked for her. scarlett work with green. Bro F sent around subscription for benefit of Dr Bryans hospital in Miss. Got \$416. we dined at Rachels. Had first rate dinner. all pleasant rather merry, but oh I felt so sad thinking of the vacant seats, not only at our table there. but in the loved homes far away in dear old Madrid, but as far as we know our loved ones are all living. While alas! How many many homes there are in the south where there are vacant seats that will never more be filled Rachel, Susan took supper & spent evening with us Mrs Coleman spent evening with us Mr Smith came for M to go patrolling
 26th Lee quite sick all day Bro F called few minutes Dr W here twice Aunt J & R came after dinner none of us went to pr'r meetg Lee too sick Mrs Wells & Flora came to see L. Mrs C. came

27th a norther last night not very cold Flora came to see Lee. Aunt J still here busy all day finishing Bro's sock had to ravel it out twice. Mrs Coleman came a while in morning & again in evening. I fixed up hoops for Gar to wear to the ball. Milam went patrolling.

heard pistol shots & cannon fired by drunken men in town scared K almost to death have sore throat.

28th Sunday. got letter from M our Army falling back oh that looks bad weve had another victory in Va.¹¹ thank God for it. some southern woman calls on all women of the south to pray for peace on the 1st Jan/63 at 12 oclck noon oh is there a woman in this desolated south who will not answer to the call & plead with Almighty God for peace honourable peace & surely surely He will hear such an appeal for He has said “call upon me in the day of trouble & I will deliver thee & thou shalt glorify me” the paper says the brute Butler is to h’d the army invading Texas.¹² We have fresh incentive now to flee from our homes & seek safety anywhere. when the highest officer is a greater brute than any private Nannie came home with K & Aunt J went to Rach’ls I wrote to M. great talk about yankees coming. M^cGruder¹³ ordered all families & property within 30 miles of coast to move farther back. K & Willy went to prayer meeting so cold didn’t go.

¹¹ Elizabeth may have been referring the Battle of Fredericksburg, which took place on December 13, 1862. The Union suffered a terrible defeat under the command of the new commander of the Army of the Potomac Ambrose Burnside. The Union troops were divided into three divisions. General Franklin was to attack Jackson at the left, Edwin Sumter was to attack Marye’s Heights, and Hooker in the center was to act as a “reserve to exploit breakthroughs.” Franklin failed to put all his men into action when attacking Jackson. The failure to comply with Burnside’s order to use his whole force eliminated any chance for a Union victory. At the end of the battle, there were 12, 600 Union casualties and less than 5,000 Confederate casualties. James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1992), 302-303.

¹² Galveston was already temporarily under Federal control. Butler proposed to send E. J. Davis’s troops to maintain control of the port. He also wanted to take Houston as well. However, Butler was replaced by Nathaniel Banks as commander of the Union troops in Louisiana in December 1862. On December 31st Davis’s troops left New Orleans for Galveston, but by January 4th Galveston had fallen back into the hands of the Confederacy. McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 624; and Wooster, *Lone Star Blue & Gray*, 111-112

¹³ John Bankhead Magruder of Virginia replaced Paul Octave Hébert as commander of the district of Texas. The removal of Hébert came about after Galveston fell into Union hands in October 1862. Wooster, *Lone Star Blue & Gray*, 65.

29th busy knitting feel sad, troubled Green runs about so. staid out all night last night I talk to him but seems to do no good. Aunt J. came down early Mr Smith called to get bags of corn going to the Colorado for corn. very warm this evening. since supper little Lizzie has kept us laughing at her antics sets with her legs cross smoking (or pretending to) poor little one she is still lame. old Mr Bolyen called to know what M said of his son in his last letter. Alas he said he was dead¹⁴ I read it to him he said he had been expecting it. Emily Garrett & Dupree Labone ran away to get married. poor Emily how deeply she wronged her best earthly friends, her parents

30th a hard norther it fairly shakes the house. Little L noticed it & said, almost as soon as she waked "Mama ind boin" (wind blowing) Milam killed hog. Bro F came for him to go to Mr Adams funeral Poor Mrs A I feel truly sorry for her with few acquaintances & fewer friends. busy after dinner making cake for New Years dinner Lizzie hanging around with me her little tin plate begging me for some of the batter. L Barton called for K to take a walk, didn't get back til nearly dark. M. didn't get back from funeral til 2 hours after dark. after supper K read aloud from Prince of house of David I finished another sock for soldier

31st very cool early in the morning but no blustering wind like yesterday. very busy all day, made pies, made sausage cut up fat for lard &c. Mrs Coleman & Mrs Royster called poor Mrs R. I feel truly sorry for her she is a dear friend of mine. Her husbands baseness almost kills her. M Probst came staid an hour or 2 I was so busy didn't see her. Mr Danzy, Russell Ward, Susan & Jimmie took supper with us. Aunt J. Rach'l Nannie came by on way to prayer meeting if they have a match meeting with the others. Milam & Lee

¹⁴ J. A. Bolling the private in Company K was killed at the Battle of Corinth. Taylor, *Cavalcade*, 185.

are in their room, my little L. who has been poorly to day, is asleep & I'm alone with my thoughts & sad solemn thoughts they are. in days "lang syne" when the year was leaving us & I would sit & think of the events of the departing year, my musing was something in this way, "well this year has been a pleasant one it has echoed many a merry laugh of mine. many a moment has fled by sparkling with pleasure, many an hour has been danced away. I have lost no loved ones by death, none have proved faithless, there's not a girl of my acquaintance that I think happier than I. I have a fond Mother & brothers & sisters I know love me. And I wonder if the coming year will deal as kindly with me as this one has" such were my reflections when I was a careless girl. alas how different now I am wondering if the coming year can possibly have as many tears & heart aches in store for me as I have experienced in this. so many fond hopes blighted. at one time feeling sure that my loved husband would be with me long before the close of the year but alas the time seems still far distant. this year has witnessed our parting & God only know what a bitter parting it was. my kind mother has gone to dwell in that holy city where "the inhabitants there of shall no more say I am sick" and where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes & my loved sisters far away captives in their own home. I often think how very dear to me, nay what joy would be mine if I could get a letter fresh from their dear hands for alas! it has been almost a year since I had one. the last from any of them was from kind, loving Mary. oh if she could only share our home! but that day seems still far off. tomorrow at 12 noon is the hour appointed for all women in the southern Confed'cy to pray for Peace. oh I have hopes that the mighty & united appeal will move the Almighty to interfere in our behalf & perhaps the coming year may witness as many happy meetings as the parting year has, sorrowful partings, but oh when I

remember that so many happy homes have been desolated, so many loved ones have parted never more to meet on earth, & my loved ones are spared & that I still hope of being clasped in the arms of my loved one, still have the hope of seeing my own kind brother & sisters. I feel that I ought to be filled with gratitude to God for having still spared their lives. I feel that I ought to be filled with gratitude to God for having still spared their lives. I know His loving kindness is great & I do desire above all things to glorify His Holy name. and now the last leaf of my journal is written and the last hour is passing. and in this solemn hour when all around me is silent I invoke a blessing God's riches blessing on my husband, my child & brothers & sisters

The following is a list of the unladylike jobs I have to perform during Maurice's absence whilst in the army. When Kate & I returned from Dr Woolfolks we had to unharness the horse & put the buggy away. At another time some one who had borrowed the buggy left it out in the street & Kate & I had to roll it into the buggy house. found a tub with the bottom out. went to put it in & the whole thing fell to pieces after working a long time got it together & the bottom in, but the lower hoop was gone & had to send to the shop & have another put on—had a calf tied near the front gate whose mother was delinquent after while the cow came. I undertook to take the calf down to the lot. it almost jerked me to pieces. the only way I kept it from getting off was by winding the rope round a tree I got it to the back fence & got Aunt Miley to help me put it over & thus got cow & calf together, but I was sore for three days & jerking the ropes thro my hands almost skinned them—found the ash hopper leaked badly. went to work dug out all the ashes tore it to pieces & made a new one—went down & tried to make a corn trade with Mr Sanford but failed he asked me too much—dug around the rose bushes &

grape vines—one of my best tubs taken to the lot to water calves, fell to pieces went down to doctor it, pressed Willie into service we worked at it an hour after bruising our fingers & getting over heated got it together but one little piece of the bottom brought it to the house, laid the case before Milam (who had just come in) he took off the lower hoops & soon got the piece in made a churn dasher—put handle in hammer made a corn trade with a negro went out nearly 10 o clk at night to see it measured.—put in window glass.—swung a gate Put new fossit in cistern

The year's end was a time of reflection for Elizabeth. She thought of happier times as a young girl when all of her family was alive and well. Elizabeth wondered what the New Year would bring as she thought of all the heartache and sadness she had endured throughout the past year. She had hoped and prayed for peace by the end of the year but that was not to be. Elizabeth ushered in the New Year with more prayers for peace that would bring her loving husband home to her and other family members as well.

On the flyleaf of her diary Elizabeth noted all the chores she attended to while Maurice was away fighting in the war. Even before the outbreak of the Civil War women worked hard tending to their homes and families. However, after the outbreak of the war women like Elizabeth Simons had no choice, as they assumed the responsibilities of their husbands, fathers, and sons. Elizabeth's list of chores attests to the types of new jobs she was confronted with during Maurice's absence.

Chapter VI: Homecoming and Life After the War

Elizabeth's prayers for peace were not answered in 1863. The war continued. Peace was not imminent, but it was the year that Maurice returned home to his wife and daughter. On July 4, 1863 Grant captured Vicksburg and surrender arrangements were made.¹ Major Maurice K. Simons and the rest of Company K were now prisoners. Maurice and the others were unsure of their fate, but on the same day of their capture they learned that all soldiers and their officers would be paroled.² Anxious to get home, Maurice applied for a leave of absence until his exchange. General John H. Forney denied the request and Simons learned that a leave of absence would be granted once the men were in parole camp.³ On July 11, 1863 the company left Vicksburg and headed for a parole camp near Demopolis, Alabama. On July 27 the company reached its destination, and on September 7 Maurice received a ninety-day furlough.⁴ Two months after the fall of Vicksburg Major Simons headed home to Texana, Texas.

Elizabeth was reunited with her husband at last. The couple now had to rebuild their lives. The Texas economy was in terrible shape, but Elizabeth had Maurice home to help

¹ John D. Winters, *The Civil War in Louisiana* (Louisiana State University Press, 1963), 205.

² Douglas Lee Braudaway, "The Life and Civil War Journal of Major Maurice Kavanaugh Simons, A.C.S. Together With an Account of His Life," (M.A. thesis, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, 1994), 38; Maurice K. Simons Journal, 1863, Box 659, 9, STA; and *War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), Series I, XXIV (3), 900.

³ Maurice K. Simons Journal, 1863, Box 659, STA.

⁴ Ibid.

put their personal and business affairs back in order.⁵ After returning home, Simons went back into the mercantile business with his brother George. The firm was called Simons Brothers, and they traded throughout Jackson County.⁶ William Henry Simons, the youngest son of Captain Simons, was also captured at Vicksburg and paroled along with his two older brothers. He later became the Commissary Sergeant for a detachment of the Second Texas Infantry at Galveston on April 16, 1864. William Henry fell ill with yellow fever and died at Galveston on September 20, 1864.⁷

Company K was later reorganized in Houston.⁸ However, there is no evidence that Major Maurice Simons rejoined his company. On September 12, 1864 Simons resigned from the Army.⁹ Despite the fact that Simons' resignation was accepted, family records indicate that he was later recalled and ordered to report for duty in Missouri. When Maurice reported for duty the commanding officer could find no instructions for him, so Maurice returned home to Texana.¹⁰ Finally, on December 25, 1865 Simons signed the Amnesty Oath.¹¹

⁵ Braudaway, "Maurice Kavanaugh Simons," 117; and I. T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1938), 187.

⁶ T. A. Simons, "The Simons Story," based on recollections as told by his mother Elizabeth Hatcher Simons, 4-5, Private Collection. For a short time after the death of Maurice, George continued the business, but he eventually gave it up to go into the cattle business. Hereafter cited as Simons Story. George was also captured at Vicksburg and paroled on July 7, 1863. "Muster Roll of Company K, Second Voluntary Infantry, Army of the Confederate States of America and Explanatory Notes," Box 350, STA.

⁷ Muster Roll of Company K; Box 350, STA; and Simons Story, 6.

⁸ Ralph J. Smith, *Reminiscences of the Civil War: And other Sketches* (Waco: W. M. Morrison, 1962), 31.

⁹ J. E. Conner and T. A. Simons, Sr., "Foreword," written for the unpublished book, *The Civil War Diary of Major M. K. Simons*, part of the research notes Conner compiled, Box 658, Folder 4, 7, STA; and M. K. Simons Letter of Resignation, September 12, 1864, Texana, Texas, STA.

¹⁰ Foreword, 658, Folder 4, 7, STA.

¹¹ Ibid.

Elizabeth and Maurice once again resumed their lives. On March 7, 1866 Elizabeth gave birth to a son, Thomas Archer Simons.¹² Unfortunately, the couple's happiness was short-lived. Maurice Kavanaugh Simons died of typhoid on June 18, 1867 at his home in Texana and was buried on the banks of the Navidad River.¹³ Once again Elizabeth Simons was left alone, but this time her beloved husband would not be coming home. Elizabeth painfully had to start her life over. Shortly after the death of Maurice she moved to Goliad with her two children and her sister Kate.¹⁴

Elizabeth never remarried and she remained in Goliad where the Simons family had received land grants for their participation in the Texas Revolution and the Mexican War.¹⁵ She was an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the rest of her life. There is no indication that she worked outside the home.¹⁶ Most likely Maurice left her with means of support, and Kate was a schoolteacher. Elizabeth qualified for a widow's pension of eight dollars a month because of her husband's participation in the Mexican War.¹⁷

Throughout the years Elizabeth remained close with her two children and their families. Her daughter Lizzie married John William Campbell in June 1884. The couple

¹² Maurice K. Simons Notes, Box 659, STA.

¹³ Braudaway, "Maurice Kavanaugh Simons," 118; and Notes by Thomas Archer Simons, Jr., Box 658, Folder, 2, STA.

¹⁴ *Census of the State of Texas*, National Archives Microfilm Publication of the United States, 1934; 1870, Goliad County, 7.

¹⁵ Maurine Simons Miller, interview by author, 23 November 1998, Kingsville; Land Grant for Joseph Simons, Republic of Texas, October 9, 1845, Box 158, STA; and Simons Story, 2.

¹⁶ Elizabeth's occupation listed on the census is housekeeper. She also had a servant, Lina Springer, who resided in her home. *Texas Census*, 1870.

¹⁷ Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, "Widow's Pension." No. 2660. As of April 19, 1908, the

had only one child, William Venable Campbell. Lizzie died at the young age of twenty-five on February 27, 1887 in Goliad. Her husband then married Ella McKinney in 1891.¹⁸ Elizabeth's son, Thomas Archer Simons, married Abbie Capen on March 20, 1889, and the couple had five children. In 1890 Thomas and his wife moved from Goliad to Beeville where he was active in the Methodist Episcopal Church.¹⁹ At some point Elizabeth had adopted a child, Maurice Wood, the son of Willie Wood, when he was three years old. For some reason, Willie abandoned his two children; Maurice stayed with Elizabeth and his oldest child Annie went back to Jackson County. When Maurice came of age he worked on a railroad in Fort Worth and sent a portion of his salary to Elizabeth.²⁰ Elizabeth died suddenly on August 14, 1910 at Epworth-by-the-Sea near Corpus Christi where she had been attending a revival at the time of her death.²¹

In the last thirty years, the study of women's history has gained the interest of many historians and scholars. Most colleges and universities now offer courses dealing solely with the study of women's historical experience. The contributions women have made throughout history cannot be understated. What better way to study women's history than through their diaries. Civil War diaries like Elizabeth Simons tell what life was like at home, focusing on domestic duties, children, men who were not in combat, attitudes

pension benefits were increased to \$12.00 per month. Private Collection.

¹⁸ Henry N. Barroll (ed.), "Dibrell Genealogy," (Washington, DC, 1915), 29. Private Collection; and Simons Story, 4.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Letter from Elizabeth Simons to Virginia McChesney, daughter of Rachel Simons, Maurice Simons sister, July 2, 1902, Goliad, Texas, 3, Private Collection.

²¹ Miller Interview; Simons Story, 4; and Maurice K. Simons, Service Jacket, United States Pension Agency, United States National Archives, 2660, Box 1, STA.

toward slavery, and the black community. These diaries also concentrate on the community as a whole and how the people banded together and gave each other moral support through those trying times.

What makes Elizabeth Simon's diary so unique is the fact that there are few Civil War diaries written by women. There are volumes of published Civil War diaries written by men describing the military events of the war. However, Duke University now has a website devoted to women's Civil War experience. Presently the site includes: Rose O'Neal Greenhow's correspondence about her activities on behalf of the Confederacy; the papers of Sarah E. Thompson a Union Army recruiter who struggled against postwar poverty, and finally, the thirty-six-page diary written by Alice Williamson a schoolgirl from Gallatin, Tennessee who wrote about the occupation of Gallatin by Union forces.

The few published Civil War diaries written by women were mainly by mistresses of large plantations in Virginia, primarily the Richmond area. The most famous published diary is that of Mary Chesnut, the wife of a wealthy plantation owner and politician. The diary of nineteen year old Lucy Breckenridge is another example. Although Lucy was not the mistress of the family plantation her family was wealthy. There are few Civil War diaries that focus on small towns or farms.

The diary of Elizabeth Hatcher Simons is unique in several aspects. First, she lived in the small farming community of Texana, Texas. Although the Simons family was well known in the area and they owned a couple of slaves, they were not by any means wealthy plantation owners. Elizabeth's husband Maurice was a merchant who made a decent living, but they by no means lived extravagantly as large plantation owners. Elizabeth's diary tells the story of average people in a small Texas community who

prayed, wept, worked and worried together during those troubled times when the nation was divided by civil war.

Finally, it is unique that both husband and wife kept a diary during the war. Elizabeth, of course, focuses on the home front and Maurice's on the siege of Vicksburg. The editing of these diaries has been twin research project. Douglas Lee Braudaway edited Maurice Simons' diary as his Master's thesis in 1994. After many hours of research in libraries, bookstores, and online, no husband and wife diaries were located. The pair of Simons diaries are indeed rare.

Now that both Elizabeth and Maurice Simons diaries have been edited it is hoped that together they may be published, as a unique example of a Texas family during the Civil War. If by chance they are not published both diaries will be accessible to researchers through the consortium of library networking, noted on the OASIS online catalog to Texas A&M University-Kingsville, and will be available through interlibrary loan.

Elizabeth Simons' diary documents not only her daily activities while her husband was away fighting in the war but it reinforces the contributions that women made to the war effort. She worked endlessly knitting socks and sewing clothing for her husband, family members, and other Confederate soldiers. The Federal blockade often made it difficult to obtain materials and supplies, so women often had to spin yarn and make homemade dye to fashion articles of clothing. At one point Elizabeth even cut her carpet to make blankets for the soldiers. Despite any obstacles these women faced, they worked hard and did whatever was needed to keep their men equipped throughout the war.

Receiving letters from home was also important to the men fighting in the war. These letters informed them about the welfare of their loved ones and what was happening at home. Elizabeth constantly wrote letters to Maurice and her brothers. She found writing letters to be a source of comfort, as was reading the ones she received. Receiving letters from the battlefield was equally important to loved ones left behind. They were kept informed of battles, troop movements, conditions in the camps but, most importantly, by receiving letters they knew that their loved ones were still alive and well, at least for the time being. Elizabeth shared the letters she received from Maurice with family and friends. Her husband not only sent letters but he often sent newspapers from places such as Memphis and Mobile. After the Battle of Iuka Maurice even sent Elizabeth captured pictures and papers about the Union. At times the news she received about Company K brought relief to the families in Texana but sometimes the news brought sadness and grief about loved ones who were captured, missing, or killed in battle.

Elizabeth, like many other women in the South, successfully adjusted to a new way of life in which she assumed the role of household head. There were many tasks that needed attending to, or as she called them “unladylike jobs.” Although Milam, Maurice’s younger brother, was often there to help, he also had his own responsibilities. Elizabeth also had Green, the slave Maurice had bought several years before to help with the chores. The relationship between mistress and slave seemed to be good. Elizabeth appeared to trust Green to a certain degree but was agitated when he went off all night. Like Milam, Green was not always available to help. Elizabeth attended to the “unladylike jobs” with fierce determination and without complaint. For instance, she

skinned her hands while trying to tie the stray calf to a tree. Another time Elizabeth bruised her fingers trying to put her “best tub” back together. She attempted to make a corn trade with Mr. J. R. Sanford, but he asked too much. Instead, Elizabeth made the trade with a “Negro.” She even personally went out at 10:00 at night to see it measured. Although Elizabeth, for the most part, trusted Green, she did fear blacks. The rumor of black insurrections had her worried. So, for Mrs. Simons to make the corn trade was unusual. Overall, Elizabeth took pride in her accomplishments when she put a new “fossit” in the cistern, swung a gate, and put in a new window glass.²²

In addition to performing the duties of their men, Southern women had to deal with other matters and concerns as well. As frightening as some situations were during the war, Elizabeth was determined to stay in Texana to protect her home despite the threat of Union invasions along the Texas coast. There was the problem of scarcity of food, supplies, and medicine due to the blockade of the Texas coast. Mrs. Simons’ daughter Lizzie was constantly sick and was in need of medical attention. At one point the price of quinine was so high she was forced to get just enough and split the rest with Mrs. Coleman.²³

Loneliness was another problem for Elizabeth while Maurice was away. She mentioned a number of friends in her diary, such as Mrs. Coleman, Mrs. Sanford, and of course Lee and her sister Kate. Although these people were of comfort to her, they could not fill the emptiness she felt while Maurice was away. Also, the loss of her mother affected Elizabeth deeply, as she mentioned numerous times the pain she felt at the loss

²² Elizabeth Simons Diary, Box 658, STA.

²³ Ibid.

of her dear mother. When young Emily Garrett ran away to get married, Mrs. Simons expressed her disapproval of Emily's "wronging" her parents. Elizabeth attended many funerals in Texana. Rose Bankhead's death was an emotional blow, but the death of her dear friend Mrs. Sanford was even harder, Elizabeth reflected on the "sickness and death" that surrounded them.

The absence of loved ones far off fighting in the war and wondering if they would ever return home was a constant concern. Elizabeth became concerned when there were no letters from Maurice for a long period of time but she also expressed her relief at not receiving any letters and, therefore, did not have to hear any bad news. However, Elizabeth cried tears of joy when she heard from Maurice, thereby knowing he was alive and well. The winter months took their toll on Mrs. Simons; she worried about the men freezing and wondered if they had enough warm clothing and blankets. When her brother, Richard Hatcher, became ill Elizabeth was beside herself with anxiety. No matter how distressed Mrs. Simons was she remained strong to help those around who needed her the most.

Keeping informed about the war was a priority for Elizabeth. Throughout her diary she mentions reading newspapers sent not only from Maurice but from others as well. Mrs. Simons wrote about the report of the invasion of Washington, the rumored defeat Buell's army by Bragg, the Battle of Iuka, and the bloody Battle of Corinth. Elizabeth expressed the contempt she felt towards Butler and the possibility that his army was to invade Texas. It seemed that having to flee her home was a good possibility if there indeed was an invasion. No matter how important it was for Elizabeth to keep up with the movement of her husband's company, she continually prayed for peace. The thought

of so many dead on the battlefields and the families that were left behind saddened Elizabeth.

For such a young woman Elizabeth was remarkably strong; she found much of her strength through her strong religious beliefs. Reading the Bible was a daily activity. Mrs. Simons regularly attended female prayer meetings as well as church services at the Texana Methodist Church. Her diary shows no indication that her faith in God faltered at any time, even in the most difficult times and situations.

The diary of Elizabeth Archer Hatcher Simons reflects what life was like in the small rural town of Texana, Texas during the Civil War. It shows how a small community came together in the most difficult of times. The women of Texana worked hard to make ends meet when necessities and supplies became scarce. They worked together to help supply the troops and to provide for their families. No matter how depressed, scared, or worried Elizabeth Simons was during this time, she showed tremendous courage and strength. She was determined to protect her home, even with the threat of Union invasion along the Texas coast, and she was always willing to lend a helping hand to those who needed it most.

Even before the outbreak of the Civil War women of the South worked hard taking care of their families and homes. During the war they still had to perform the same duties but with the added responsibilities. "The war imposed unprecedented demands on Southern rural women. To meet them, they had to draw on hidden reserves of fortitude and courage that many of the women never knew they possessed."²⁴ Consequently, after

²⁴ Philip N. Racine, "Emily Lyles Harris," in *American Portraits*, eds., Stephen G. Weisner and William F. Hartford (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1998), I, 293.

the Civil War ended how women viewed themselves and were viewed by others changed dramatically.²⁵ The Civil War destroyed the old southern way of life and after Reconstruction the “New South” was born. Women became more independent and became active in various organizations that promoted women’s suffrage, civic reform, and education. Women also participated actively in church and missionary organizations, temperance societies, and women’s clubs.²⁶ The lessons of the war were bittersweet, but having learned these lessons Elizabeth Simons was better equipped to care for her home and children after the death of her beloved Maurice.

Like many other women during the Civil War who kept diaries, Elizabeth Simons recorded daily occurrences at home, military events, but most important she wrote down her innermost feelings and thoughts. Elizabeth’s diary was a means to express feelings that she normally would not display in public. In doing so, Elizabeth gathered the strength and courage to make difficult decisions and to confront tough situations. The impact of the Simons diary and those written by other women during the Civil War era has significance on the study of women’s history. By examining the lives of women from the past and how they coped with new and unfamiliar roles presents a more concrete picture of women’s historical experience.

²⁵ Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 253.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

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