

Lawton

# HEROINES OF DIXIE

To  
emory of my Grandmother  
*Lary Turner Garrison*  
Wife of  
*ant William David Garrison*  
th Carolina Regiment, C.S.A.

*Confederate Women Tell  
Their Story of the War*

BY KATHARINE M. JONES

Shall we add this  
to part two in our  
Bibliography?

*[Signature]*



Copyright © 1955 The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without first obtaining written permission of the copyright owner.

This edition published in 1995 by SMITHMARK Publishers, a division of U.S. Media Holdings, Inc., 16 East 32nd Street, New York, NY 10016.

SMITHMARK books are available for bulk purchase for sales promotion and premium use. For details write or call the manager of special sales, SMITHMARK Publishers Inc., 16 East 32nd Street, New York, NY 10016; (212) 532-6600.

This edition published by special arrangement with Scribner, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Inc. and W.S. Konecky Associates, Inc.

ISBN: 0-8317-6676-X

Printed in the United States of America

10987654321

## INTRODUCTION

In some of the more recent studies of the subject strongly suggested that the prime reason for the defeat of the Confederacy was a decline in, or loss of, the will to fight. It is certainly true that the more remarkable thing about the course of the conflict, is that the will to fight was so strong so long.

For that, the women of the Confederacy were in a large measure responsible. Not every woman could be classed as a "Dixie," as the title of the present work puts it, but it is well observed at the time by foe and friend alike, and has been noted since, that it was among the women of the South that the spirit of resistance flamed highest.

The harder part of war is the woman's part. True of the war of the Sixties in the few women, some of whom left memoirs which have been read, there were the excitement and sustaining sense of adventure to be derived from contact with stirring events and as well as the notable personalities. For the great majority, however, it was more of strain and anxiety, of fear and loneliness, and of privation than there was of glamour and excitement. To these were added, in large sections of the South, the aggravation of invasion and occupation by Federal troops. In the worst case, the depredations of the lawless freebooters of the North, neither, in those areas which were strongly held by the Confederates.

The story of the life of women in these years is scattered in diaries and letters written without thought of publication. Through the comparatively small number of published memoirs, the latter, even, not many are well known and read. Searching out the facts about the lives of Confederate women, therefore, calls for diligence and patience, while presenting them to the world found requires judgment in selection and skill in organization. Jones has brought to her work the qualities requisite for the task. In effect, a composite autobiography of Confederate women.

my letters and despatches according to instructions, mailed packages for the commanders of the cruisers Shenandoah and Florida, which I had received with especial injunctions to be particularly careful of, as they were very important; and then proceeded to the transaction of such other business, commercial as well as political, as I had on hand.

There were a good many matters of more importance than trade and finance, however, which demanded my immediate consideration, and many and long were the conferences held with regard to the proposed grand movement on the enemy's rear. There were a number of points about this grand scheme that I would have liked to have been informed of; but those who were making the arrangements for the raid were so fearful of their plans in some way getting to the ears of the Federal authorities, that they were unwilling to tell me, and other special agents, more than was absolutely necessary for the fulfillment of the duties intrusted to us. . . .

I was merely furnished with a general idea of the contemplated attack, and was assigned to special duties in connection with it. These duties were to visit Johnson's Island, in Lake Erie, and, if possible, other military prisons, for the purpose of informing the Confederates confined in them of what was being done towards effecting their release, and what was expected of them when they were released. I was then to telegraph to certain agents that the prisoners were warned, and such other information as I might deem it important for them to be possessed of, in accordance with an arranged system of signals. This being done, I was to proceed to the execution of other tasks, the exact details of which, however, were made dependent upon circumstances, and upon directions I might receive from the agents in the States, under whose orders I was to act.

This plan for a grand raid by way of the lakes excited my enthusiasm greatly, and I had very strong hopes of its success. . . .

## 2. SARAH ALEXANDER LAWTON—"HOW ALONE GENERAL LEE SEEMS!"

*The daughter of A. L. Alexander of Washington, Georgia, Sarah Gilbert Alexander married Alexander Robert Lawton, member of the Savannah bar. He became a brigadier-general at the outbreak of hostilities, was in the Seven Days' battles, Second Manassas and An-*

*netown—Lawton's Georgians were famous fighters—was wounded at Sharpsburg in September 1862, and on August 7, 1863, appointed quartermaster-general. Mrs. Lawton and the four children came from Georgia to be with him in Richmond.*

*In lieu of letters Mrs. Lawton sent extracts from her diary to members of her family back home. This report of dark days went to her sister, Mrs. George Gilmer Hull.*

Richmond—May 9 [1864] Monday. Mr. Lawton came upstairs after dinner and said to me "I have made arrangements for all of you to leave, day-after-tomorrow." It came like a thunder-clap upon me. Our arms had seemed so successful that we were beginning to breathe freely and to think the enemy were foiled. At least *I* cannot go away.

May 10. Tired and sick tonight—after a sad and busy day—preparing the children to go—they are all ready now. Corinne was bitterly opposed to going—but her father talked to her a long time and she now seems cheerful and reconciled.

May 11. They are gone. I feel sad and desolate enough—but have not time to indulge it. I must pack my trunks, so as to be ready for anything. . . .

Thursday—12th. Rain—but I went visiting. I had been at home for several days and knew little of the state of feeling in town. We heard last night that the children had safely reached the end of their railroad journey, so I felt relieved about them. Mr. Lawton was kept up late last night and waked up early this morning by business connected with getting a train of corn thro' to Gen. Lee's Army. Well, I went visiting. I went first to Mrs. S's—found her tete a tete with Mr. T.—made the acquaintance of that silver tongued Frenchman and learned from his magnetic eyes the secret of his power over the bewitching and bewitched lady.

I learned that on Tuesday there was great alarm in the city. Many ladies sat up all night, dressed in all their best clothes with their jewelry on. Congressmen besieged the war department all night—so that Gen. Bragg<sup>1</sup> was called out of bed to go down to them after

<sup>1</sup>After General Bragg's unsuccessful Chattanooga campaign, General Joseph E. Johnston had been put in command of the Army of Tennessee and Bragg called to Richmond to be President Davis' chief-of-staff.

midnight. We knew nothing of all the excitement—absorbed in the grief of our expected family parting. We slept as we best could each in our quiet chamber. . . .

Friday—13th. Early this morning we were waked by the tidings that the Danville road was cut. We next learned that Gen. Stuart was dead—sad news. After breakfast I had a trunk or two to pack—while thus engaged, Mrs. Stanard sent for me to sit the morning with her. . . .

I had a very pleasant morning with Mrs. Stanard and returned home just before Mr. Lawton and the Doctor came to dinner. Mr. L. hurried off soon to be pall-bearer at Gen. Stuart's funeral. Not long after, the Doctor returned to his office—rain set in—I had a dreary afternoon—we are all alone this evening—a rare occurrence. The gentlemen are talking about how terrified the Congressmen are—how anxious to get horses. We are now hemmed in on all sides.

Sunday 15th. . . . The excitements yesterday were the cannonading at Drury's Bluff<sup>1</sup>—and the impressment of negroes to work on the fortifications. Jake was caught. Paul and Lysander took flight and hid—and all day Paul did not dare go out.

There is much feeling against Gen. Bragg and about Pemberton's being put in command of the artillery around the city. Members of Congress are much excited and there is indignation against the President on his account.

Today we had some cannonading at Drury's again—Beauregard is preparing to give the enemy battle. We expect a heavy fight in a day or two. A train went off on the Central Road today. Several families left on it, en route for the South.

Wednesday 25. For a week we have been more quiet. Business begins to receive attention. Letters are once more delivered. We are expecting, however, daily to hear of a terrible battle between Lee and Grant. We have all been much excited by the tidings that Gen. Johnston has retreated below Marietta and abandoned upper Georgia.

<sup>1</sup>About May 11 General Ben Butler advanced slowly until he reached Drewry's Bluff, halfway between Bermuda Hundred and Richmond. Beauregard had been gathering reinforcements. On the sixteenth he attacked Butler with vigor and with such success as to limit materially the usefulness of the Army of the James as a factor in the campaign.

May 30—Sunday. 9½ P.M. Gen. Lawton has just returned from a long ride. He has been out to Gen. Lee's headquarters at Atlee Station, 10 miles from town. He reports the Gen. very unwell and looking worn down. No wonder—the wonder is that he has kept up so long, with so intense a strain upon his mental powers. Gen. Lee seems to expect that the enemy will attack him tomorrow. He telegraphed for Beauregard who went up to him this afternoon. Butler is said to have been heavily reinforced—and I suppose Beauregard will not venture to stay long away from his command. We are all discussing the probability that Grant will not attack, but will cross the Chickahominy, thus forcing Gen. Lee to the city. A siege is far more to be dreaded by us than a battle.

Mr. Lawton was saying how alone Gen. Lee seems to be in his responsibilities. Ewell is out of the field—broken down,<sup>1</sup> Jackson gone, Longstreet wounded<sup>2</sup>—So few on whom he can rely for counsel.

June 19. Sunday. The enemy have been beleaguering Petersburg and shelling it. Refugees from there have been coming here and there are uncertain tidings of great battles—but nothing authentic is known. We here feel still very calm and cheerful and never think on the ifs of Grant's success. Household matters still fill up my daily life, as in peace times, and the struggle to live comfortably requires considerable effort and forethought. We continue to have all our wants supplied. I send to market every morning and get fresh vegetables. We have fresh meat in small quantities, some two or three times a week—the rest of the time, ham. I will append my market bills for a week.

Wednesday, 5½ lbs. of veal, \$33.00. 1 peck green peas \$12.

Thursday. Lettuce \$1.50. Cherries, 2 qts for \$3.00.

Friday, Squash. 1 doz. for \$6. Asparagus, \$3.00.

Saturday, Snap beans, \$4. gooseberries \$2.00. Butter, 4 lbs. for \$48.00.

Sunday and Monday—nothing.

Tuesday, Lettuce \$1.50. Beans, \$4, Raspberries \$20.

<sup>1</sup>Ewell, who had been in the thick of the fighting since the Wilderness campaign began, was "in danger of collapse under his burdens."—D. S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants*, III, 433.

<sup>2</sup>Near the Plank Road in the Wilderness fighting on May 6 Longstreet had been seriously wounded by a ball mistakenly fired by one of his own men. It passed through his throat into his shoulder.

We have been to church this morning and tonight. I think all the sermons we hear now show want of thought. Our ministers have no time for study—they are so engaged with visits to the afflicted, to hospitals, to the wounded and with funerals.

Tuesday 21. The air is full of sorrowful tales. Last week we walked to the Armory to see Mrs. Gorgas.<sup>1</sup> She has just heard that her brother-in-law was severely wounded. . . .

Friday—June 24. All our railroads cut<sup>2</sup>—Enemy fortifying on the Weldon road. The Gen'l. getting very anxious about the supplies of corn for the Army. The Doctor working hard with the sick and wounded at Jackson Hospital. 2300 patients there—thermometer at 92— Daily prayer meetings. . .

### 3. JUDITH BROCKENBROUGH McGUIRE—

“GENERAL STUART DIED LAST NIGHT”

*After Chantilly in the spring of 1861 the McGuires found refuge in Danville, Lynchburg, Charlottesville and other Virginia cities and towns. In November 1863 they went to Richmond, where Mrs. McGuire got a position in the Commissary Department and, as always, helped in the hospitals.*

*General Stuart, the Bayard of the Confederacy, was only thirty-one when he was mortally wounded by a pistol shot in a skirmish with Sheridan at Yellow Tavern, six miles from Richmond, on May 11. When he was a young lieutenant at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and she a girl in her teens, he had fallen in love with Flora, daughter of Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, the most capable cavalry officer in the United States Army. They were married in 1855. During the crucial days of battle they had been able to snatch only fleeting moments of happiness together. Mrs. Stuart was at Colonel Edmund Fontaine's plantation at Beaver Dam when she heard the general was wounded. She started at once for his bedside but Union raiders had cut the communications and she did not reach Richmond till four hours after he had died. The hymn for which he asked was “Rock of Ages.”*

<sup>1</sup> Brigadier-General Josiah Gorgas was chief of the Ordnance Department.

<sup>2</sup> This was only a rumor. Trains continued to roll into Richmond.

Richmond, Virginia  
May 13, 1864

General Stuart died of his wounds last night, twenty-four hours after he was shot. He was a member of the Episcopal Church, and expressed to the Rev. Dr. Peterkin his resignation to the will of God. After much conversation with his friends and Dr. P., and joining them in a hymn which he requested should be sung, he calmly resigned his redeemed spirit to the God who gave it. Thus passed away our great cavalry general, just one year after the Immortal Jackson. This seems darkly mysterious to us, but God's will be done. The funeral took place this evening, from St. James's Church. My duty to the living prevented my attending it, for which I am very sorry; but I was in the hospital from three o'clock until eight, soothing the sufferers in the only way I could by fanning them, bathing their wounds, and giving them a word of comfort.

May 23.—Our young relative, Lieutenant G., a member of General Stuart's staff, has just been giving us a most gratifying account of General Stuart's habits. He says, that although he considered him one of the most sprightly men he has ever seen, devoted to society, particularly to that of the ladies, always social and cheerful, yet he has never seen him do any thing, even under the strongest excitement, unbecoming his Christian profession or his high position as a soldier; he never saw him drink, or heard an oath escape his lips; his sentiments were always high-minded, pure, and honorable, and his actions entirely coincided with them. In short, he considered him, whether on the field or in the private circle, the model of a Christian gentleman and soldier.

When speaking of his gallantry as an officer, Lieutenant G.'s admiration knows no bounds. He speaks of the devotion of the soldiers to him as enthusiastic in the extreme. The evening before his fatal wound, he sent his troops on in pursuit of Sheridan, under the command of General Fitz Lee,<sup>1</sup> as he was unavoidably detained for some three or four hours. General Lee overtook the enemy, and a sharp skirmish ensued, in which Sheridan's rear suffered very much. In the meantime, General Stuart determined to overtake General Lee, and, with his staff, rode very rapidly sixteen miles, and reached him about nightfall. They were halting for a few moments, as General Stuart rode up quietly, no one suspecting he was there,

<sup>1</sup> Major-General Fitzhugh Lee, eldest son of Sydney Smith Lee, who was an elder brother of Robert E. Lee.

wise Known as Lieutenant Harry T. Buford, Confederate States Army, ed., C. J. Worthington. Hartford, Conn.: T. Belknap, 1876.

2. "How Alone General Lee Seems!"  
Sarah Alexander Lawton to her sister, May 9, 1864. Marion Alexander Boggs, ed., *The Alexander Letters, 1787-1900*. Savannah, Ga.: privately printed for G. F. Baldwin, 1910. (By permission of A. Leopold Alexander.)
3. "General Stuart Died Last Night"  
[Judith Brockenbrough McGuire], *Diary of a Southern Refugee*. (See I, 10.)
4. Hunter Burns the V. M. I.  
Cornelia Peake McDonald, *A Diary with Reminiscences*. (See III, 3.)
5. "You Burned My Home"  
Henrietta Bedinger Lee to General David Hunter, July 20, 1864. *Southern Historical Society Papers*, VIII (1880), 215-216.
6. "I Am an Exile"  
Issa Desha Breckinridge to her husband, July 30, 1864. Breckinridge Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
7. In Besieged Petersburg  
Mrs. Roger A. (Sara Rice) Pryor, *Reminiscences*. (See V, 9.)
8. "I Am for a Tidal Wave of Peace"  
Agnes to Sara Rice Pryor, August 26, 1864. *Reminiscences*. (See V, 9.)
9. Our Exchange Prisoners  
Phoebe Yates Pember, *A Southern Woman's Story*. New York: G. W. Carleton & Company, 1879.
10. Chasing My Hospital  
Kate Cumming, *A Journal of Hospital Life*. (See III, 5.)
11. The Battle for Atlanta  
Mary Ann Harris Gay, *Life in Dixie*. (See V, 12.)
12. "They Took Possession of Atlanta Quietly"  
Diary of Mary Rawson. "The Margaret Mitchell Memorial Library," Atlanta Historical Society, Atlanta, Ga.
13. "A Better Son Never Lived"  
Mrs. Henrietta Morgan to her daughter-in-law, October 1, 1864. John Hunt Morgan Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

#### CHAPTER VIII. WINTER OF DESPERATION (November 1864-March 1865)

1. "Lead, Blood and Tears"  
Mary Ann Harris Gay, *Life in Dixie*. (See V, 12.)
2. "Things Is Worse and Worse"  
A soldier's wife to her husband, December 17, 1864. *Pickett and His Men*. (See VI, 4.)
3. Hood Is Defeated at Nashville  
Rebecca C. Ridley, "Behind the Lines in Middle Tennessee, 1863-1865: The Journal of Bettie Ridley Blackmore," ed., Sarah Ridley Trimble, *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XII (March 1953). (By permission of *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*.)
4. Running the Blockade  
Journal of Mary Ellen Arnold. Arnold-Appleton Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.
5. Fort Fisher Is Bombarded  
Mrs. William Lamb. "The Heroine of Confederate Point: An Interesting

#### Bibliography

- Contemporaneous Account of the Heroic Defense of Fort Fisher 24th and 25th, 1864, by the Wife of the Commandant, Col. Lamb," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, XX (1892), 301-302.
6. "I Thought of the Gayety of Paris"  
[Judith Brockenbrough McGuire], *Diary of a Southern Refugee*.
  7. The Treasury Note Department Leaves Columbia  
Mrs. Malvina Gist Waring (Malvina Black Gist), "A Confederate Diary," *South Carolina Women in the Confederacy*, I, ed., M. Taylor and others. Columbia, S. C.: The State Company, 1903.
  8. "Poor Old Columbia!"  
Journal of Emma Florence LeConte, December 31, 1864, to August 1865. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.
  9. "The Enemy Comes to Our Plantation"  
Diary of Charlotte St. Julien Ravenel. Susan R. Jervey and C. Julien Ravenel, *Two Diaries from Middle St. John's, Berkeley, Carolina*. Charleston, S. C.: St. John's Hunting Club, 1921. (By St. John's Hunting Club.)

#### CHAPTER IX. OUR CONFEDERACY IS GONE WITH A C (March-May 1864)

1. "We May Have To Fly from Richmond"  
Mrs. Malvina Gist Waring (Malvina Black Gist), "A Confederate Diary." (See VIII, 7.)
2. "The Sound of Cannon Is Ever in Our Ears"  
[Judith Brockenbrough McGuire], *Diary of a Southern Refugee*.
3. "They Marched into Mobile to the Tune of 'Yankee Doodle'"  
Journal of Mary D. Waring, July 26, 1863, to April 16, 1865. Room, Alabama State Department of Archives and History.
4. "With Hearts Bowed Down by Despair We Left Richmond"  
Varina Howell Davis, *Jefferson Davis*. (See I, 5.)
5. "The Women of the South Still Fought Their Battle"  
Phoebe Yates Pember, *A Southern Woman's Story*. (See VII, 9.)
6. "Like a Vivid, Horrible Dream"  
[Judith Brockenbrough McGuire], *Diary of a Southern Refugee*.
7. President Davis in Danville  
Mrs. W. T. Sutherlin. J. William Jones, *The Davis Memorial Volume: Our Dead President, Jefferson Davis, and the World's Tribute to His Memory*. Richmond, Va.: B. F. Johnson & Company, 1889.
8. "General Lee Has Returned"  
[Judith Brockenbrough McGuire], *Diary of a Southern Refugee*.
9. "Our Poor Unhappy Country"  
Mary Custis Lee to Miss Mary Mead, April 23, 1865. *Mrs. Robert Lee*. (See I, 9.)
10. "And This Is the End of the Confederacy"  
Eliza Frances Andrews, *The War-Time Journal of a Georgia Girl*, New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1908.
11. "The Confederate Flag"  
Mrs. D. Giraud (Louisa Wigfall) Wright, *A Southern Girl in Wartime Memories of a Confederate Senator's Daughter*. N. Doubleday, Page & Company; Copyright 1905 by Doubleday & Inc. (By permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.)