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Every war has many constituencies, groups of people who play a role, willingly or not, in its great events. Today, the old, clear boundary between civilian and combatant has blurred so badly that the people of one group often cannot identify the members of the other; and many participate fluidly in both. The few exceptions to the rule in the 1860's, Mosby, Imboden, Quantrill, and their kind, played such a small role that their existence merely sharpened the distinction. The other sharp distinction, still clear today but fading, was the difference between men and women. True it was that a handful of women masqueraded as men and fought in the ranks; but the woman in that era, the "weaker sex," faced the agony of war from a position of no strength when they found themselves in the midst of great armies marching to battle.

The number of women who recorded their experiences, who saw two armies swirl past them to a nearby bloody battlefield, and who watched the leaders ride through their town was very small. Ann R. Schaeffer was one of the few, and after the war the emotions of these sharp changes over a few days remained clear enough to become a narrative. Many of the roads to Antietam Creek and the town of Sharpsburg led through Frederick, Maryland. Mrs. Schaeffer's narrative, which found its way to the Maryland Historical Society through the thoughtfulness of her daughter-in-law in 1935, recaptures the events and emotions of a wife and resident of Frederick in the two weeks before and the week after the Battle of Antietam in September of

1862. Her story, as she recorded it, began as Lee's Confederate army marched north into Maryland.

RECORDS OF THE PAST
by Ann R. Schaeffer

Many periodicals of the present day contain accounts of Civil War battles which appear to interest this generation and to stir the youthful imagination with visions of glory for inactive life, as in natural scenery "Tis distance lends enchantment to the view." Many are still living who participated in these battles; their old hearts glow with youthful ardor as they relate their exploits. But many peaceful citizens also live in these days, who could tell another tale--of the anxieties and sufferings attending them--the war desolation following in their trail. Some time since, on leaving Frederick City, which had been my residence for many years, I sought to dispel the sadness occasioned by parting from dear friends in observing the lively scenery surrounding the dear old town, at times obscured by flurries of swift falling snow, again quite clearly defined and even in winter presenting a variety of color and picturesque beauty. My thoughts reverted to other days, particularly to scenes occurring around these peaceful vales in 1862.

Then Frederick was another sight when drums beat at dead of night striking terror and dismay into many stout loyal hearts in her midst. Hoping to entrust and edify the generation grown up since this period, I have found melancholy pleasure in overlooking my journal, and copying some interesting facts relating to the occupation of Frederick in 1862 by the Rebel Army.

About the 4th of September came rumors of the Rebel Army crossing the Potomac River, into Maryland. But we had heard similar reports before and gave little heed. At evening while

sitting quietly in my parlor conversing with several friends, we were startled by the cry of "Fire! Fire!" Then we heard the fire bells ringing--the given signal of the approach of the enemy. No tongue as or pen can describe our emotions. Seeing the street illuminated by a bright light, we learned the Union troops were burning the Hospital stores--making a grand bonfire in the street, of all the bedding that could not be carried away, to prevent its falling into the hands of the Confederates, and the soldiers themselves were "skedaddling as fast as their horses and their own legs could carry them, leaving the Town defenseless. All sorts of reports were abroad and nobody knew what to do--what to expect. Fearing perhaps we would be obliged to fly during the night or forced from our houses by fire, I packed up a few necessary articles of clothing, shawls &c. in satchels--awaiting my Husband's coming home from his store. He confirmed the reports of the approach of the Rebels. Union men were flying, fearing arrest--Among others our neighbors on either side. Finally we learned the Confederates had encamped six miles south of Town and would not enter until the next day. Confident his Drug store would be ransacked my Husband had the most valuable articles brought home, where we hid them away--covered from view by ashes under an old fashioned outdoor bakeoven and not knowing what we might be called upon to endure the coming day, we lay down to rest after midnight and slept until 5 o'clock - Sept. 6th. Woke up--found all quiet--The fire in the street dying out leaving a horrible smell of burnt hair from the mattresses. What a dreadful waking up, to we knew not what! I went up street before breakfast to secure shoes for the children. Streets crowded with anxious faces. Returning home, I gathered together all the small valuable articles--silver spoons &c. and put them in large pockets, which I fastened to a belt around my waist under my skirts. I learned afterwards many ladies carried around a similar burden for a whole week. After breakfast my

cook took leave--as the colored people are running away in all directions and I was left alone with the children & white nurse. About 11 A.M. the Rebels came in by the Southern pike, led by a former citizen of Frederick and were received with open arms by those who favored their cause, while the Union men hung their heads in sorrow and shame to see the Stars and stripes pulled down and trampled on. Our own small flags were all hidden out of sight. Soon the streets were swarming with ragged, filthy, worn out men--yet every one (to our astonishment) respectful and polite. Soon they were thronging the stores, offering their Confederate notes, which not being regarded of much value in Maryland, about 4 P.M. most of the stores closed up. We were still in suspense, knowing not what was intended by the enemy who now placed the City under martial law--Who can describe our feelings as paint the sad anxious faces? We feared to go to bed, yet felt the necessarily of rest.

7th Sept. peacefully--The Sabbath day--Wanted to go to church, but feared to leave home--Hear rumors of the approach of the Federal army, but know not how to credit them as we are cut off from all communication with the outer world--guards and pickets on every side. This we do know--that the Rebels blew up the rail-road bridge over the Monoquary this afternoon.

8. Monday. I ventured to the more public streets to day to see the crowds--and could not help admiring the conduct of these poor men. Although in need of everything and our merchants refused to open their stores, they humble acquiesced. I learned afterwards, they were simply obeying orders, for it is the policy of their officers, to do nothing to offend in Maryland, still hoping she may be induced to secede. Generals Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Stuart and Long street are all in Frederick--The men appear devoted to their officers, who seem to care kindly for them and cheerfully share their privations--The Southern sympathizers keep open house and our kind

hearted Union citizens turn none away hungry who apply to them for food--so that they all declare, Frederick is the best place they have been quartered in for a long time. Their hatred of the 'Yankees,' as they call all Union men, is intense, though they admit they are heartily tired of this war. We can hear nothing of our troops approaching, although the slaves and contrabands, who wait at table, where the Rebel officers are dined and wined, listen attentively to all that is said and assure us "they are coming." Nobody pretends to work--everybody on the streets--standing in groups talking and eyeing the the [*sic*] quiet gaping soldiers.

9th. Another night passed and we [were] still spared from fire and bloodshed. The stores remain closed--Men still gloomy though getting a little accustomed to the state of affairs. Our supplies are all cut off--the bridge destroyed and R.R. track torn up--the mills taken possession of. Housekeepers are examining their stock of provisions. We succeeded today in getting a bag of cornmeal, with a prospect of some flour. Many indications of the Federal army approaching and I dread a battle in our midst. We listen for every sound of gun or cannon, hoping they are coming. I learned today with deep regret, that the brave scout, who brought us news of their approach, was arrested and yesterday shot at Camp Morman(?). Encouraging reports this evening of the Rebels leaving, but our streets are still crowded with the filthy, desperate looking, but polite strangers.

10th Very warm. at 12 pm last night the Rebel army / the darkies were right, began moving and are passing through our streets out the Hagerstown pike as fast as they can travel. Their destination (They say) Pennsylvania, but many think to endeavor to recross into Virginia at Williamsport. I have had some interesting conversations with several soldiers. One especially so homesick--he begged me for citizens clothing to facilitate his escape, which I supplied, he

promising to inform me when safe and far away. (I never heard from him and suspect he was, like many other stragglers, shot in crossing the mountains). This evening my husband got hold of a newspaper, which had been smuggled into town--"The Philadelphia Inquirer." It was almost worn out, having passed through so many hands. We read hurriedly for others were waiting their turn and felt much disheartened on reading the accounts therein given of a few panic stricken Rebels crossing into Maryland. They--the North--will not believe, with what a formidable force they may have to contend, until they see them at their doors.

"Poor most poor!" deprived of every comfort and yet an army of desperate men--well disciplined and well officered--in these respects vieing [vying] with, if not excelling our own army.

11. Still in suspense--Confederate army leaving--streets thronged--stores closed. I tried to calm my nerves this afternoon by sewing--but the excitement is too great. Every noise startles as we are listening intently for the booming of cannon announcing the approach of the Federal Army. Knowing friends North are all anxiety concerning us, I tried to send a letter, but failed to get it through the lines. There is a great noise tonight and rumors of Stuart's cavalry preparing to leave. Wagons rumbling through the streets mingled with the lowing of the cattle they take with them. Almost afraid to go to bed.

12. Arose this morning rather surprised to find our condition still the same. Our Army said to be near and the Confederates evidently in great confusion. I added another page to my letter and put it in my pocket, to send by the first opportunity. Compelled myself to remain quiet at home. About 4 P.M. my husband rushed into the house to tell me the Union troops were in sight--that from Canon hill they could be seen fighting and driving the Rebels before them. I

quickly donned my bonnet and going to a friends house ran up to the observatory, where with a glass we could plainly see our troops approaching, pursuing the Confederates along the Baltimore pike. Just outside of Town, the Union forces separated--a part coming through the fields and the Lutheran graveyard at the end of Church st. but the main body continuing on the pike up Patrick st. to the Square where the Confederates made a stand and charged on their pursuers, driving them back to the East end, where they turned and again the Rebels flew before them, compelling several unfortunates prisoners to keep up with their horse's. These however were retaken at the west end of the Town. As the shots whistled through the streets, the citizens ran in every direction, seeking shelter. I started for home, but seeing the street deserted and hearing more shots, I returned to the observatory--we heard cheering and listening and watching, we beheld the stars and stripes borne aloft up Patrick st. Good Lord! could I believe the sight of that dear flag would ever affect me thus? Unconsciously I screamed, shouted--jumped for joy. Again we flew down to welcome the small body of troops coming up Church st. Oh the frantic joy of that hour I shall never forget! And so with every body. Some shouted--some laughed--some cried--Cheers and hurrahs rent the air--People ran out of their houses--clasped each others hands--I went home to the children and found my little five year old daughter had some where found a hidden flag and was waving it--the first I know--on our street. Then we went to Patrick street. The Union troops were pouring in . Every body at doors and windows cheering and waving flags and handkerchiefs--many on the sidewalks, engaged with buckets, dippers and cups giving the tired, heated soldiers, water as they passed. After a while came Burnside himself--and now they cheered. Many ran trying to grasp his hand, while he bowed again and again--Cheers rent the air--Surely was [an] army never given a more uproarious welcome. At last we came

home to supper and this exciting day--another 12th of September ended in a quiet night, or at least we felt we could lie down to sleep in safety. One little episode I must here record and give the true history of Barbary Fritchie and her flag. A Confederate has recently said, she was bedridden and probably never saw a rebel soldier. This was untrue--I will relate here what one of her nieces told me, when Whittier's poem first appeared. Mrs. Fritchie was very old--upwards of eighty years and looked much older. Before the door of her residence was a long low shaded porch and during the warm September days of that memorable week, the poor, worn out soldiers, would often seek rest there. She, leaning on her staff would sometimes come out among them and say "get out you lazy, dirty Rebels." Without replying they invariably made way for her. On the evening of Sept. 12th she sat at her open window waving a small flag to the advancing Federal troops, who were led by Gen. Reno. They halted in front of her door--just before crossing the Town bridge. The soldiers seeing this very old lady cheered her and one and another begged for the little flag. At length she gave it to one, who fastened it in the head gear of Gen. Reno's horse. Stonewall Jackson had led his men, just a few hours previous, up an alley coming out on Patrick street a little distance above Mrs. Fritchie's house and I doubt whether she ever saw him. This is I believe the true story--The gallant Reno passed on to South mountain, where the next day he was killed in battle.

Sept. 13. Awoke to find our streets crowded with Union soldiers. After breakfast I went to my sisters on one of the main streets. All bustle and excitement--McClellan expected--We heard a great noise and looking out, saw the Hero at the head of his staff approaching. Leaping down the steps we ran to the square and were among the first ladies to grasp his hand--Shouts and deafening cheers! people seemed beside themselves and forced him to stop--to receive their

greetings--He sat as one confounded--the enthusiasm so unexpected--while ladies hung upon his horse's neck--patting his head stuck a flag in the gearing. At length he galloped away and when the streets cleared I hurried to the P-Office which had just opened to mail my letter. All the morning we have heard the booming of cannon for a battle is going on at the foot of the mountain--Again McClelland [sic] and Burnside passed through Town and now indeed came an army--Began passing at noon--continued marching as rapidly as possible until night. Oh what a different day from last Saturday! Still, most of the stores are closed and it is difficult to purchase anything--All articles of food are very high, but we hope for a change next week.

14. The holy Sabbath and still the murderous work goes on. We have heard firing all day and know that many souls are appearing before their maker, while many more are suffering excruciating bodily pain unseen and unpitied by human eyes.

15. Still sounds of the battle in progress. Said to be between Boonsborough and Burkettsville. The wounded and prisoners constantly arriving.

16. McClellan gaining victories, but Harpers Ferry has surrendered to the wizard Jackson, who is always appearing where least expected. Wounded now constantly arriving in ambulances--churches all taken for their accommodation--the Ger. Reformed alone reserved for public worship. I sent provisions to the old Epis. church today. We hear most heart rendering accounts of wounded, exhausted and dying men lining the roadsides and on the battle field. If possible I would go out, but know not how--besides we have our hands full here in Town.

17. I thought I would remain at home today--to accomplish some necessary sewing, but could not resist going to the store to see the prisoners passing through town on their way to Washington to be exchanged--First the Rebel prisoners--After these, about 8000 Union soldiers

just surrendered to Stonewall Jackson on Monday last. A more humiliating sight, to a loyal heart, could not be conceived. Returning home, I saw a number of wounded soldiers just arriving at the Seminary and hurried home to prepare bread, butter and coffee for them.

18. Battle raging at Antietam.

19. Wounded arriving from battle field. Strings of ambulances in our streets on their way to Baltimore from our churches, halls and schoolhouses and some private houses are filled. I with my neighbors determined to confine our attention for the present, to these poor fellows in the ambulances and found them sadly in need of refreshment.

20. All day in the kitchen preparing broth, porridge and jelly for the wounded.

21. A lovely Sabbath day--but it does not appear like the Sabbath--Churches filled with the wounded and dying, streets thronged with ladies and servants carrying baskets and buckets, endeavoring to minister to their comfort or alleviate their suffering--and the saddest sight of all, strangers going the rounds to find friends--only hoping they might be found among the wounded.

22. Busy preparing food for the sick.

23. Accompanied some ladies to the hospital at the Barracks. Time can never efface from memory, the scenes of suffering witnessed there. Oh this hellish war!--I could not help thinking how ridiculous our world must appear to superior intelligences--our incurring so much trouble, expense and suffering to maim and murder each other and after accomplishing this object, laying the poor creatures side by side--endeavoring to relieve their pain and save their lives. How terrible was the torture of some we saw--One especially who had just had one jaw removed--One just carried out to be buried--another was dying--far from home and friends. On our way home stopped at the Methodist church saw two who will die tonight. One delirious--the other shot

through the lungs was calm; said he had a Father and sister in Pennsylvania. He trusted in God's mercy for his salvation. Really I can scarcely believe I am living in Frederick--Good old Frederick--Once so quiet orderly and clean. Now all bustle and confusion--Sidewalks crowded with soldiers, ladies and Still we hope for a brighter future. A great battle has been fought at Antietam. The Union troops victorious. Confederates are recrossing into Virginia. History will recorded the glorious victory. I have only recorded some of the side scenes--the shadows cast by this Civil War and God only knows the suffering--the agony, of suspense--the desolation of hearts and homes spread abroad throughout the land, our once happy land, and then the the [sic] rupture with members of my family, for we were divided.

Ann R. Late Schaeffer
of Frederick City, Maryland