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Sarah Butler Wister's Civil War Diary

SARAH BUTLER WISTER was born May 28, 1835, at Butler Place. She was the older daughter of Fanny Kemble, the renowned English actress, and Pierce Butler. At the time of her birth Butler Place, bought by her great-grandfather in 1810, was a farm with a rather unimpressive, middle-sized, owner's dwelling, but with splendid barns and outbuildings. The site, six miles north of Philadelphia's City Hall, at the end of Broad Street, is today filled by small row houses.

Sarah's mother had come to America from London in 1832 with her father, Charles Kemble. They were of the third and fourth generations of the famous Kemble theatrical family. The Kembles toured the eastern seaboard, acting together, and it was in Philadelphia that Pierce Butler was introduced to Fanny. They were married in Christ Church on June 7, 1834. The marriage was unhappy from the start, and, under extremely harsh circumstances, Fanny left her family in March 1845 to return to England, where she built a second career as a superb reader of Shakespeare. Appearing both in England and America, she supported herself for twenty years. In 1863 she published *The Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation*, in which she declared her abhorrence of slavery. This book gave her a lasting reputation as an abolitionist and as a writer.

Sarah's father was born Pierce Butler Mease, son of Dr. and Mrs. James Mease of Philadelphia. Mrs. Mease was the daughter of Pierce Butler, a signer of the Constitution for the state of South Carolina. At the request of his grandfather, Pierce Butler Mease changed his surname to Butler, and was designated as heir to the signer's immense Georgia plantation and large fortune.

Sarah Butler married Dr. Owen Jones Wister on October 1, 1859. In 1861 they were living at 5107 Germantown Avenue next door to the house where he had been born, Grumblethorpe, built by his ancestors in 1744. The writer, Owen Wister, their only child, was born July 14, 1860.

Sarah was fine looking, nearly beautiful, although she did not resemble her mother feature for feature. She is remembered as regal when she received at the Philadelphia Assemblies, dressed in black velvet and white lace. She had several suitors before she married Dr. Wister, and many admiring friends, particularly men, who continued to come to see her long after she was married. She is sometimes spoken of by women as cool, aloof, almost high-handed, but her close friends looked up to her. She was the great lady of her neighborhood. Years after she was dead, Mr. Francis Fisher Kane told me that he went to call on her for the "stimulation of her conversation."

She inherited from her mother a fluent and graceful use of English, and as a constant observer of nature dwelt often in her writings on outdoor scenes and landscapes, describing them romantically; her love of flowers is expressed in many a lyric passage in her diary. However, her pen had also a cutting edge, and she is often tart in stating her disdain for certain people and events which she believed unworthy of her attention. Her son said of her: "her power in discerning the value of works of art was truly as unerring as the words she chose for addressing them. Life-long reading and enthusiasm had wrought her native gift into a beautiful instrument."

She translated professionally the poetry of Alfred de Musset from French to English for *The Atlantic Monthly*. She also wrote for the *Atlantic* many anonymous articles about her travels in Europe, and a fine essay about Deborah Logan of Stenton, which is included in a volume published for the Centennial, with essays by Mary Irwin, called *Famous Women of Our Century*.

Sarah was introduced to Henry James in Rome in 1872, and their friendship was long lasting. He became, as she says, "almost a member of the family." He wrote her many letters, always went to see her when she was in England, traveled with her in France, and came to stay with the Wisters at Butler Place.

During the Civil War Pierce Butler and his younger daughter, Fanny, were southern sympathizers, but Sarah and her mother sided with the North. Sarah's love for and devotion to her father and sister held steadfast during those four years.

It was evidently the outbreak of the war that stimulated her to keep a diary, which is now with the Wister Papers at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The diary begins on April 15, 1861, with an account of the surrender of Fort Sumter and concludes abruptly on September 8, 1861, with an entry that filled the diary's last page. At the outset of the diary Sarah's mother was staying with her while her father and sister were visiting the Butler planatation on the coast of southern Georgia. Excerpts from this diary included here display her deep feelings and concern, and reflect the tension and reactions to the war in Philadelphia.

In 1889 Sarah annotated the diary, identifying people and places, and this information has been added parenthetically to its text.

St. David's, Pa. FANNY KEMBLE WISTER

April 15, 1861 Most exquisite morning, sun shining brilliantly & a soft spring breeze. Before noon it clouded over, the wind rose, & the latter part of the day was gloomy & forbidding. Was up early & out before 8 o'clock to take some letters to the post office. All the world was awake & alive with the news that Ft. Sumter has surrendered. Our newspaper, the Press, was stolen from the door step where the carrier threw it as usual. We soon got another, however, & there read, to our infinite amazement, amusement & disgust that after nearly two days' incessant firing, & the burning of the quarters at Ft. Sumter, Anderson[1] had surrendered—*not a*

[1] Maj. Robert Anderson (1805–1871) graduated from West Point in 1825. After his surrender of Fort Sumter he was appointed brigadier general, but saw little active duty prior to his retirement in 1863.

man killed on either side. Among my letters was one from my Father dated the 11th inst. describing their journey to the South & stay in Charleston; he was one of a large party who went accompanied by Gen. Beauregard & other officers to visit the fortifications on Morris' & Sullivan's Island, Ft. Moultrie, &c; he describes them as impregnable, having full command of Ft. Sumter, & deprecates extremely any attempt at reinforcement on the part of our Government (the Government of the U.S. as he calls it in contradistinction or rather, contradictioness) as it must not only fail he says, but be attended inevitably by fearful carnage on both sides! And the same mail brings the news of this bloodless bombardment. Anderson says that it was the skilful engineering which avoided loss of life; perhaps too, probably even the reports are incorrect & the losses concealed, especially on the Southern side; we have no means of knowing but through themselves. Still there is a grave suspicion of Anderson's good faith spreading among all classes, but we must not judge till more is known. The war vessels never once crossed the bar, kept out it is said by high seas or low tides, perhaps this was intended by our Government however. One incident might almost be regarded as a portent; as the Stars & Stripes were lowered & the Palmetto Flag run up over the Fort, a salute was fired & a gun burst killing or fatally wounding several men, the only blood drawn in the affair, but certainly most ominously drawn.

Wrote letters, read life of Palissy,[2] practised & drew (am still upon the shading exercise in Ruskin's Elements)[3] all day. Rain coming on p.m. did not go out. Long visit from Miss Fox[4] A.M. & from Mary Gormly after lunch; she returns to Pittsburgh in a few days. Towards night the reports began to reach us of the mob which had risen in town on the news this morning. There was the most tremendous excitement. Thousands assembled furious at the news of the surrender, & swearing revenge on all disunionists or disaffected. They marched through the streets their numbers swelling

2 Bernard Palissy (1510–1589), French potter. His biography was Morley's 1855 *Life of Palissy*.

3 John Ruskin (1819–1900), English writer, published his *Elements of Drawing* in 1857, and *Elements of Perspective* in 1859.

4 Miss Mary Fox. Her place, Champlost, located on Green Lane near Fern Rock Station, was considered to be one of the most delightful in the neighborhood.

as they went, & visited the houses, stores & offices of some of the leading Loco Focos[5] who of course have been especially odious in the last few days. George Martin left town, or lay perdu. Bob Tyler[6] litterally fled before them; others hung out flags, & made patriotic & pacifying speeches. They committed no outrages, beyond knocking down a few persons in the crowd, which will always happen, almost accidentally, & tearing down the printing office of a small paper called the Palmetto Flag recently started. It appears after all that the editor was not a Secessionist but a mere catchpenny who had named his paper merely with a view to making money, not converts. The Mayor[7] by a sensible speech managed to prevent any excess. Pat Kane[8] may thank his stars he is not here, & oh how thankful I am for Father's absence.

April 16, 1861 Raining & blowing furiously all day, though not cold. Ran out before breakfast to see if there were any radishes in market, & managed to return dry, I don't know how. Letter from Fan (Frances Butler afterwards Hon. Mrs. J. W. Leigh) this morning, & a very sad one. She is on St. Simon's with the Kings; she, Georgia King (Daughter Hon. Thos. B. King,[9] afterwards Mrs. Thos. Duncan Smith, Confederate Gov., & Mrs. J. J. Wilde), & Miss Grant (of Elizafield . . . who was afterwards Mrs. Mallory King) left Savannah the very afternoon that the news of the war steamers being off Charleston, & the storming of Sumter imminent, reached there. Of course they were in the greatest state of excitement & suspense, not knowing what had happened, not even knowing whether the telegram itself had been true, & unable to hear anything for several days, as the steamer only touched at that lonely island twice a week, & they can get their mails in no other way. Poor girls. I can fancy what they endured among those sand hills & pine woods, & what they will endure, for things certainly can not stop here; Lord & Floyd King are both in the Confederate

5 Loco Foco was a term applied to the National Democratic Party by its opponents.

6 Robert Tyler (1816–1877), son of President John Tyler, moved to Philadelphia about 1844. Because of his well-known southern sympathies, the mob attacked his home and Tyler fled south.

7 Alexander Henry was Mayor of Philadelphia throughout the Civil War.

8 R. Patterson Kane had expressed strong southern views.

9 Thomas Butler King (1800–1864), a plantation owner on St. Simons Island, Georgia, served in Congress several terms and was later active in the Confederacy.

Army.[10] I expect to hear next that my Father has joined it. Well, our silent President has spoken at last, & to good purpose. There is no compromise in the Proclamation which appeared this morning, & it has infused a spirit of cheerfulness into everyone that has long been unknown. The mob went to uncle George's, Mr. John Cadwalader's,[11] Gen. Patterson's, No, Wm. B. Reed's,[12] & was finally dispersed authoritatively by Mayor Henry with a strong body of police. They were the most moderate, mannerly mob ever heard of, but in reality they were in the utmost state of excitement & the least thing would have fired them, & then riots must have followed.

Practised, read & drew all day. The baby is to be fed now, previous to weaning him, & I spent ever so long messing and mixing & boiling his food for him; I fancy it will not be easy to make the nurse take so much trouble when she has so much easier a mode of satisfying him. I shall hail the hour when I wash my hands of my last wet nurse. Frank Wells (Francis Wells, afterwards & long asst. editor of Evening Bulletin) dined with us as usual, bringing more details from town. The newspapers are filled with reports but for the most part one paragraph contradicts the preceding. Despite the gusts of wind & rain Charles (Chas. Jones Wister, Jr., my brother-in-law), Frank & I went over to the Lutheran Church to the first singing class. Mr. Bishop[13] was there in the lecture room with his blackboard, but only Charles & Kate Reichel besides. The lesson was interesting. We brought Mr. Bishop home to take a glass of sherry & sing to us a little before he went into town.

April 17, 1861 Snowing heavily but melting as it fell great part of the morning. Rained & snowed at intervals all day. Gov. Curtin of Penn. has come out with a spirited Proclamation in reply to the President's, & now—to arms. Practised & read in the morning; long visit from Hartman Kuhn (called Hartman Kuhn 3rd, son of Mr. Charles Kuhn), the first in three months: despite his

10 Sons of Thomas Butler King. John Floyd King (1842–1915) attained the rank of colonel in the Confederate Army.

11 Gen. George Cadwalader was married to a sister of Pierce Butler. Judge John Cadwalader was his brother. Both were identified as strong Democrats.

12 Gen. Robert Patterson (1792–1881) and Wm. B. Reed were, like the Cadwaladers, leading Democrats.

13 Thomas Bishop, professor of music.

Southern sympathies & Loco Foco tendencies, patriotism & feeling for the Union supersede everything else now: he & Hamilton had both planned going to Europe in the autumn, but now enlisting is their only idea.[14] He mentioned a number of the young men who have already joined the volunteer companies or are forming others. We were glad by way of relief to speak a little of the opera which is here this week, with Colson, Phillips, & the two new little prima donne Kellogg & Hinckley, with Brignoli, Ferri, &c. they give La Juive, Linda, & then Ballo in Maschera only.[15] Unfortunately his criticisms were not good for much as in all matters of art he is one of those people who are "forever learning & never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." After lunch went to town, to the dressmaker's, & to the Philadelphia Library to get the life of Cornelius Agrippa. Chestnut Street is a sight; flags large & small flaunt from every building, the dry-goods shops have red white & blue materials draped together in their windows, in the ribbon stores the national colors hang in long streamers, and even the book sellers place the red, white, and blue bindings together; the streets are filled with a crowd of idle, eager, hurrying, lounging, talking, listening people, men & women, old & young, rich & poor, wherever there is a telegraph office, there is a regular jam at the corner to read the last message which has just been pasted up on a board, though I suppose few of them are true & most absolutely invented in the office. Came out at 5½ with Cousin William (William Wister of Belfield). Evening, Charles came down with his violin, miserable dictu, & we practised for some time, & then played a while.

April 18, 1861 An exquisite morning, before noon had clouded over & was gray & gloomy, but just at sunset cleared beautifully for a couple of hours. Our newspaper stolen from the door step again this morning; an odd evidence of the eagerness for news, & yet there is nothing reliable in the prints after all. The only real

[14] Hartman Kuhn, an 1849 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and then of the Harvard Law School, died in Rome in 1870 as the result of a fall from a horse. His brother James Hamilton Kuhn, an 1857 University of Pennsylvania graduate, was killed in battle in 1862 near Richmond.

[15] The Italian Opera was playing at the Academy of Music. Madame Pauline Colson, Miss Isabella Hinkley, and Miss Adelaide Phillipps were featured. *Un Ballo in Maschera* was a new work by Verdi.

intelligence is the stirring account of the simultaneous rising of the people in arms in response to the Government's demand for troops; the regulars from New England & New York are beginning to come on already & countless companies of volunteers are forming everywhere. The rumours from the South are innumerable & incredible; the one idea seems to be that they will certainly march on Washington. Virginia has decided at last, as absurdly & ludicrously as she has hitherto held back; North Carolina, Kentucky, & Missouri refuse to comply with the President's demand for troops, some of the Governors in very insolent terms, some laughably enough, speaking of waging a fratricidal war upon the South just as if the Rebels hadn't begun it. Of course there are reports of disaffection among the slaves, but nothing is known positively. The daily resignations from the army & navy are lamentable. These are the least comprehensible, the least excusable; those men have been homeless, wandering over land or sea for the greater part of their lives; the country has fed, has clothed, has sheltered them, not one particular state or city; they are more than any others her children. Of course they enter the Southern Service immediately, & make use of the education given them by this Government, against it. There have been some sudden & most amusing conversions within forty-eight hours. Two extreme cases being Gordon Bennet[16] & Wm. B. Reed. The former really deserves not only life but a livelihood for his matchless impudence; the latter I suppose has felt that hereditary halter, that noose which has been hanging over his treacherous race for three generations brushing unpleasantly near his head; the Sword of Damocles was a joke to it. There is a Treason law out which will keep people very straight. Drew, read, & practised in the morning; in the afternoon when it cleared took a walk, did some errands, & paid Sarah Wister (My sister-in-law, semi-invalid, demi-malade imaginaire) a visit. On coming in found a note from William Moss,[17] who was to have dinner with us, saying that the Washington Grays which he has joined may be ordered off tonight & that he cannot be out of the way. This brought it home dreadfully & depressed me

[16] James Gordon Bennett (1795–1872), editor of the *New York Herald*, had been in favor of letting the seceding states go.

[17] Dr. William Moss of 1320 Walnut Street, one of the diarist's closest friends.

very much. Mr. Weber[18] came in the evening, & I played nearly three hours with him, two of Mozart's Sonatas, one of Beethoven's, & those beautiful bothersome arrangements of the Huguenots & Midsummer night's dream.

April 19, 1861 Very disagreeable, cloudy, windy, dusty, gritty, as all the week has been. Well the Quakers have had it all their own way this week. I hope Spring may be allowed to come in next Sunday. Bessie Kane's cards arrived this morning; Pat returned last night from the South with Mrs. Joshua Fisher.[19] Read, wrote, practised & drew all the morning. Visit from Emily Wells (Sister of Francis Wells). Later, from Lizzie Mitchell (Daughter of Dr. J. K. Mitchell). In the afternoon we dined at Champlost, my Mother, Owen (mirabile dictu!) Cousin William, Lizzie Livingston née Fisher, & her Sister Sally (Daughter of Mr. Coleman Fisher).... Terrible news has come today; the Massachusetts men who passed through Philadelphia last night, & went with some unarmed Philadelphia troops to Washington, were set upon by the mob in Baltimore, insulted & pelted for hours, & finally fired upon—two men were killed, more wounded; then they fired upon the mob. Some of the column fell. They managed to push through, but now the Marylanders are tearing up the tracks & burning down the bridges, & the Mayor of the City of Baltimore & Governor of the State hitherto staunch Union men now refuse to oppose the State or permit more troops to pass. This has raised the excitement to delirium. Everyone is enlisting in at least the Home Guard. Willy Wister is raising a company of cavalry, all the young gentlemen of the neighborhood will belong to it.[20]

April 20, 1861 Everything by turns, warm, chilly; sunny, cloudy. More particulars of the outrages in Baltimore. It seems the mob attacked our unarmed men, also that they pelted the Massachusetts men with paving stones for two hours as they marched

18 Charles Weber, professor of music.

19 Mrs. Joshua Francis Fisher of Alverthorpe was the former Eliza Middleton, daughter of Gov. Henry Middleton of South Carolina. In March Pierce Butler escorted her to Charleston.

20 William Rotch Wister ultimately failed to enlist enough men in his troop at Chestnut Hill. Subsequently he served as Lt. Col. of the 20th Pa. Cavalry and became a distinguished lawyer.

from station to station; finally they shot a soldier in cold blood; then the ranks fired. Another regiment of Yankees passed through town last night mad to avenge their friends, & the great New York 7th Regiment, the flower of their young men, & a splendidly drilled body to boot arrived in Philadelphia last night & leave today, & meanwhile are foraging for their day's rations which they have been ordered to collect; everyone who knew of it sent them their dinner, breakfast or whatever there was in the larder.

Attended to my usual household weekly duties, paying bills, giving out stores &c. Then went to town with Mother at 11 in the train, shopped & visited. Went with Molinara[21] to the Germania Rehearsal. The programme was good; but the benches not more than two thirds' full, a great contrast to the last time I went there. The first piece was to be the overture by Reissinger, The Shipwreck of the Medusa, but instead, the band broke out with Hail Columbia; everyone rose of course, the enthusiasm was immense, the very women stamped & screamed. How strange it seemed; that air which had never said one word to me before, caused all the blood to curdle round my heart, & my whole frame to thrill & vibrate strangely. Owen, who had come to town to buy a musket, which of course he couldn't procure, met me after the concert & we came out together at 5½. Tonight he began drilling. Cousin William dined with us, & when Charles dropped in we got up a sleepy game of whist. It appeared that they had a funny time at the Town Meeting last night. In the midst of speeches, good & bad which were being made, a certain peppery Democrat of our neighborhood (Mr. John Littell), not one week ago a Secessionist, rose to vindicate the honour of a certain big, braggart Virginian (St. George Hopkins, M.D.), who has been blowing & bullying about after the manner of his people, all winter; now he "wishes to cast the slander back in the teeth of his defamers," seized a Star Spangled banner & cried "long may it wave o'er the land of the free & the home of the brave." Poor bully! He's frightened to death of course. What fools those Southerners are to talk of courage when there's not one in hundreds has one grain of moral courage or even understands the term. This fellow no doubt would fight a duel, but is scared into eating his

[21] One of the diarist's closest friends, Molinara was Mary Noronha.

own words by the threat of a mob, & the fear of losing his practise. There was some talk of visiting him among the crowd last Monday, but his prudent father-in-law (Mr. Frederick Brown) hurried out with a flag which now waves over his happy home.

April 21, 1861 A pleasanter day than we have had yet & yet the sun was too hot for so cool a wind, or vice versa. A longing for home violets came over me, so instead of going to church I walked or rather wandered deviously over to Butler Place, while the good carpet dealers (the Ormes, our tenants) were safe with the Presbyterians in Germantown.[22] I found them, the violets, in their old place in the kitchen garden, not so large & sweet as in more genial weather, but still finer than any others, with a richer purple & a sweeter perfume. I picked quite a bunch & strayed back with them. It always seems strange to me to go to that place, & now how much stranger than ever, that dear place; next to Owen, Father & Fan I love it above all things; I had the strongest yearning towards it to-day, before long it may be confiscated, for who knows whether even now Father is not in the Southern Army?

April 22, 1861 Lovely day at last though almost too hot all of a sudden. Some authentic good news this morning, the Government have reinforced Fts. McHenry & Monroe taken possession of the telegraph lines & railroads between here & Baltimore, the direct route is destroyed but they go round by Harrisburgh. The Gosport navy yard has been destroyed by the promptness of old Prendergast,[23] & the Government is seizing all the steamers, sloops & vessels of all descriptions, scuttling & sinking such as cannot be rescued & might be of use to the Southerners. They have taken possession of several of our men of war already unfortunately & some with arms & provisions. No matter, there are reports of 1500 Sharpe's muskets in private possession in Philadelphia, Charles Macalester's it is said, to be put at public disposal, & 8000 more in the Frankford Arsenal, & many more exported from England. There is a report that Uncle George's fine place in Maryland has been burned by the mob, & his splendid cattle & game all destroyed; it

22 John F. Orme and Edward B. Orme owned a carpet warehouse at 519 Chestnut Street.

23 Capt. Garrett J. Pendergrast died in 1862, the year he retired after fifty years service in the Navy.

will be a great pity, but will add considerable zeal to his services.[24] Read & practised: Owen drove me to pay a wedding call on Mrs. Elliston Morris: after all, she does not strike me as too good for him, a good humoured, common sensible, country girl; he with his oily voice talked the first real Quakerism I have heard on this matter, non-resistance to the last. Walked home, & nearly melted by the way. Afternoon, drove with Mother to Belfield & Wakefield,[25] & then stopped to see Mrs. Henry about the sewing for the soldiers, but nothing has been set on foot yet. On reaching home found Mrs. Jones[26] who had come out all distraught to hear if we had news of Fanny; she had tried to write & telegraph to her, but been told at both offices that there was no communication. Later Mrs. Dan. Smith (Mrs. Daniel B. Smith, Hester Morton of R.I.) came in, she feels all this sadly, said she wished she had only died a fortnight ago when she was so ill, but she is full of spirit, says she sometimes forgets she is a woman & a Quaker. Charles came in in the evening & helped me make out my wretched accounts, lamer & more behind than ever. We are falling into shocking habits among all this excitement, rising early to hear the news, sitting half the morning over the newspapers, dining at any time between 6 & 7, & not leaving the parlour till midnight, Owen sometimes bringing three or four friends, or members of the family home from drill, sometimes coming alone & rushing out again to hear the last news, or pay some professional visit.

April 23, 1861 Went to town at 11 with Mother to see Mrs. Sam Ward (Mrs. S. G. Ward, Anna Barker) who is in town for a day or two. She looks more ill & haggard than I have ever seen her, but Lilly (Later Baroness Richard von Hoffman) has grown tall, filled out & is quite fine looking besides having acquired a very pleasing manner; they say that she too is becoming a Roman Catholic. They say that their daily letters from home speak of the frenzy which the news of the murder of the Mass. men in Baltimore

24 Gen. George Cadwalader owned a vast farming estate in Maryland. His house at Maxwell's Point was destroyed by arson. Doubts about his zeal for the Union cause were unwarranted.

25 Belfield was the William Wister property and Wakefield that of William Wister's father-in-law, William Logan Fisher. Both houses have survived the years.

26 Mrs. Jones ran the boarding house where Pierce Butler and his daughter Frances stayed.

created in Boston, all the men have enlisted, & the women are all sewing night & day to get them ready. William Moss in undress uniform, hot & dirty from drilling rushed into a shop where he saw me & drove to the 1 o'clock train with us, talking at the top of his voice without stopping to breathe, the whole way. He mentioned dozens of young fellows of our acquaintance who are in the Grays. John Markoe, the Biddles, Baches, & numbers more. He expressed a sentiment which for the last few days I have noticed is obtaining very widely, a cheerfulness & content in spite of the most depressing rumours, the desire of fight, the venom & rancour towards the South which was becoming a morbid feeling from want of a vent has passed into a frank, active, healthy soldier spirit now that the drilling occupies everybody's time & thoughts, & that there is a prospect of settling scores. As he said, "I don't hate them half as much now as I did a month ago because I shall have a chance of fighting them."

Pat Kane has joined the First Troop! John is giving him riding lessons![27] Now the grand paradox of Pat's life has arrived, for "if things fall out thus & so, I shall learn to ride on horseback," has always been his way of saying "when the sky falls we shall catch castles." Oh dastard that he is, he needs a coat of many colours indeed, & what he has acquired, the deftness of a Harlequin in turning it. Where are the muskets that he & John declared at Alverthorpe not six months ago they would shoulder, & march to fight for the South in case what has come to pass should come? There is a hereditary curse in your family too oh Pat! Not three generations old it is true, since you cannot boast a grandfather, but it will never catch you, an eel can hardly be hung, dignity has never been your summum bonum, & agility which has, has stood you in good stead!

Frank Wells came out to dinner & went over with me to the singing class; all the ladies came, but two of our men have deserted to the drill. The lesson was interesting touching on those profound truths which underlie music as much as astronomy. A soft summer

[27] R. Patterson Kane was one of thirty men who joined the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry on Apr. 19, 1861. "John" is a reference to John Cadwalader (1843–1925). Both were to marry daughters of Joshua Francis Fisher.

night, all moonlit. We brought Mr. Bishop home with us, & made him sing "By Celia's Arbour," & then he, Mother (who had been spending the evening at Champlost) & Frank tried that lovely thing of Horsley's, "When shall we three meet again."[28]

April 24, 1861 Very warm bright morning; spring is fairly coming on with a rush. Practised & read. Had a succession of visitors this morning: Miss Rawle (Daughter of Burge Rawle) & Mrs. Williams (His niece), the China folks, Mary Holsman (Mrs. Dan Holsman, Mary Markoe), Mrs. Mitchell & Mrs. Harry Ingersoll. It was funny to hear their different opinions of the present state of things; the Rawles gave an account which was a mere epitome of the whole situation, of a Southern family who are lodging at the same house with them detained apparently by want of means to go home; the greatest care has been taken not to say a word or discuss a topic which might be disagreeable to them; politics has been a forbidden theme, no small effort of self-denial at such a time, the return for which they appear at table in Secession badges, invoke destruction on the North, & are so insulting & intolerable in their whole tone that the other boarders have been obliged almost to give up speaking to them. Mary Holsman is very lukewarm of course, feels no bitterness against the South, could not fight against were she a man, but confessed to a certain thrill if she happened to see "our unusually large flag" floating above her; Holsman is drilling with a N. J. Company to which he already belonged. Mrs. Ingersoll's flitting, fluttering style made the seriousness of her subject almost comic; her husband being a silent man may change his course without entering upon any explanation, which is not his custom; he is a member of the Committee for Public Safety; she, however, it being her nature to talk & not keep silence, is constrained to make all sorts of airy apologies, defenses & justifications, still ringing the changes on "we cannot help feeling with the South," & "My husband is doing everything he can in the cause of the Union."

We are perfectly tormented by rumours; it would be a wise thing if one had the strength for it, to resolve to listen to no news & read

28 William Horsley (1774–1858), English musician, was also the composer of "By Celia's Arbour."

no papers for a week together. We should know all the real events & save ourselves from these exhausting rises & falls of expectation. One story, that the Southern forces are in possession of Arlington Heights is contradicted by Sanford (Henry Shelton Sanford of Derby, Conn., formerly chargé d'aff. in Paris, later U.S. Minister to Belgium) who comes up from Washington having driven all about the vicinity for ten miles round the day before & not seen a sign of them. Then there is a story of Col. Fremont's having arrived in N.Y. from Europe,[29] with no one knows how many thousand stands of arms, then this is blown to the winds, & if Gen. Scott said half the things that are said for him he would be contradicting himself faster than he could speak. The most ridiculous propositions for ending the controversy are offered; to submit it to the arbitration of the English minister, & better still to take a counsel of the surviving Ex-Presidents Van Buren, Tyler, Pierce, Fillmore & Buchanan to decide the difficulty! These things really sound more like something from Punch than suggestions made in sober sadness. There is a fear arising that the Government will allow no fighting, & that the thing is to be patched up peaceably. That will be a terrible experiment & will probably only end in a general Revolution; the war spirit is roused throughout the whole country; the troops which are awaiting orders are even now chafing with impatience, & to disperse these men now with their sense of wrong unappeased, & the consciousness of all Europe looking on & laughing at our mock-fight, would be to scatter seeds of dissension ripe to bursting over the whole country, & burst they would & grow into armed bands, & we should have all the horrors of indiscriminate plunder & pillage, & such a thing as has never been seen before in the world.

Torrents of rain fell in the afternoon keeping us indoors & laying the dust delightfully. In the evening we went over to Wakefield where were in addition to the usual party, Mr. & Mrs. Sidney Geo. Fisher & Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Eustis of Boston. Mrs. Eustis told one delightful story which is probable, though of course not true, that Mrs. Lincoln on arriving at the White House & observing its dimensions said, "Abe, I guess we'll have to keep another gal."

[29] John Charles Frémont (1813–1890), explorer, politician, and soldier, served without distinction as a major general in the Civil War.

Sidney George blew & puffed himself up, & was as consequential & inconsequent as usual;[30] they think him a great man but she is the man of the two with her fine strong head & brow, & sweet, semi-satirical smile. It seemed dull without Willy & Frank Wister, but both were drilling: I trust that those two old people (Mr. & Mrs. William Logan Fisher) who have seen the young men of their own name fall away one by one may not be doomed to behold the other set of grandsons also plucked off before their prime. Langhorne took them by surprise by appearing here a day or so ago to procure arms, clothing &c for a troop of upwards of seventy Duncannon men of whom he is captain.[31] It is not the only family near us however which has sent their sons to the Services; the Newhalls & Welshes each number three in the ranks.

April 25, 1861 Warm day but almost unpleasantly windy. Owen is dull this morning at the news of the scuttling & sinking of the Plymouth & Dolphin, the two vessels in which he sailed, down at Portsmouth.[31a] A number of fine ships have been destroyed to save them from the Secessionists, among others the Germantown, Merrimac & Pennsylvania; the latter has never made a cruise; she is the largest finest ship of her sort ever built I believe, but was too expensive for use. This state of things is most unsettling. . . . Went to town at 12 o'clock to shop, pay visits & go to Bessie's (Bessie Kane, married the Rev. Chas. Shields, D.D.) reception. To the latter I drove absolutely quivering with nervousness, & my recollections are confused & chaotic.[32] Bessie most lovely in her white dress & veil, blushing & bridelike with her honest eyes & bright smile, Pat (R. P. Kane) bowing, John (J. K. Kane, M.D.) glowering, Mabel Bayard (Daughter of Hon. Jas. A. Bayard,[33] afterwards Mrs. J. K. Kane jr. & Mrs. Lewis Bird) & Lily Fisher (Daughter of Mrs. J. Francis Fisher, afterwards Mrs. R. P. Kane) in elegant white

30 An entertaining picture of Fisher, the now noted diarist, pontificating.

31 Langhorne Wister (1834–1891) achieved the rank of brigadier general in the Civil War. The Wister family had a large interest in the Duncannon Iron Works in Perry County.

31a Dr. Wister had served as an Assistant Surgeon in the Navy from 1848 to 1851.

32 The diarist's nervousness stemmed from her dislike of the Kanes, particularly of John Kane with whom she had once been on intimate terms.

33 James A. Bayard (1799–1880), United States Senator 1851–1869, a conservative Republican who opposed most antislavery measures and who eventually returned to the Democratic Party.

toilettes perfect specimens of high breeding. Mrs. Kane & all the old aunts & cousins chattering, people elbowing & pushing, & a pervading perfume of orange blossoms. It was all over in a moment. We were in the house & out of it again almost instantaneously, & the relief was unspeakable. . . .

The mail brought me a long letter from my Flori (Florence Bayard, daughter of Hon. J. A. B., afterwards Mrs. Benoni Lockwood) full of the anxieties & alarms they have endured at Wilmington & with sad misgivings as to the end of it all: Mr. Lockwood is very anxious that she, Mabel & their Mother should come up to Chestnut Hill at least for the present, but Mrs. Bayard will not leave in her husband's absence, & the girls will not leave their mother. . . .

After dinner Mother read us the latter part of the Midsummer Night's Dream. Owen & Charles were audience & I played Mendelssohn's music in the interludes. She read it less well than I ever heard her, & I though it seems ridiculous tc speak of our performances in the same breath, played unusually ill; but what music it is, & what poetry!

April 26, 1861 Very warm & bright. This being the last day of Mother's visit she was very busy, packing, going for the last time to the dentist & paying her farewell visits. As soon as she went out I betook myself to the room where the ladies were sewing for the soldiers. They had been a week endeavoring to get up some organization & held three meetings, & finally given it up being told that there were more hands than were wanted for the work already, & more work than would be needed. Some more energetic than the rest however went to town (where the Girard House[34] has been appropriated to the purpose & ladies & seempstresses are sewing there day & night) saw the Quarter Master, & got a quantity of coats & haversacks & the girls were busy upon them all day yesterday. I found them in the Temperance Hall, a large room in the third story of a factory building in Mill Street, some forty or fifty, all as busy as bees, some cutting out, some basting, some distributing, some at work with sewing machines some with their needles. I sewed for a couple of hours & then came home to lunch. In the

[34] One of the city's principal hotels, the Girard House was located at 833 Chestnut Street.

afternoon I wrote a long letter to my Janet (Daughter Mr. D. D. Field of New York & Stockbridge, Mass., afterwards Lady Musgrave, wife Sir Anthony Musgrave, K.C.M.G. Colonial Governor of Nevis, Newfoundland, British Columbia, Natal, Adelaide, Jamaica & Brisbane) who writes that she cannot come on owing to the state of affairs. She is all excitement of course, has been sewing on a flag presented by the young ladies to the 7th Regiment, & is now at work on soldiers' clothes, & rubbing up her knowledge of nursing in hopes of being allowed to go down to Washington & help take care of the sick & wounded. She is miserable about Dudley who was elected to a Rifle corps formed by the young men of his own set, but was obliged to decline by his little wife & her foolish mother; poor little Laura's situation increased tenfold her natural nervousness, unreason & exigeance; Dudley was full of enthusiasm & never had a moment's hesitation about joining, for whatever his faults, courage & spirit he has in double measure, but one stormy scene followed another with Laura & Mrs. Belden, & at last the poor little thing went to bed ill with excitement & threatened with a miscarriage, so he sullenly gave it up. I do not know how I shall get through the spring without a visit from Janet, & wrote to urge it exceedingly, adducing the excellent example of the ladies of the Revolution who stayed all about the country with their friends even at the height of the conflict. Went again for an hour in the afternoon to the sewing room. I am much mistaken if the soldiers do not find cause to regret the ladies' enthusiasm, some of the sewing machine work was hastily & inefficiently finished off & it will infallibly all rip out.

Hartman Kuhn spent the evening with us; he & Hamilton are both in the First Troop. Charles, Willy, & Frank Wister dropped in after the drill, & remained here quite late. Then, as if we had not sufficient excitement without that, Owen in a moment of insanity begged Mother to prolong her visit. She had made all her arrangements to go tomorrow morning, her trunks are packed, her carriage ordered, while I have engaged a parcel of chimney sweeps, chorewomen & upholsterers to come on Monday & clean the house & get it ready for summer. Of course there was a scene. She said she would stay if I wished, as long as I wished, & of course I was placed by my silence in the agreeable posture of declining a further visit.

I froze hard as usual, & went to bed more angry with Owen for his thoughtlessness & folly than I have been since our marriage.[35]

April 27, 1861 I . . . drove down to the Kensington depot with Mother to see her off at 11½. There was a row with the maid, an alarm about the luggage, a wrench at parting, & at last she was gone. I wish I could say: Peace go with her, but that it never will. Poor Mother! I took the passenger cars & went down to town where I had a morning of shopping & visiting before me. . . . In the course of the morning I met Mr. Kuhn, & was glad to be able to tell him of my own immense relief in hearing from Fan this morning. She wrote on the 19th from Darien where she had stopped from one steam-boat day till the next to see Father whom she describes as installed there in a boarding house (Heaven save the mark) where he is the only lodger, comfortably awaiting the arrival of all the keys of the trunks & chests which are at Butler's Island, which he left behind him here & has had to telegraph for. Thank goodness she says nothing of any talk of his joining the Confederate army, & speaks confidently of being here next week. She has not received my three last letters & does not know which of hers I have got. She thinks that the taking of Ft. Sumter will put an end to hostilities as the North will see that the South is in earnest, & is so very unwilling to fight, itself!!! She will open her eyes a little when she arrives here & finds every man of her acquaintance enlisted. Molinara & I went to the Germania with William Moss. The programme was not very good & the performance broken up by various things, a woman fainting, the presentation of a pair of pistols to Lentz the leader,[36] who had joined the Washington Grays, with the stupidest of speeches by Fitzgerald of the City Item.[37]

April 28, 1861 Sunny morning, cloudy, stormy, rainy & cold later. Rose late quite tired out, read, wrote & played with the baby all the morning, dined at Mr. Wister's & sat with Sarah till 4 o'clock, a pour of rain preventing my going to church. Willy Wynne (W. W. Wister, jr., my husband's half-brother) & Edmond Robinson (Ed. Randolph Robinson) walked out to see me. The former only stayed

35 The diarist did not find her mother an easy house guest.

36 William B. Lentz, conductor.

37 Thomas Fitzgerald, newspaper publisher.

a few minutes, the latter remained to tea, to which came Charles also, & did not go until 9½. Of course we talked politics a great deal, & although we differ very much from him it was a pleasure to hear anyone discuss so rationally & dispassionately. He is against war, for disunion, & cannot feel any hostility to the South where half his family & all his early associations are, but still is anything but a Southerner in the view he takes of the whole position. . . . I have heard two stories about our flag within a few days which curiously illustrate the difference between Northern & Southern feelings: half a dozen Southern school-girls, very young were leaving Bethlehem where they were at boarding school on the first breaking out of this trouble some two weeks ago: on getting into the cars they saw some little national flags stuck about the windows, they rushed upon them, tore them down, stamped & spat upon them: the other was of Sophie Fisher (Daughter of Mr. Joshua Francis Fisher, afterwards Mrs. Eckley Coxe) who was standing at the window of her uncle's house on the Battery at Charleston,[38] when Ft. Sumter surrendered, & burst into tears as she saw the Stars & Stripes lowered: her aunt ridiculed her for affectation & sentimentality.

April 29, 1861 A lovely day indeed, especially the afternoon. My housecleaning troubles began this morning, a woman scrubbing & whitewashing the garrets, & chimney sweeps up the flues. The latter filled all the rooms with such an avalanche of soot, despite all precautions, that it took two of the women a couple of hours to clean them afterwards, & obliged me to dress entirely immediately after breakfast. Then I went up to the Sewing Room where to my great joy I found Elizabeth & Susan Stevenson (Orphan cousins of my husband's living with their grandfather Mr. John Wister) among others, so I sat down with them & sewed for about two hours. . . . We were in high glee too about a report which seemed pretty well authenticated that ex-Senator Mason who has been here incog. last week about his wife's property has been arrested at Perrysville & brought back to Philadelphia.[39] The best of the joke is that old

38 Williams Middleton, owner of Middleton Place as well as a house on the Battery.

39 James Murray Mason (1798–1871) of Virginia married Elizabeth Margaretta Chew in 1822. Elected to the Senate in 1849, he continued to serve in it until Virginia seceded. He was associated with John Slidell as Confederate diplomatic commissioners to Europe. The report here of Mason's arrest was in error.

Ben Chew set the police on his track, knowing that some bill or mortgage was about falling due & that his brother-in-law must needs come on to look after it. What a satisfactory wiping out of old scores for that rascally old Ben if it is true![40] . . . I had a letter from Father this morning dated several days before Fan's, from Darien however, & giving me an account of his latest difficulties with Aunt Ella (Mrs. John Butler, daughter of Col. Morris of Morrisania, granddaughter of Gouverneur Morris) in which as usual she has behaved like the goose she is; her mauvaise langue makes her a very dangerous bird however, & irritates & incenses people who otherwise would only pity her.[41]

May 1, 1861 Letter from Mother; she says that the outward demonstration in N.Y. is far less than here—fewer flags & cockades—but a ceaseless reviewing, drilling, & departure of troops day & night. She saw the firemen's regiment go, a fine set of fellows with their beautiful pair of colours from Mrs. Astor. She says that measured tramp is so familiar to her everywhere else in the world, but so strange here, & hitherto only heard in token of some holiday that it affects her unspeakably. . . .

May 2, 1861 Very cold indeed, though clear. Frost & even ice last night, & all the little fanlike sprays of leaves drooping piteously. . . . On reaching home I found to my great joy a telegram from Fan dated yesterday to say that she left on that day for home by the Western route. Mr. Henry Fisher (Charles Henry Fisher) had received it in town & sent it out by private hand. Owen found a message from Robt. Haines (R. B. Haines) to go over there this evening, so I said I would go with him as far as Brookwood to thank Mr. Fisher for this trouble.[42] It was very cold, but there was a lovely light in the sky against which the trees with their young leaves stood out their branches fringy like the calices of a moss rose . . . we talked freely of the latest event which sad to say is

[40] Benjamin Chew (1793–1864), grandson of the Chief Justice and brother-in-law of Senator Mason, was estranged from other members of the Chew family.

[41] Mrs. John Butler, a noted beauty and widow of Pierce Butler's brother who had died in the Mexican war, was the former Gabriella Manigault Morris—hence "Aunt Ella."

[42] Charles Henry Fisher, brother of Sidney George Fisher, was a prominent businessman and a close friend of Pierce Butler. On Butler's failure in 1856, Henry Fisher, Gen. George Cadwalader, and Capt. Thomas C. James were appointed trustees to handle Butler's affairs. Fisher's lavish estate on Green Lane was called Brookwood.

Lt. Maury's defection.[43] He went in the most dishonourable way, remaining with the Secretary of the Navy talking business up till the last moment without giving a hint of his intention, & packing up & decamping before he sent in his resignation; it appears immediately that he has been removing buoys & other land marks, or rather water marks in important places, & seems to have behaved altogether very villainously. His resignation has not been accepted, he is in the position of a deserter in time of war, & if he is caught let him look out for his neck. Several men have been executed in & about Washington within a week, two pilots hung on board a man of war for trying to run the vessels containing the 7th N.Y. & one of the Mass. regiments ashore where they would fall into the hands of the Secessionists; & three more shot for filling shells with sand instead of powder at the Washington Navy Yard. If capital punishment is ever justifiable, which must be a grave doubt, I think, to every real Christian, certainly it is in such cases & circumstances as these. . . .

May 3, 1861 Heard that Tom Kane has come down with a ragged regiment from Elk, Potter, & McKean counties in his old capacity of Colonel. I cannot but believe in him. He has never paltered like the others. Went up to the depot at 3 o'clock to meet Florence (Florence Bayard). Ben[44] was with her & they came down together through the rain which was now pouring, & he stayed till 4½ when she & I were left together till half past nine to talk to our hearts' content. Owen going to his drill immediately after dinner. Flori is very sad of course much worried about her father; he has not yet returned from the South though on his way & expected daily. She says that his letters show how far he is from realizing the state of things; she says he did not take the oath of allegiance to the Southern Confederacy at Montgomery Ala. though he went thither on his route to New Orleans on business of his own. He has not the least idea of the position in which he will find himself on his return, obliged to disavow his Southern sympathies, or leave Wilmington at once & forever. She of course will be married at once, & remain. Mabel declares that she will do so too; Mrs.

43 Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806–1873), naval officer and oceanographer, tendered his resignation three days after Virginia seceded and entered the Confederate Navy.

44 Benoni Lockwood who married Florence Bayard on June 4, 1861.

Bayard says she cannot be separated from them, but in the issue will almost certainly cling to her husband. Tom Bayard (T. F. Bayard, afterwards Senator & Sec. of State)[45] is in the gloomiest & bitterest state of mind: he of course will leave the state, but for him it is not so bad, he carries his children, his wife & her fortune with him; he is young and begins life over again, though no longer as Bayard of Delaware. Flori says she would rather see her father dead than disowning his whole past life, & his real opinions, but she does not fear his doing so. Nor I, for there is a certain dignity about his rascality after all. Poor Flori is quite converted herself & has become a strong Northerner in the last six months, a pretty sufficient proof of how entirely affection & association influence her views, though of course she supports them cleverly enough. Ben arrived about 9½ & carried her off in an hour. . . .

May 4, 1861 But two months since Lincoln's Inauguration! & how much has passed. . . . There are some funny stories in vogue about the first City troop, who by the way have been sadly spited by finding that their superb uniforms & equipment will not be permitted in the regular service; all the recruits & half the old members had refitted themselves entirely. Moreover when they went to be examined they were 150 strong, & but 56 passed muster, nearly a round hundred were pronounced incapable.[46] The women all say that they, the First Troop, can't go to Washington unless they take Ellis the riding master's horses.[47]

May 5, 1861 Poor Mr. Kuhn was full of complaints about the First Troop. Capt. James seems to be on his last legs figuratively & literally. They say he could not stand a day's march, & his inveterate lying makes him the laughing stock of the whole corps. Poor fellow, for all the harm he has done us, I cannot but like him a little for his real good nature & amiability.[48]

45 Thomas Francis Bayard (1828–1898) also served as Ambassador to Great Britain.

46 These comments seem to be based on rumor rather than fact. The City Troop was not mustered until May 13, when more than eighty-six officers and men entered the service.

47 Livery stable keeper John Ellis.

48 Thomas C. James joined the City Troop in 1838 and was elected Captain in 1850. After the Troop was mustered out following its three-months service, he became lieutenant colonel and later colonel of the 9th Pa. Cavalry. His health broke and he died in 1863. Some of the diarist's bitterness about James was probably attributable to his role as one of her father's trustees.

May 6, 1861 I wearied myself out mind & body by spending two hours over a parcel of fashion plates & a heap of cast off raiment devising how I might make a new jerkin out of an old coat, for the tightness of the times in addition to my constitutional impecuniosity admonished me to make as much as I can out of what I have this summer. (My yearly allowance from the time I was twenty until 1867, when I was thirty-two, was $500.) But having neither talent nor taste for such work the task made me almost sick, & will result I am sure in some hideous toilettes. . . .

May 7, 1861 Had a letter from Flori Bayard speaking of her father's return, of his anxious & unsettled state of mind & of her own plans, which are now, to be married early in June, as quietly as possible. She enclosed a letter from her bright friend, Agnes Irwin,[49] describing their beleaguered state in Washington for the past two weeks; mails, telegraphs, everything cut off, an old Herald selling at a quarter of a dollar, great fear of provisions running short, days & nights of agony & alarm . . . to 11th & Market to meet dear Fan; car after car came rushing into the depot, the mules tramping, the bells jingling the men shouting, shoal after shoal of tired looking passengers got out, but no Fan. Dreadfully dispirited, & thinking that she could not arrive till 10 o'clock tonight I took a passenger car for Germantown, further refreshed by hearing that Mr. Bayard had been mobbed this morning, here, they say both the girls with him. On reaching home, there was Fan! She got in at 11 a.m. had quietly bathed, dressed & dined in town & come out at 5 this afternoon. She came by Kentucky, Tennessee & had not changed her clothes for six days, till this morning, & has not been in bed for six nights. Nevertheless she looks fat & fresh. Father went as far as Cincinnati, whence she & her maid came on with Mr. Phillips who had been in Savannah with his lady love. Fan says that at the extreme South everything is perfectly quiet; the excitement has quite died away, & increased steadily as they came Northward; in Cincinnati she says that she saw not only not a house, but hardly a window without a flag. The contrast between the Southern cities & ours she says is wonderful, in point of excitement. It has

49 Agnes Irwin (1841–1914), founder in 1869 of the girls' school which bears her name, and later first dean of Radcliffe College.

entirely receded from them. Of Father's plans she could say nothing as he told her nothing, seemed to have none himself. He returned to Darien after parting from her at Cincinnati. . . . The child went back to town at 9. . . . I had not a room or bed for her to sleep in. One bad piece of news. Henry Fisher has failed: he borrowed money to buy stocks after the State Elections in the fall, the presidential election & its unimaginable consequences followed, stocks fell to 0, his notes have come due, & he is broken.

May 8, 1861 . . . The Washington Grays left this morning, & they say there were sad scenes in Washington Square, where they mustered & at the depot at Broad & Prime: crowds of people went to see them off, hundreds & hundreds of ladies, the mothers & sisters of many of them; few of them are old enough to be married. Poor boys, I suppose the average age of the regiment is twenty-five. They went with Uncle George's brigade; first orders to Perryville, two days' rations; after that even the Colonels do not know their destination. Had a letter from Father written at Cincinnati the day before yesterday just after seeing Fan off, a short & most sad letter; also a few lines to Owen putting her under our charge, unspeakably desolate letters. Poor Father, poor poor Father.

May 9, 1861 There is a good deal of excitement in Germantown today on account of the illness of a number of one of the volunteer companies. They were ordered off two or three days ago, & the night before they were to leave some thirty of them, all who had supped at their usual resort, as well as the man who kept the place & his wife were taken violently ill. At first it was thought to have been merely a poor practical joke, as several of them recovered in a few hours, but others have remained very ill, & it is said today that one of them has died. The sugar & various other of the eatables of which they partook are being analysed. It will be a hideous thing if it is really an attempt at poisoning. Mrs. Hooper & her two girls arrived at 3 o'clock very miserable at having kept our lunch table an hour. They had been waiting half an hour at the passenger railway depot. Charles came down in time to carve for us (Owen had been obliged to go out) & then we all packed into a Germantown wagon & drove up to the barracks, stopping by the way to get half a dozen pies & a demijohn of milk for the heroes. We reached there just in the middle of the afternoon drill; there was not a very fine

turn-out, but sixteen of the thirty-eight being on the drill. I don't know why, but they were running & leaping their horses in a way that we found quite entertaining for an hour. There were a number of ladies belonging to the different members there—Mrs. Leedom, the Reichels, the Mrs. Newhalls & others; we were all seated on the stand giving us a fine view, for their parade ground is an old race course & their barracks the tavern appertaining thereto! Afterwards we went up to see their quarters; very good rooms but a Spartan simplicity of furniture, straw shake-downs & a pair of boots constituted the whole in every room that I saw. . . .

May 10, 1861 Beautiful morning; cloudy soon & torrents of rain in the afternoon & evening. Was busy the whole day literally in superintending & assisting putting away carpets putting up curtains &c. The servants despite their lofty pretentions are just as incompetent as if they had never lived in a house in their life, & so inattentive that they forget your orders while you are speaking & disobey them under your eyes. This is my first experience in house cleaning, & unless I secure some servant who can overlook & direct it before the autumn I think it will probably be among my last for I have not the physical strength for it nor the moral serenity; a few more years of such household worry like the last six months, & I shall have consumed the small vitality that remains of what I once thought that inexhaustible spring. (It lasted, trickling out, until 1881—& then went forever in a terrible nervous breakdown that ended in two years' melancholia.)

May 11, 1861 Went to town at 12. . . . Met Fan at Tompkins,[50] lunched & proceeded on our visits. We went to see poor Miss Gratz (Rebecca Gratz, the once famous Jewish beauty; it is said that Washington Irving's description of her appearance & character to Sir Walter Scott suggested the Rebecca of Ivanhoe) who had just lost one of her few remaining props in Julia Hoffman. She was calm, but very feeble, saying sadly "I thought she would have closed my eyes."[51] It is hard enough to see one's contemporaries drop away, but when the younger generations who were one's

50 William Tompkins, confectioner, 1106 Chestnut St.

51 Rebecca Gratz (1781–1869), pioneer Jewish charitable worker and noted beauty, often called "the foremost American Jewess of her day."

hope & stay begin to fall from us too it is desolation indeed. Her illness was severe, but the end was short painless & peaceful. . . . I fought violently with a dense crowd assembled to witness Major Anderson's procession, but did not see the hero himself for whom I have no enthusiasm since this absurd termination of the affair at Sumter. In fact I have no good qualities at all, small patriotism, no hero-worship & entire absence of curiosity. (There I misunderstood myself; as a child of six or seven in England I remember crying in secret over the taunts I heard on the subject of slavery. At the same period I began saving my pence to pay the Pennsylvania bonds, a naive scheme that all the children in America should unite in paying off the states & sectional debts.) I called on the Hoopers & took them to the Germania Concert; we heard some lovely music in spite of little Lentz's absence, an air from the Zaüberflöte, "O Isis & Osiris" which they played beautifully; the adagio from the 4th Symphony, so tranquilizing, & the overture to Lodoika which carried me back to my Father's quintet evenings twelve years ago, in Walnut Street. We left before the end and took the passenger cars to Fairmount, a most changed & improved place since I was last there, & thence the boat up the Schulykill. The afternoon was perfect & the scenery most lovely. We landed at Laurel Hill where Charles met us, & walked all over that & Fairy Hill which the Peppers have finally sold to the Laurel Hill Company. It was all most beautiful. I have never seen the dogwood in such perfection as this year. We lingered till sunset when they took the passenger cars to town & Charles drove me home, tired, tired to death but having enjoyed the rest & quiet of the afternoon exceedingly. . . .

May 12, 1861 The stories of the horsemanship of the First Troop are very funny, three or four of them fell off at the drill yesterday. Pat Kane was knocked from his seat by another man tipping over against him! This brave insists on having a white horse & scorns & flouts the representations of the greater amounts of risk incurred in action by the conspicuousness of the colour; a white horse he will have & none other. It appears that Tom Kane applied for Uncle George's post of Brigadier General! "Colonel Switch" indeed! Those men are beyond everything; nothing is too good for them, no post, no women.

May 13, 1861 Went up to the room where the ladies are sew-

ing for Miss Dix's Hospital Department. The ladies are allowed to take the things home, & consequently very few work there, Elizabeth & Susan, Mrs. Charlton Henry, & a nice little woman named Wright with two or three more were there, & set me at sewing pillowcases. They have closets full of night shirts, bed gowns, & nice calico double wrappers all beautifully finished, besides, pillowcases sheets, & Havelocks, a new thing here but such as the English soldiers wore in the Crimea to protect their head & neck from the sun, a loose round cap of light drilling with a cape like a sun-bonnet which fits over the fatigue cap. I sewed all the morning, came home to dinner, & sewed again the whole afternoon till past 7 o'clock. . . . Mrs. Wright . . . told me a funny story of two of her boys: the eldest who is about fourteen is a tremendous little patriot & politician & ever since the beginning of these troubles has been laying aside the newspapers (after reading them carefully) as containing the history of our present; a few days ago the next one, aged ten ran to her room saying: "Mother, I can't stand Willy; he takes all the newspapers to keep them for his children, & what are my children to do?" He will have reason enough to keep them to-day, for the Press contained the account of Jefferson Davis' Proclamation of War, not however published in full, but sophistical & tricky enough, as one could judge from the extracts. . . .

May 14, 1861 Note from Mr. Kuhn mentioning that the First Troop was mustered in yesterday. Uncle George leaves town to-day with the remainder of his Brigade of which part went on Thursday, no Wednesday of last week.

May 16, 1861 The news of the day is the arrest of the younger Wynans[52] of Baltimore for furnishing bullets &c to the Secessionists. Some few weeks ago there was a great excitement in Philadelphia on that same account; some miserable little merchant had been sending arms to the South & barely escaped the indignation of the mob, after which for several days ropes & nooses dangled ominously from the lampposts, but this is a different business; things have gone much further; the treason laws are in force, & this man is a millionaire & a member of the legislature of Maryland, on his way whence he was arrested yesterday afternoon. I shudder & shrink from the

52 Ross Wynans.

thought of capital punishment, which indeed is scarcely to be expected, but in such a case it would have a great & very general effect. Had a letter from Mary Duncan (Mrs. Henry Duncan of Miss., a well known beauty, afterwards Mrs. George Parrish) to-night, full of patriotism & Anti-Lincolism, & fustian & flummery, & verbiage & nonsense. Their pleasant plans of travel are rather frustrated. She remains on the plantation to console herself with her Northern views, & Mr. Duncan if there fights for the South of course. Charles came down latish & we played a game of whist.

May 18, 1861 Bright day but not warm, & most unpleasantly dusty. Went to market before breakfast, & spent the rest of the morning in counting clothes, adding accounts, giving out stores & finally in covering the pictures & looking glasses in the parlour with rose coloured net to protect them from flies & dust, a task which should have been done by the servants at least a week ago, but which I had become convinced would never be done at all unless I attended to it myself.

May 20, 1861 Drove with Owen to Mr. Leedom's & Fernhill[53] to complete a $50.00 collection which I pledged myself on Saturday to make for the Missouri & Kentucky Volunteers. Everyone is begging & working for them now, brave men who will fight for the Union but have neither arms or clothing as their governors both being Secessionists will furnish them with nothing. . . .

May 21, 1861 Stopped . . . to give in my subscription . . . & found a score of ladies hard at work on the grey flannel shirts for the Kentuckians & the Missourians. . . . The papers are full of reports of small hostilities already beginning from the Secessionists, a steamer on the Potomac fired upon by a concealed battery, another fired upon from the Pensacola Navy Yard. I suppose it is rapidly coming to a head. Jeanie Field's letter this morning was full of regret for the immediate return of the 7th. They left business, families, fiancées, everything at a moment's notice it is true, expecting to be absent but 70 days. The days have almost expired, & they are about to return, most of them merely to put their affairs in order & go back permanently to the seat of war, also in order to

[53] Probably B. J. Leedom of Germantown. Fern Hill was the Germantown property of Henry P. McKean.

disband that they may form again & elect other officers, their present set being very unpopular, the Colonel at least, but the populace who followed them with shouts & tears down Broadway will never consider all this when they see them marching up again with unfleshed swords; & even if they form again & return to Washington immediately, their prestige will be gone & no proofs of courage or endurance can restore it. . . .

May 22, 1861 Immediately after dinner Charles called for us, with Martha Milligen & we all drove up to the Chestnut Hill barracks. Very few, not a dozen in all, were drilling, half their horses being knocked up. We saw an exceedingly pretty sabre exercize however—though the sergeant's orders sounded rather grim "Cut at the level of a man's neck," &c, & some leaping which was quite exciting, the horses some of them being nearly unmanageable & the boys capital riders.

May 23, 1861 We are having severe lessons of the folly & ignorance of this hue & cry that has been raised about the ladies doing the army work to the exclusion of the poor; three pieces out of every five that are given out to sewing women, even those vouched for by persons capable of judging, is brought back in such a state as to be either wholly unfit for use, money & material both wasted, or requiring to be picked out & sewed over again by the ladies themselves, a discouraging piece of business.

May 24, 1861 Wrote all the afternoon, & sewed in the evening, discussing the news of the afternoon, sad news enough. The U.S. troops among others the Zouave Regiment from New York took Alexandria last night, & young Ellsworth, their Colonel, an uncommonly fine, intelligent fellow of only twenty-three, rather a remarkable man in his way, pulled down a Secession flag which was floating from the Marshall House, in coming down stairs he was shot by Jackson the proprietor of the Hotel, from an ambush, the wretched man was instantly bayonetted by the Zouaves, but their loss is very heartbreaking. He had been Captain of the Chicago Zouaves who went so triumphantly through the country six months ago exhibiting their perfect drill & manoeuvres, & he left off playing soldier with them for the real thing as soon as this trouble began, his regiment belongs to the N.Y. firemen's brigade a dauntless & desperate set, & their mourning for their young leader was frantic.

It will be a savage piece of work this war, for war it will be, is now indeed.[54]

May 25, 1861 Called for Molinara & went to the Germania Rehearsal. . . . The programme was good—overture to Semiramide, delicious waltzes by Lammer, the Andante from the 2nd Symphony, I think, the overture to the Hebrides or Fingal's Cave, some of that incomprehensible music of Wagner's (Wedding music from Lohengrin!—notes 1889), & in conclusion our National airs, played gloriously. They have an extraordinary effect on me now; I felt this morning as if I would lift my voice & fill the whole room & lead the entire assembled audience. When Yankee Doodle broke out it was a sort of reaction from the other two, everybody laughed, nodded time & finally I saw at least a dozen in different directions keeping time with their feet (we were all standing of course) heads & entire bodies, it seemed contagious too so that I had some apprehension of seeing the whole audience dancing like a community of Shakers.

May 27, 1861 Emily Dyer came to dine with me & in the afternoon Charles drove us up to the Chestnut Hill Barracks where we had been told there would be a very fine drill. There was an unusually large number on the field, the regular troop being augmented by a country company which had come to drill with them with a view of joining; their uniforms were gray with white pantaloons & bright saddle cloths & looked well mixed with the dark blue jackets & red caps of our men. But it was inexpressibly stupid; they performed all their evolutions in a walk, & had no leaping or sabre drill at all. . . . We sat there, bored to death, & every moment expecting something better, for an hour & a half, only enlivened by Charles Reichel's leaping his horse over the bar & ditch which he did beautifully; the animal had a sore back & could not bear the saddle, consequently could not drill, so master Charles rode him with merely a halter & surcingle, which was doing pretty well.

May 28, 1861 A very fine day, but almost too cool & breezy. Twenty-six to-day! What memories of old birthdays come over me.

54 Col. Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth had recruited a regiment from the New York volunteer firemen and had uniformed them like French Zouaves. He was killed at the Marshall House, Alexandria, by its proprietor, James W. Jackson, on May 24, 1861.

They must have haunted me in my sleep even, for all night I was dreaming of being again at Butler Place. Rose early went to the upper market, & to the gardener's for some flowers for Fan (My sister's birthday & mine fall together—she born in 1838, I in 1835). I can hardly realize that she is twenty-three to-day. The puss! with her short curling locks & baby mouth she does not look eighteen & I believe she spoke her whole soul when she said: "There's nothing in the world I would like to be as much as a news-boy." Feeling that it might be the last of these double birthdays we might spend together I looked all through my jewelry to find something for her, the only things which I had bought for myself were a little set of studs, pansies enamelled, & these I put on her plate at breakfast with the vase of flowers beside them. Mr. [Carroll] Livingston is to dine here & drive her up to the barracks, so she will have a happy day at least. I have a choking ball in my throat. Would have given worlds to write to Father, but know that there was no use. The communication being cut off, so wrote to Mother instead. . . .

May 29, 1861 We are a little amused by Uncle George's performances in Baltimore, arresting a citizen on suspicion of furnishing the Secessionists with some species of munition of war, & peremptorily refusing to recognize the writ of habeas corpus got out by the indignant fellow townsmen, or the summons to himself sent by Chief Justice Taney. I suppose that the Baltimoreans thinking they have had enough of that sort of thing with Ross Wynan's arrest, & disgusted with a new case resolved to put a stop to it at once; but they have not succeeded quite to their minds. Another arrest which quite grieved me tonight was that of Frank Markoe of Washington on suspicion of complicity with the treasonable & dishonest proceedings of the late Cabinet; that will be sad indeed if true.[55]

May 30, 1861 Fan went in at 8 to see the [City] Troop off & returned at 1 very much depressed. She described the scene, the double-line of carriages filled with the families & friends of the young men, the swarming crowd, chiefly of ladies & gentlemen, &

55 Francis Markoe (1801–1871) had long held a clerkship in the State Department. Married to a southerner, he was known to sympathize with the South, but treason could not be proved against him.

the Troopers themselves sitting patiently on their horses waiting for their captain, & singing, led by William Camac & William Angier the National Airs, & Vive l'America, & Happy & Gay, two airs which I do not know, but which are very popular at the present. When Capt. James arrived (their first lieutenant Butler Price had played them false & remained under pretext of being a Staff officer),[56] they moved slowly off two by two along the thronged street amid huzzas & adieus, to West Philadelphia where they were to take the cars, to Carlisle they supposed, for their orders are sealed. Carlisle is a pacific place, where they can at least learn to ride. Now what with the Washington Grays & First Troop both going, I have but two men friends, Brinton Coxe[57] & Frank Wells, left in Philadelphia. . . .

May 31, 1861 They are beginning to show great discontent & disaffection there [*at the barracks*]; two men left for the First Troop; two more resigned; two more have gone into the regular army. They are in earnest & anxious to be on the move, at least to know that they are accepted & will be mustered in, which they never will be now unless it is understood that they go for three years. This Willy Rotch [Wister] is unwilling to do, except at the very last pinch & this doing things by halves is spoiling the temper of the boys & hurting his own reputation; he has gone to war without counting the loss I fear. . . .

June 1, 1861 Afternoon went out driving with Owen, called at Wakefield. . . . Thence to Medary dropping Owen to pay a visit at Champlost. . . . It was an unsatisfactory visit. Mrs. Ingersoll spoke of Ellsworth's death so drily & coldly, "entirely his own fault; want of proper discipline; should have sent a drummer boy to take the flag down." Lizzie had a likeness of him in her photograph album, a singularly handsome person, fleshy of course.[58] The

56 R. Butler Price had been a member of the City Troop for more than thirty years. Later in 1861 he served as colonel of the 2nd Pa. Volunteer Cavalry, and was brevetted brigadier general at the end of the war.

57 Brinton Coxe (1833–1892), lawyer, collector, and scholar, was President of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania from 1883 until his death.

58 Medary was built by the Harry Ingersolls in 1847 on Green Lane near Fern Rock Station. "Lizzie" was Elizabeth Clarke who had been engaged to the Ingersolls' son George at the time he was killed in a railroad accident in 1855.

verdict of the coroner on the inquest held upon the body of Jackson, or whatever the murderer's name was, makes rather a funny story—"came to his death by wounds received in defending his house from burglars," a Virginia coroner of course. Lizzie Clarke told me of something she had seen in a paper about Robert Gilmor's (Afterwards Judge Gilmor of Baltimore; as he was exceedingly thin the uniform was probably his brother's) trunk being seized & found to contain an uniform of one of the Secession companies, pair of holster pistols, & compromising letters: the owner it was said could not be found, was supposed to be at Richmond; Lizzie said that she had heard that four of the brothers are in the Southern army.

June 5, 1861 A letter from Father, the first for a month; it was in reply to one I wrote him before Fan's return, & was a great relief to my mind. He says that Southern as his sympathies are, & right as he believes them in their cause, he a born & bred Pennsylvanian would never take up arms against his own country even were Fanny & myself not in existence as a restraining motive. Here again is the history of our condition in parvo; the root of all American patriotism is State feeling, that, the only love or pride of country they acknowledge. Probably my lack of nationality is owing to the impossibility of getting up a pride in Pennsylvania. . . .

June 6, 1861 Fan had letters from several of the First Troop to-day, especially Hartman Kuhn, particularizing nothing but the dirt which seems the worst of their sufferings. A funny incident occurred at that foolish cavalry charge at Fairfax, a trooper seeing Col. Washington with his long locks among the Secessionists in the streets seized him by the hair jerked him across the saddle & rode out of the town with him prisoner, charging twice before they were clear. Washington has since taken the oath of allegiance to our government, saying that he was merely with the Secessionists by compulsion! however several of his former comrades have done the same & then rejoined the Southern army.

June 7, 1861 Went at 9 o'clock a.m. to a service which is to be performed twice a week during these present troubles, who can say how long? The De Profundis, the full litany & those touching prayers which have been written for this present strait. I wish any church going could take some of the hatred out of my heart, but I cannot wish the war to stop. I cannot but hope that some lives may

be lost in battle & some on the gallows, & I cannot speak or even think of the English without almost going into spasms. . . .[59]

June 8, 1861 A most astounding disclosure appeared in the morning papers: Harvey, the former editor of the Independent & just appointed minister to Portugal, is a traitor: at the very time when he had just received his mission & was preparing for departure he telegraphed the Southerners of the sailing of the fleet to relieve Ft. Sumter.[60] This has transpired in the seizure of the last twelve month's dispatches at the Telegraphic offices, by the government. Unluckily he has already sailed for Lisbon. Edmund Robinson & Wynne here for a short time in the afternoon, & Mr. Coxe in the morning. He gave me a most ludicrous account of the lawyer company of the home guard, a corps which includes nearly every lawyer in town from George Biddle, to himself, practising the double-quick, all in a row with their legs raised above their hips ninety times to the minute. . . .

June 10, 1861 All excited by the news from the "seat of war." Uncle George has moved on towards Harper's Ferry in command of a column, ex-governor Banks has taken his place at Baltimore.[61] though there is some muddle about that old piece of political incompetency & unreliability. Cooper (whilom Senator), now Brigadier General or some such thing, which everyone is bothering about.[62] There is a report about Baltimore which if true, proves that that nest of traitors should be razed to the ground for the safety of the country: it is universally said & believed that there has been an intention on the part of the Southerners to march suddenly upon Washington by the back way as it were, through Baltimore, the whole population being in collusion & prepared to rise & overpower the small number of United States troops left to maintain order in the city. This wholesale treason so subtle &

59 Because of English attitudes favoring the South, there was fear that she might ally herself with the southern cause.

60 James E. Harvey had for the past twenty years been Washington correspondent for the *Philadelphia North American.*

61 Nathaniel P. Banks (1816–1894), former Governor of Massachusetts, was commissioned major general of volunteers on May 16, 1861. His first service was in the Department of Annapolis.

62 James Cooper (1810–1863), United States Senator from Maryland, was commissioned brigadier general of volunteers on May 17, 1861. He saw duty as a camp commander.

permeating & pervading is one of the peculiar features of this war I think, & distinguishes it more than anything else from any other on record.

June 11, 1861 Afternoon Charles drove Molinara & myself up to the Chestnut Hill barracks, where there was a very small drill, but an interesting one, the men having improved exceedingly. Willy Rotch is absent at Washington whither he has gone to offer his services & his company's for three years. It is a serious step for a lawyer of thirty-three well launched in business & the executor & trustee of half a dozen or more people, however it had to come to a pass when his reputation was more likely to be hurt by staying than going & when what people would say & think was for once worth considering. We drove down the Wissahiccon which looked wonderfully beautiful the banks in one flush with the laurel blossoms. . . . The news to-night is very bad, our troops have had a check & met with loss, & so uselessly, so wantonly under some Maj. Gen. Pierce, a politician of course, he lost head, would neither advance nor retreat, let the men stand an hour exposed to a galling fire, the men fired on each other in the darkness & blundering, & finally retreated with no one knows how many killed & wounded.[63] Oh it is too bad, too shameful, that the lives of soldiers, & still worse army officers men of experience & fit to command, & all our fates & fortunes should be subject to the incapacity & ignorance of such men, men who have not had an ordinary soldier's drill. But there lies one of the cardinal errors of the management of things in this country, the wrong men in the wrong place from the White House to the village post office.

June 12, 1861 The reports of last night are confirmed this morning, not so much loss as at first stated, but everything else as bad as possible. Will it be a lesson? . . . Frank Wells here evening. Says Miss Irwin has been in town on her way from Washington where she saw the clothes of Robert Gilmor's which were reported seized a week ago, the obnoxious clothes, cavalry uniforms &c, so that was true.

June 14, 1861 The whole family [Cadwalader] except Annie have now gone on to Chambersburgh, whence the Troop have not

63 A mismanaged engagement at Great Bethel, near Hampton.

yet moved as reported.[64] Several are or have been ill, all quite neglected in the matter of provisions & "water privileges" by their Captain, who short-sighted, weak fool that he is, is neglecting his own men while dining & supping with the regular army officers who are encamped near them; all very well for the moment, but he forgets that he is not an army man in reality & that his home & life lies among these men, the men of his own society whose ill will he is now gaining. Moreover, the poor troopers between the privates of the regulars, & M'Mullins rangers have been rifled of every small valuable in their possession, matches, meerschaums & tobacco. More fools they I think to let those thieves get the better of them. Uncle George has been promoted & is now in command of three brigades, 1500 men, & has gone to Chambersburg to advance on Harper's Ferry it is supposed. But most important of all, Harper's Ferry itself has been evacuated! There is great triumph about it, but I am sorry, it seemed to me not so much a retreat, as an attempt to draw our men further South & oppose them with a larger force. After tea Owen went up to the drill, & I finding that my eyes do not bear use at night very well, took the 8½ to Chestnut Hill, all alone like a strong-minded woman, to pay Miss Irwin a visit who is staying at the St. Geo. Campbells'. Willy Rotch was in the car going up to his young family at the barracks where he will find that bloody work has been going on during his absence, pugnas pugnant, affairs of honour among the young men, two of whom came with black eyes & broken noses to Owen last night. He returned last night from Washington where he had satisfactory interviews with both Uncle George & Cameron,[65] saw Gen. Scott, dined with him I think he said, went out to Kalorama & saw the Washington Grays, & William Moss who appeared to have had an affair of honour too. The lust of fight must be strong in these boys that they can't keep their hands off one another. . . .

June 15, 1861 In the afternoon Charles drove me up to Alverthorpe (Place of Mr. Joshua Francis Fisher, near Jenkintown). . . . The place is really lovely; the house in its light Italian style is the

[64] This was the John Cadwalader family. Their eldest son, Dr. Charles E. Cadwalader (1839–1907), was with the City Troop.

[65] Simon Cameron (1799–1889), Secretary of War.

least pretty part of it, but they have a champaign view of rolling meadows set with curving lines of wood lands, through which one catches glimpses of winding paths & long vistas. About the house there are slopes of smooth lawn bounded by gravel, walks half hid by shrubbery, & the garden, one bloom of roses mignonette & heliotrope is laid out upon a terrace of a single grade: the girls with their fluttering white dresses & picturesque hats & feathers among the parterres & urns overrun with brilliant verbenas made a scene like those on old French fans or vases. . . .

June 17, 1861 Went to see the Cadwaladers; Sally had returned & was full of amusing accounts of their "camp following." It must have been exceedingly exciting; when the camp moved from Chambersburg to Green Castle they moved too, staying over in the wake of the artillery carriages & baggage wagons. Seeing six or seven thousand men march through the place every day, surrounded by crowds of people, many friends of the soldiers who like themselves had come on to see them, but for the most part officers, the most prominent in the service at present too, in fact the whole life seemed to be the newest, strangest & most exciting that she had ever known. The First Troop went with its division to Williamsport Md. on Friday. There is no news; those unprincipled monkies the newsboys were shouting "Fight near Newport" all about the streets, but the papers contained nothing but some further particulars of the burning of the great bridge at Harper's Ferry. There is a considerable amount of poetical justice in it, almost all the stock of the Baltimore & Ohio R.R. Co. (to whom the bridge belongs) is owned in Baltimore; so they are tasting the fruits of their own sowing. . . .

June 18, 1861 More news this morning, the Secession troops fired on the train of cars which were bringing Ohio troops, some engagement followed, & there is the report of another fight elsewhere, but all vague no particulars. The Maj. Winthrop who was killed in that *fiasco* of Gen. Pierce's was Theodore Winthrop of Staaten Island, an exceedingly amiable, clever, gallant young fellow, the author of the article on the Departure of the 7th Regiment in the last Atlantic Monthly. . . .

June 19, 1861 Did not get out [from town] till the 2 o'clock train where I met Willy Rotch. I had been thunderstruck yesterday

by hearing on his mother's authority that the troop had been disbanded. This now appears to be incorrect; he showed me a letter from Cameron saying that they would be accepted at once if they would mount & clothe themselves; the government will only furnish arms; he is fully aware of the light in which he & his undertaking are viewed & is very anxious to go. He says they mean to make a desperate effort this week to fill up their number, after that, if they fail he sees nothing for it but to disband. . . . More particulars about those reports of yesterday, the cars were fired on by heavy ordnance which did some damage, the engineer unhooked the engine & put off at great speed leaving the cars & troops to their fate; the men got out & formed, the Secessionists though about three times more numerous fled without firing another shot. Verily this chivalry does not spare its spurs. The other was a small affair but a capital joke. Gen. Lyon landing with some U.S. forces near Boonville & being fired upon by the Secession forces who were posted in a wood ordered a retreat; the trusting Southerners rushed from their posts in pursuit whereon the others wheeled, fired, fought & dispersed or captured them all.[66]

June 20, 1861 There is no lack of news just now. That was a bad business in Virginia, again a piece of such carelessness as a child would hardly have committed, the cars laden with troops advancing through that hostile country where the deep cuts & wooded banks of the railroad gave every facility for masked batteries & ambushes, without any scouts or any reconnoitering. However to set off against that Jefferson City the capital of Missouri is in the hands of the U.S. forces, & that rascally Secession governor has escaped with the skin of his teeth. . . . There is a report tonight of forty of our men being cut to pieces in defending a bridge near Piedmont Virginia against several thousand Secessionists who were advancing to occupy the place. Of course there is no telling whether it is true or not.

June 21, 1861 That report of the discomfiture of the U.S. men at Piedmont proves untrue or at least is unauthenticated. The reports keep me & everyone else uncomfortable enough; it is days before they are credibly confirmed or contradicted, & then days &

66 Gen. Nathaniel Lyon (1818–1861), a West Point graduate, captured Boonville, Missouri, on June 17, 1861.

days before any particulars are obtained. The last rumour now is of a brush between some of the rebel forces & our first Reg't of artillery in which our dear Washington Grays are, & in which the "Sesechers" were worsted: how long it will be before we shall know the truth no one can tell.

June 22, 1861 Fan had another letter from Hartman Kuhn to-day, giving her an amusing account of their last adventure which was really risky enough; they had gone over into Virginia (across the Potomac) with one or two other companies in pursuit of some Southern troops who as usual were not to be caught, & by some unexplained misunderstanding were left when the rest withdrew again to Maryland. A man was sent to recall them & was shot by mistake by one of their sentinels, & there they remained over twenty four hours giving themselves up for lost & given up for lost by the rest of the troops at Williamsport amongst whom was Hamilton Kuhn who had been detached with several others & put into Gen. Patterson's bodyguard. A pretty severe experience.

June 23, 1861 About 10 Willy Rotch & John Wister came in, & stayed me miserabile till 11½. . . . Willy had nothing very encouraging to say about the troop; the forty from Whitemarsh who promised to come have not shown themselves, probably when they came to add up the expenses incident on fitting themselves out they found them too great. He said little but seemed much out of heart. John gave us an account of the troops near Harrisburgh, especially the Wild Cat regiment as they call them, Tom Kane's men from Elk & the adjacent counties. Certainly Tom has behaved as never did Kane before in resigning his Colonelcy to Charley Biddle & taking the lieutenant-colonelcy which was offered to the latter: it was not the magnanimity only, for I have always believed him great souled, but the modesty which is so wonderful in any human being, so superhuman in a Kane.[67]

June 29, 1861 I sat reading till 7 when [Owen] came in having been quietly engaged during the interim in discussing the war with

[67] This regiment raised by Thomas L. Kane, popularly known as the Bucktail Regiment, was the 13th Pa. Reserves, 42nd of the Line. Col. Charles J. Biddle (1819–1873), a veteran of the Mexican War, left the Regiment in December to take his seat in Congress, despite a petition signed by every man in the Regiment that he continue with it. Col. Kane, who was not popular, and may even have been subject to temporary derangement, then took over the command.

Richard Rush (Richard Henry Rush, afterwards colonel of 6th Pa. Cavalry) who has moved out for the summer, & has lately been to Washington & visited our forces in Maryland & Virginia. He confirmed the account of the Pennsylvania regiments being the worst drilled & accoutred of all that have gone down. There has been another miserable piece of mismanagement too & more lives sacrificed a party of forty landing to make a battery in the midst of a thickly wooded country without making any reconnaissance. They were attacked by a much superior force, fired upon from the cover of the trees, the captain killed, & forced to retreat to their ship & put off in disorder. . . .

July 1, 1861 The news from Baltimore shows a very bad state of things. The marshall of police has been arrested & in his possession have been found arms of every description, ammunition, & I believe uniforms, to be forwarded to the rebels: on further examination all the police quarters were found similarly stocked, so the entire force has been disbanded & the city placed under martial law, in fact regularly invested. It is a great pity that Uncle George did not effect all this while he was there; there was warrant enough but he passed it all over. Lizzie Clarke the other day gave a curious instance of the entire identification with the Southern cause of all the higher classes in Baltimore; numbers of men had left the city incog. or on plea of business & joined the Secession army before the city was put under arrest, but were not provided with their uniforms; their women, the Hoffmans among others, went over into Virginia to see them wearing the uniforms & in some cases arms under their own clothes. Crinoline like charity covers a multitude of sins; the classical fashions of the last century would not have answered for that. . . . In the cars met Willy Rotch in citizen's dress carrying a lawyer's bag; he informed me that he had returned to the profession of the law & that the troop had broken up. Their last hope, the Reading company on which they counted had failed them yesterday, the captain throwing his men into another company which is going at once to prevent their joining Willy's. He says that with all the disappointment he is in a more comfortable state of mind now than he has been for many weeks; the indecision was most wearing. It is a great annoyance & mortification to me, but it cannot be helped & the sooner forgotten the better. . . .

July 3, 1861 My father-in-law came down to show me a very large & beautiful bunch of wild flowers, the finest collection I ever saw, blue lobelias, yellow evening primroses, pink wild roses, with quantities of waxen white pipsisaways & another exquisite flower of the same sort but far more beautiful called aslepia or aslepius all crowned by a fine tawny wild tiger lilly. They were gathered by a policeman for his Dulcinea, a shop girl in the neighbourhood, a very unusual piece of sentiment & gallantry as he walked six miles to get them & must have been hours gathering them. Went to church, & the first news that I heard on my return was that the First Troop have been in action. No particulars except that our forces have been victorious, the enemy had sustained considerable loss, two killed & a few wounded on our side, but who may they be?[68] . . .

July 4, 1861 Was waked at dawn by church bells, fire crackers, cannon, & drums which continued their chorus until 7 when I rose & dressed for church at 8 o'clock to which Owen went with me. We had the regular morning service, all the war prayers, which fall very short of the Liturgy except perhaps the one for the volunteers. On reaching home we found by the morning papers fuller accounts of the battle at Hainesville, but still not satisfactory ones except as to the main point of victory & small loss; the names of the killed were given, the friends of others, not ours; of the wounded of course there is no detailed list; nor does the whole affair amount to anything, it is absurd to call it a battle; on the first news of troops being in the neighbourhood, some Ohio, Wisconsin & Pennsylvania regiments, among others our First Troop dashed across the Potomac into Virginia; the others stopped to take off their shoes, stockings, pantaloons & drawers, & to put them on again on the other side, also to pick blackberries growing by the road. When they heard the firing begin they hurried up the road towards the scene of action but before they reached it all was over; the rebels gave away instantly & fled as usual. This is very curious, very unaccountable to me, dreadfully suspicious; they are as well armed & far better officered than our men, by all reports they have been in far greater numbers in all these little encounters, & yet they always retreat;

68 The skirmishes in which the City Troop was engaged resulted in driving the enemy back several miles without heavy loss on either side.

there must be some meaning to it, pray Heaven it may not be made known to us by some overwhelming disaster.

July 5, 1861 Congress opened yesterday & they elected a speaker. The president has called for 4,000,000 more men & $4,000,000 more money; I do not doubt that he will get it all. Oh if the money given so willingly, & the lives offered so freely were not so squandered through incompetency & political dishonesty.

July 6, 1861 There is a rumour in today's paper of an engagement between our forces & part of Wise's[69] men in Virginia in which the latter were routed, & the immediate prospect of another between the men under M'Clellan & the remainder of the ex-governor's troops, but I doubt that.

July 9, 1861 Susan Stevenson told me this morning that fifteen of Langhorne Wister's men had had a brush with the rebels on the 2nd with a company of forty men who were driving a large herd of cattle; our fellows killed several & wounded several more carrying off forty-two of the cattle in triumph; it is like a real Highland raid.

July 10, 1861 There is a most extraordinary dispatch in the paper tonight about an engagement which has taken place in or on the borders of Missouri between Jackson & the Secession forces & a Col. Siegele[70] with our troops; the accounts of the numbers engaged, the numbers killed, & the marches & countermarches of both parties are something too incredibly absurd marked with all the preposterous exaggeration of all the first news in this business. One thing seems certain, that our troops have met with repulse & loss. William Moss has received the post of surgeon to the Keystone Regiment, now nearly full & ready to be mustered in; they are trying to get Richard Rush for their colonel, & I hope they will succeed; a fine frank fellow, a gentleman & a soldier,[71] full of fire & spirit, "the best of all the Rushes." Scull's ship (Gideon Scull jr. of Phila. later of Boston) has been in port at N.Y. for some time, arrived on the 3rd but neither he nor Dr. Ruschenberger (W. S. W.

[69] Alexander Henry Wise (1806–1876), Governor of Virginia 1856–1860, became a brigadier general in the Confederacy in May 1861.

[70] Franz Siegel (1824–1902), German-born soldier and editor, was at this time a brigadier general of volunteers serving in Missouri. His opponent Jackson was Gov. Claiborne F. Jackson of Missouri.

[71] Rush was a West Point graduate.

Ruschenberger U.S.N. husband of my husband's half-sister) have yet come on; the Richmond will probably be despatched to the blockade of some of the Southern ports, & her mess & crew go with her without any change.

July 11, 1861 I have heard today the saddest & most shocking thing that I think ever came to my ears. Fanny Longfellow is dead, burned to death from melted sealing wax falling on her dress, Longfellow himself severely burned in trying to extinguish it. This is unutterably dreadful, that noble beautiful woman, that home so beautiful, so happy, so fairly ideal in all its elements, those five poor children, especially the three little girls, above all Longfellow himself; it is a horrible household wreck; her poor old father too, who had been failing fast these many months, her only sister, an invalid long exiled from this country by her American-hating English husband. What will become of them. It is too fearful.

July 12, 1861 Went up to call on the young bride, Mrs. Sam Chew (Daughter of David S. Brown).[72] Several people were there & the whole thing struck me very strangely, the imposing old house with its mutilated statues & grim stone lions, the slipshod Irish chambermaid who ushered us in, the fine large room almost destitute of furniture, in which the few heavy, shabby old articles contrasted strangely with the one or two little modern knick-knacks, wedding presents I suppose, it seemed such a strange old place for two young people to be beginning their lives in; & Miss Ann Chew with her handsome, sad face & simple high breeding,[73] & the little insignificant, chattering chirping bride. (I knew better afterwards, an amiable, admirable woman she turned out.)

July 13, 1861 Owen's story of yesterday that Father was on his way home but stopped in Kentucky by the cessation of travel on the Nashville R.R. in consequence of the quarrel between the governors of Kentucky & Tennessee he had from Lizzie M'Allister,[74] who professed to have it from Fan. Like mother like daughter, a wonderful pair: not a word of it is true; Fan has had no letter, &

[72] In 1861 Samuel Chew (1832–1887) married Mary Johnson Brown (1839–1927) and brought her to live at the Chew House, Cliveden, now a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

[73] Miss Anne Sophia Penn Chew (1805–1892).

[74] Elizabeth Butler, first wife of Col. Julian McAllister.

the one which did come was to Aunt Mary (Mrs. Alfred Langdon Elwyn), dated Darien June 28th & contained nothing of the sort but vague assurances that he was about to return, just what he wrote Mr. Fisher the day before, just what he wrote us a week earlier. . . .

July 14, 1861 The Sunday papers are full of reports of a very decided victory, & the first one, over the Southern forces, by Gen. Rosencrantz[75] one of M'Clellan's inferior officers; M'Clellan himself sends the official account of it so that there can be no doubt, men killed, prisoners taken, & artillery, tents & camp equipage all seized. . . .

July 16, 1861 The battle of which we heard yesterday seems to have been very decisive, a great many killed & taken prisoner, Garnett himself (the Gen. not the Congressman) among the former.[76] This is the first man of eminence lost on either side . . . & it sobered & saddened me a little. Old Nathan Appleton too is dead: poor Fanny's (Mrs. Longfellow, his daughter) death I suppose snapped the last ravelling thread of the old man's life.

July 19, 1861 The news-boys [in town] were shouting the capture of Manassas Junction, but having great doubts of any such happy event I saved my pence. On reaching home however I found that the evening papers were full of it, & that it had been formally announced on the floor of the House, this afternoon. If this indeed be so why little more can remain, & the play must nearly be played out. There has been a small engagement at a place called Bull's Creek, mismanagement again, & our troops firing upon each other. The new number of Punch just out today has a cartoon representing America as a cross child—"Naughty Jonathan"—saying to England, a portly dame drinking a cup of tea,—"You *shant* interfere Mother & its too bad, & you ought to be on my side, & you *shall* interfere & I won't have it!"—rather belittling it is true, but still good-natured; there has been a gradual change in English sentiment, in favour of the North ever since it appeared which was to be the winning side, faugh! . . .

75 William Starke Rosecrans (1819–1898), a West Pointer serving as a brigadier general in western Virginia, won the battle of Rich Mountain.

76 Gen. Robert Seldon Garnett (1819–1861), another West Pointer, was a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. He was killed in action on July 13, 1861.

July 20, 1861 That news of the capture of Manassas Junction was not true of course, & moreover the troops seem to have received a decided check at Bull's Creek. . . .

July 21, 1861 The rumours of the affair at Bull's creek are becoming more serious, & the Sunday papers report that Johnson[77] has reached Manassas Junction & combined with Beauregard's forces there which at once ends all hope of crushing them singly & leaving nothing for it but to wait with set teeth for the issue. . . .

July 22, 1861 The whole town [Philadelphia] was in consternation: the riddle of the retreats in Virginia has been solved at last. We have had an overwhelming defeat at Manassas Junction, all the batteries are taken. Several entire regiments among which are the N.Y. 79th & 12th & the Fire Zouaves, entirely cut to pieces, several thousand killed or captured. It seems impossible to realize it, the sudden transmutation of all the elements of our position is as bewildering as the blow itself. Our only comfort is that we must have heard the worst, & probably far worse than the worst. They say that the army has been utterly disorganized & driven back upon Washington. . . .

July 23, 1861 After all every account makes things look brighter than before though at best it has been bad enough. Gen. Patterson received three distinct orders to advance & reinforce the main body of the army, he directly disobeyed alleging that his men were too tired. Beauregard had been routed & driven back, & his foremost batteries taken, when Johnson with 15,000 men appeared to support him, had Patterson with his 30,000 been there to support our forces, no one can doubt the issue, though the Southerners fought well & entirely outdid us in generalship, & no wonder having army officers to lead them while we depend upon political creatures. There was a panic occasioned first among some of the civilians upon the field by the unexpected opening of some masked batteries, it communicated itself to the troops & they fled to Centreville, three miles off where they were checked in their retreat by the reserves, & where they have now entrenched themselves. Sherman's battery was not lost, but 18 guns in all have been taken it now appears; there has been a frightful loss of life on both sides, a brother of Secretary

[77] Gen. Joseph E. Johnston (1807–1891).

Cameron's reported killed & many others of distinction both among the regulars & volunteers, however many are prisoners & many more straggling slowly in all of whom at first are counted lost. Some of our surgeons behaved nobly, refusing to fly & giving themselves up as prisoners rather than leave their wounded; they say that many of the wounded men were bayonetted as they lay. Savages! however no truth will be known till the official reports come in. The thing is but too obvious, that whereas had that victory been ours the thing would have been at an end, as it is it opens an endless vista of sad possibilities & the war may spin itself out indefinitely. . . . More men enlisted in Philadelphia today than were lost at this battle even at the largest estimate.

July 24, 1861 There have been prodigies of personal valour, & achievements of single regiments & companies really worthy of record. Young Governor Sprague[78] spiked his guns before leaving them on the field, a cool thing enough. Russell of the Times who was present said he had never seen such charging, not at Balaklava nor Solferino.[79]

July 25, 1861 Willy Wynne came over after tea. He had seen the Washington Grays & other three months men who arrived in town this morning. They are full of complaints & discontent though a great majority of them came home merely to arrange their affairs & return again for three years, the young gentlemen as second lieutenants & the common men under different officers.

July 27, 1861 . . . about noon we were dropped upon by William Moss. . . . His accounts & descriptions were excessively interesting; he spoke of the difference in the troops from different parts of the country, & mentioned especially the New Hampshire men, the brightest, bravest, most thieving & insubordinate of all the men he met; he says that their encampment looked like nothing but Sherwood Forest in the days of Robin Hood. Stolen pigs, poultry & small cattle roasting & frying in all quarters, & stolen whisky fairly flowing. In traveling through the Secession part of Maryland & Virginia, especially the latter he said that the prepara-

78 Col. William Sprague (1830–1915), Governor of Rhode Island, subsequently declined the rank of brigadier general. He was later a United States Senator.

79 William Howard Russell of the *Times*.

tions for war had evidently been long & systematic. The smallest village through which they passed had sent its company of men which had been drilling for two years; the little boys of eight & ten were so accustomed to the sight that all of them could go through the manual as well as any of our volunteers; it appeared too that they were all armed with Minie muskets. He told the usual story of the incompetence of the officers & discontent of the men, especially the three months' men. He said that with regard to Gen. Patterson's excuse that he could not reinforce M'Dowell because his men refused to stay the extra ten days, that it is all a pretext; Patterson distinctly told the men that he would not lead them into a fight & that they were not strong enough to attempt to give Johnson battle; & they said they would stay any length of time if there was to be a fight but not a day otherwise. The feeling with regard to Patterson is so strong in town that his house had to be guarded on Monday night, & there will be a very strong force posted there tonight also, as the mob declare they will burn him out despite mayor & police.[80] William Moss said that the depression was not nearly so great with the army on the news of the defeat, as here, they only looked upon it as so much more to repay.

July 31, 1861 Among other reports we hear that Wade Hampton was killed at the Manassas battle, & his regiment almost cut to pieces.[81]

August 2, 1861 Frank Wells met me [in town] & told me that Father is to arrive today by what train he could not tell. . . . Mr. Coxe came to tea & we had a pleasant evening talk together. He told me some sad things however: two of the younger Gilmor men (sons of Robt. Gilmor of Balt:) are said to have been killed at Manassas (in the C.S. army), he mentioned another terrible tragedy—some Maryland or Virginia man, a Unionist, had four sons among the Secession troops, & after the battle the eldest came home bringing the bodies of his three brothers.

August 3, 1861 About 8 o'clock Father looking as well as I ever saw him [arrived]. He had plenty of Southern news of course,

80 Gen. Robert Patterson, sixty-nine years old at the time, was mustered out of federal service on July 27, 1861. After the war he wrote a book vindicating his conduct.

81 Wade Hampton (1818–1902) was later Governor of South Carolina and United States Senator despite this rumor.

Wade Hampton not killed, but the Oglethorpe Light Horse all cut to pieces; Georgia King married to a Colonel Smith formerly of U.S., now of C.S. army, gone up to Virginia with him where he is in command of a regiment. Lord & Floyd King both in Va., lieutenants in the Secession army; Hurlbut (W. H.) a prisoner in Charleston; he would go roaming about the country to see what was going on despite his avowed hostility to the South & they finally pounced upon him & keep him to make reprisals upon in case we hang our prisoners. I kept Father all night & shall try to coax him to stay here while I am away. [The diarist was on the eve of her departure for Atlantic City.]

August 5, 1861 At last within an hour of the time of departure [for Atlantic City] the nurse & I fell upon the trunk (the baby first sleeping like an enchanted child & then waking & playing about by himself like an angel) & packed it pretty thoroughly before I was obliged to leave. I had to leave it to be sent to town after me however as I was obliged to go in myself at 2 o'clock. . . . Father took me to the Vine street wharf & crossed to Camden with me. . . . Little Emmy Howell (Daughter of Mr. Arthur Howell, afterwards Mrs. Campbell of Va.), who was to go down under my care was left with a whole omnibus full more who arrived just as the boat pushed off. We were in the last car of a long & crowded train, & the dust poured into the windows in such clouds for the first half of the journey that we were obliged to shut them & bear the heat. The route lay through characteristic N.J. scenery, long barren flats of white sandy soil, or endless stretches of mangy pine & stunted oak. At last we reached the old Indian village of Absecom & thence the road ran over trestle-work across salt marshes, & we caught delicious whiffs of sea air & occasional distant glimpses of a long line of tumbling breakers. The coup d'oeil was very theatrical as the train backed up a little track which runs behind all the principal hotels, where the whole company were assembled in their fresh evening toilettes to witness the arrival of us poor dirty mortals, the bands playing on the piazzas & everything wearing a most holiday air; it was funny indeed & still more theatrical to see how the very instant the passengers had got out & the cars steamed away to the next house the whole scene shifted, the band stopped playing, the people dispersed & nothing remained but the empty piazza & deserted

grounds at the back of the building. I saw quantities of faces familiar & unfamiliar. . . . The hotel is large & clean & they gave me a nice room with a sea view & no furniture, up six pair of stairs. . . .

August 6, 1861 A most beautiful day bright & sunny with a fresh salt breeze. . . . The dining room is arranged as at Nahant, two long tables in the middle of the room & two rows of small ones at the sides. Mrs. Noronha Mary & myself of course took possession of one. The breakfasts here are excellent, the freshest fish, crisp fried potatoes, & tender chops & steaks with good bread; tea is not a bad meal either, a small dish of stewed oysters being the piece de resistance then; but dinner is a true Barmecide feast for the bills of fare raise the wildest expectations which the reality fails to fulfill either in quantity, quality or even in point of bare fact. . . . Between 11 & 12 we went to bathe; the arrangements for that are nicer here than at any seashore place I was ever at, the only objection being "the bower" a huge skeleton frame building two stories high where the nonbathing part of the company go daily to witness us poor dripping grotesque wretches emerge from our dip.

August 8, 1861 Sat on my piazza with Miss Irwin drying my hair. She is a very striking girl, with her beautiful fine hair & dazzling complexion, her deep set earnest grey eyes & expressive features. She told me one thing that I was glad enough to hear, that Mr. Frank Markoe, the results of whose arrest I had never been able to learn, had been discharged a day or two afterwards fully acquitted.

August 15, 1861 The Merediths arrived by the evening train & Charley Cadwalader who returned yesterday with the First Troop. He looks less burnt & bronzed than anyone I have seen yet, but looks well & strong. James Biddle,[82] Katy's brother & Gertrude Meredith's fiancé was presented to me this evening. He was one of the Washington Grays, & confirmed the account that they all gave of the rage & grief of the men when they found that instead of marching to attack Winchester they had been moving in a circle & were only at Harper's Ferry. He says that the officers all uphold Patterson & say he did what was perfectly right, & that the ranks were in too profound ignorance of all the movements of either side

[82] James S. Biddle, formerly of the Navy.

to be qualified to judge of his conduct, but that the feeling against him among the privates was tremendous.

August 19, 1861 The morning was close & cloudy like yesterday, & the last glimpse of the sea very threatening. But the journey to town was free from dust & we arrived at Camden before 9. Half way across the river we passed the other ferry boat & on its deck stood Father just too late of course as his object had been to meet me, calm, quiet, dressed from head to foot in white drilling, & waving his white handkerchief with perfect serenity. On the wharf was Frank Wells waiting for me. We both waited till Father returned. . . . During my whole visit at Atlantic City the war & politics altogether have been a forbidden topic; we have heard nothing but the one event of the fight in Missouri with Gen. Lyon's death. But Owen had been telling me what a week of gloom the last one had been, the blackest there has been, worse even than the one after the battle of Manassas, & of the last order to send all the regiments immediately to Washington complete or incomplete, armed or unarmed. I lay there thinking how long many a struggle for right had been, how it had often outlasted the lives of generations, & I began to wonder if the South gained the day & we & many others who had hardly been able to live with her on equal terms & could hardly live under her sway were forced to leave the country to what part of the world miserable exiles that we should be would we turn our steps to begin life again. Just at 10 o'clock the door bell rang & to my unutterable amazement my cousin Alfred [Elwyn] came in, came to tell me that at 4 in the afternoon Father had been arrested by the U.S. Marshall on a special order from Cameron, & taken to New York by the 6 o'clock line to be placed in Ft. Hamilton.[83] Alfred of course could give me no particulars. He left at 10½ just as Owen returned. At 11 dear good Morton Henry came in, he had been to Mrs. Jones' & heard all the particulars. Father was at home when the arrest took place; his room was searched & of course nothing found. He was notified that they must proceed to N.Y. with him by the 6 o'clock train. Mrs. Jones packed his trunk & Walsh Mitchell went for Uncle George

[83] Pierce Butler came under suspicion because of his recent visit to the South and his strongly expressed opinions in its favor. He was not, however, guilty of treason.

who could not be found at once, but crossed to Camden & saw him before the cars started. This was all.

August 20, 1861 Frank Wells came out in the 8 o'clock train, Mrs. Jones a couple of hours later; they had nothing to tell me but what I had heard last night, except, what I of course knew, that Father had been calm & quiet to the last point, had not addressed the officers, merely bowing in reply to their remarks, & though white & with slightly quivering lips & nostrils as is his wont when at the highest pitch of anger, had controlled himself entirely. I went in at 2 to see Uncle George who gave me an intolerably long winded account of the part of the transaction with which I was already acquainted coming at last to the important point, viz, that in his conversation with Father at Camden which was private & lasted half an hour, the latter assured him positively that there was nothing among his papers at the office, which of course are to be searched, which can in any way convict him. There are expressions of sentiments & feeling which he is well known to hold, but nothing in the least compromising. My plan had been to go on to N.Y. tomorrow morning, & I had telegraphed Fan, who I knew would rush headlong thither on receipt of Weir Mitchell's[84] & Mrs. Jones' letters which they despatched last night, that Owen & I would meet her there; but Uncle George was strongly against my going, & when he told me that he was perfectly uncertain even whether I could have any access to Father, as the recent restrictions on visits were very severe, of course I determined to wait till I knew something more. The Marshall who is to examine Father's papers in Uncle George's presence had not yet returned from N.Y. He would find out everything from him & send me word tomorrow. On this I came out of town again & managed to dash off a letter to Fan in time for the evening mail, of course I had first telegraphed her to stay where she was until further notice. Poor little thing, this will come more heavily on her than on anyone else after her winter & spring of anxiety & harrassment, & she will fancy she would be able to know & do so much more if she were here . . . what preys upon me most is that Henry Fisher, Uncle George & Mrs. Jones all seem to me, despite what they say, to suspect something yet in

84 Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell (1829–1914), Philadelphia physician and novelist.

the background, & why I care is, that I cannot help doing so too.

August 21, 1861 Stayed at home all day in hopes of a message from Uncle George which however did not come. Florence Lockwood spent the morning with me. Frank Wells came in the evening. Owen brought me some sort of news from Brookwood. Mr. Fisher had seen Uncle George & they had talked the whole thing over (Heaven save the mark) & agreed that there was nothing to be done for the next few days, that influence must be used at Washington &c &c winding [up] with that as to my being allowed to visit Father, but two persons could give me that permission, Gen. Scott or the President. All this was not at all tranquillizing in spite of the many exhortations to patience & quiet with which it was interlarded.

August 22, 1861 I wrote to Lincoln this morning, a short & simple note to ask, not as a favour but as a question, whether or not I might visit & correspond with my Father. I cannot consent to remain quiet in the hands of Messrs. Fisher & Cadwalader, the one impeded by a sense of the magnitude of the occasion the other by a sense of his own magnitude, nor to have people of influence begged to make interest, nor people of importance to lend their might, in short I am impatient of electioneering & manoeuvring & at least shall make a struggle to do a simple thing in a straight forward way. . . .

August 23, 1861 A letter from Father took me by surprise early in the morning. It was dated Tuesday & was as cold & bitter a composition as I ever read. He speaks of his arrest, of his journey to New York & removal to Ft. Lafayette for it is there & not at Ft. Hamilton that he is incarcerated, I find; & incarceration it is; they are six in a casemate, double locked, only allowed exercise at stated times, from 7 to 9 a.m. & 6 to 7 p.m. in the quadrangle of the fort. The whole letter is in a tone of biting sarcasm though like all the communications it passed under the eye of the commandant. He says that visits are not allowed & therefore that neither I nor any of his friends need attempt to see him. This is a different picture indeed from that given me by Uncle George, Mr. Fisher, & the rest, lodged in the officers' quarters with the range of the fort, & every comfort & convenience that they chose to purchase: this ends my plans of carrying him clean towels ad libitum, tea, fruit, & his

flute & music. I felt at once savagely indignant & sorely depressed. Whatever right the government may have to arrest & imprison men on suspicion, it cannot have the least to herd them together as the very felons at Moyamensing are not crowded, & deprive them of all necessaries & decencies of life. . . .

August 24, 1861 In the evening Owen & I talking over this affair of Father & how in a whole week not a single step had been taken, nor an inch of ground gained, to all appearance; began to discuss some mode of bringing things on. Uncle George, though he has been doing everything in his power I believe, is awkwardly placed towards the Administration & Mr. Fisher of course would do as much from his own friendship for Father as at my instance. All his other friends here are either democrats, or Republicans of no political weight. We might reach Cameron thro black Charles Wister (my husband's cousin), but we both shrank from laying either Father or ourselves under obligations to two such men. At last I confessed my own note to Lincoln, which as it has received no answer, has been thrown with a score of others I suppose into the Executive wastepaper basket. Owen said that he thought a personal application from me, far the simplest & most straight forward & probably effectual mode of proceeding, & that if I would write again he would enclose the letter to his friend Fox,[85] now at the head of the Naval bureau at Washington who would hand it to the President & thus ensure it a reading. . . .

August 25, 1861 Wrote my letter to the President this morning, a very short & simple one merely mentioning the irregularity of Father's arrest, the delay in the examination of his papers, the outrageous situation of all the prisoners at Ft. Lafayette, & asking permission for Fan & myself to visit him. I cannot but hope that a straight forward application to so honest & downright a person will have more affect than setting the whole machinery of political engineering into motion. . . .

Owen thought my letter to Lincoln too long & that it had better be confined to the simple request for permission to visit Father. So I copied it over in a very reduced form, a little sorry to give up this opportunity of making matters known at headquarters. . . .

[85] Gustavus Vasa Fox (1821–1883), an Annapolis graduate, was Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

August 26, 1861 Beautiful day rather warm for travelling. [*She was going to visit Fanny Kemble at Lenox, Massachusetts.*] Was not so busy as on the day of my last departure but still sufficiently occupied with final directions & superintending the nurse's packing of my trunk. Went off at 10 o'clock tired & depressed. Charles put me into the cars; Alick Wister my nephew took charge of me at Ninth & Green, Frank met me at the wharf & Willy Rotch crossed to Camden with me. Frank told me, a good deal to my annoyance, that he had written to Scull to meet me at New York, but it could not be helped then. The journey was not dusty but I experienced for the first time the unpleasantness of travelling alone; a drunken Irishman sat down by me & almost went to sleep on my shoulder, the conductor finally found him a place elsewhere but not till I had been nearly poisoned by his suffocating breath for half an hour. There were a number of soldiers & officers in the train, Gen. Mansfield among others, a gentlemanlike looking person with white hair & beard.[86] We passed a long train full of troops, & after leaving Amboy our steamboat passed another large one whose three decks were crowded with them, not a man out of uniform on board, all on their way to the seat of war poor fellows, but gay & brave & shouting as they went by. The sail was very tedious & as at length we came in sight of the various forts near New York my heart sank dreadfully. I was glad enough to see Scull's graceful, elegant figure lounging on the wharf as the boat came in. He took charge of me & my trunk, & we drove up Broadway (now dark & lighted with gas for we had got in an hour later than we should & it was near 7½ before we left the wharf), stopping to attend to several little commissions on our way to the Clarendon. I got a nice large room there on the first floor away from the noise of Broadway. . . .

August 27, 1861 Much like yesterday. Breakfasted at 7 & Scull walked up to 27th street with me got my ticket & check & I set off. The journey was hot & fatiguing in the extreme & I felt very ill, faint & nauseated several times. . . .

Mother was not at the station when I arrived which made me think that my letter had miscarried, or been intercepted, & de-

86 The venerable looking Gen. Joseph K. Mansfield was killed in September 1862 at the Battle of Antietam.

pressed me, in my faint & weary condition; but she soon drove up looking well & in good spirits. Her house is a large & comfortable one charmingly situated just west of the village facing Baldhead Mountain & with a lovely view of the little Walker lake close at the left. My room opens upon a piazza which I do consider the perfection of enjoyment. I found Fan looking very plump & well despite her anxiety, but talking the matter over & showing her Father's letter brought on a fit of crying which sent her to bed ill poor child.

August 29, 1861 Had several visits in the morning, & dined at 2 o'clock as Mother was to read in the evening. In the afternoon Fan drove me in the English pony carriage a most charming little affair, looking like a great wicker basket swung on coach springs; it is fitted up with morrocco seats, comfortable as a low arm chair, & protected by a large blue silk umbrella which spreads over it like a canopy. Unfortunately there are no ponies, but a large coach horse, which however does not altogether spoil the effect of the fairy-like little equipage. We drove round the Stockbridge lake by Curtisville a lovely road, but the afternoon was lowering the lake leaden looking, & a thunder storm overtook us just as we reached home. In the evening we all went up to Mr. Rackeman's music-room; the Haven where Mother was to read. The aspect of the room itself was indescribably charming, artistic & attractive, the walls covered with fine engravings, interspersed with brackets supporting busts, & vases, little cabinets of books in the corners, the furniture all simple but comfortable & the grand piano with its heaps of music holding its own at one side; at the other was Mother's reading table with massive silver candelabra, exquisite flowers, & her great quarto Shakespeare; it stood before a window over which fell a crimson curtain which brought out her figure in her white dress, & her beautiful head with its wreath of dark purple pansies. The audience consisted only of the family & three or four friends, not a dozen in all. She read us As You like it, most beautifully. Afterwards we had some wine & ices, & a little chat & broke up before 11. In spite of the painful excitement & concentration which her reading always produces upon me & which she & everyone else tells me makes me look so pale & souffrante at the time, it is surely one of the greatest intellectual delights one can have.

September 2, 1861 Frank Wells arrived, & a letter from Owen too, the only news either gave being that the examination of Father's papers had taken place of course without bringing anything to light, but no reply from Washington, & no hint of a discharge. . . .

September 3, 1861 We had particulars to-day of the doings at Cape Hatteras where Butler of Mass. has redeemed his own honour & cast a little over militia men.[87] We wanted some such signal success greatly to pour new life into the souls of our men, besides its more practical effect on the Southerners. The evening train brought up the report of Jefferson Davis' death, but I doubt that & at any rate it would make no great difference immediately I should think;—Floyd, Cobb, Stevens, Mason are all there to replace him officially if not actually. . . .

September 4, 1861 Letter from Owen—the permission [*to visit Pierce Butler in prison*] has been given.

Postscript

The diary concludes three days after the above entry for September 4 without the diarist having left to visit her father. Whether or not she paid that visit is not known. However, through the influence of Henry Fisher, Pierce Butler was released later in the month. Butler spent the rest of the war living at York Farm, his property opposite to Butler Place, and, although known to sympathize with the South, kept very quiet on that subject, even in private conversation. This must have been a great relief to his daughter Sarah.

87 Gen. Benjamin F. Butler.