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# **THE ALEXANDRIA CHRONICLE**



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## **Edgar Warfield--**

### **Alexandria's Last Surviving Confederate Soldier**

#### **"In Remembrance of Duty Faithfully Performed"**

A speech presented by T. Michael  
Miller at Ivy Hill Cemetery  
on October 14, 2000

Edgar Warfield, Alexandria's last surviving Confederate soldier, epitomized the eight hundred plus men of the Sixth Virginia Battalion who evacuated Alexandria on the morning of May 24, 1861. Mostly merchants, artisans and professional men [doctors, attorneys, bankers, etc.] these citizens of Alexandria fought and sacrificed for their state, family, hearth and home. Many died and now lie moldering in the soil of their beloved Virginia. The names of

one hundred of these soldiers are etched on the Confederate Monument situated at the intersection of Prince and South Washington Streets.

One soldier who survived the fratricidal conflict was Private Warfield of Company H of the Old Dominion Rifles. He was born in Washington, D.C. on June 7, 1842, the son of Abel Davis Warfield and Sarah Ann Adams. Following their

marriage the Warfield family removed to Alexandria in 1838 and took up residence on the west side of the 100 block of South Fairfax Street. Abel, a well liked and jovial man, worked for many years as a dyer of cloth and fabrics.

Edgar, the second of nine children received his early education at the Mechanics Institute, 114 N. Alfred Street. Mr. Warfield later wrote that at 14 years of age "I quit school and entered as a clerk in the retail drug store of Messrs. Peel, Stevens and Co. southeast corner of King and Alfred Streets, where I remained nearly five years, leaving to enter the Confederate Army in 1861."

During the winter and spring of 1861, dark war clouds hovered over Alexandria as festering differences between the North and South concerning tariffs, states rights, Southern nationalism and slavery soon erupted into conflict. Alexandria with its strong Federalist background was initially opposed to secession. Indeed, in the 1860 U.S. presidential elections, Alexandrians had cast the majority of their ballots for John Bell, the Constitutional Unionist candidate who opposed slavery and secession.

As war fever swept Alexandria in the spring of 1861, militia units organized and drilled on the Catalpa lot situated on the 600/700 blocks

of North Washington Street. Private Warfield writes in his outstanding autobiography Memoirs of A Confederate Soldier that "those were the days when all was bright and joyous, the streets, with bands playing and drums rolling, amid the waving of flags by fair hands. New and dazzling uniforms helped to make a bright and cheerful picture for the eyes of the young soldier. All too soon the sweat, dust, and blood of the conflict were to make those bright uniforms sadly war-worn, and hunger was to get in its dreadful work, making haggard and emaciated the once bright and happy faces."

In December 1860, Edgar Warfield and his friend Frank Wise had been instrumental in organizing a militia company known as the Old Dominion Rifles, formed at American Hall on the north side of the 400 block of Cameron Street. One of five militia companies organized in Alexandria, the Old Dominion Rifles evacuated the city on the morning of May 24, 1861. They subsequently mustered at Centreville where they enlisted in the Confederate Army on July 17, 1861, a component of the 17th Virginia Regiment. Under the command of General Montgomery Corse, an Alexandria banker, the 17th Virginia Regiment fought gallantly in such memorable battles as Blackburn's Ford, First and Second Manassas, Williamsburg,



General Edgar Warfield (b. 1842; d. 1934)

Seven Pines, Frazier's Farm, Sharpsburg, Drury's Bluff and Five Forks.

Following General Lee's surrender to Federal General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse on April 9, 1865, Private Edgar Warfield returned to Alexandria where he and his longtime companion, Frank Hall, established and operated a drugstore from 1867 to 1907 at 302 Prince Street.

Soon Warfield's Drugstore became an Alexandria institution and a mecca for former Confederate veterans including General Montgomery Corse, banker and erstwhile commander of the 17th Virginia Regiment. Many of these ex-Confederates in arms mustered around the store's old potbelly stove where they reminisced about the joyous scenes of camp life, lost comrades and the horrors of the battlefield.

There is no doubt that Edgar Warfield revered the City of Alexandria where he held many positions of civic responsibility. He was a member of the fire department; was the oldest member of Andrew Jackson Lodge, No. 120, serving as worshipful master in 1879-1880, 1880-81 and 1888-89. Mr. Warfield also held positions in Masonry and was a member of the Scottish Rite and the Mystic Shrine.

As a prominent druggist, Mr. Warfield was appointed to the first State Board of Pharmacists in 1886 by Virginia Governor Fitzhugh Lee. Mr. Warfield served on this board until 1902. By 1922, Mr. Warfield was recognized as the oldest merchant in the retail drug business in Virginia.

In 1907, Edgar Warfield closed his store at 302 Prince Street and joined his son Edgar, Jr. in operating a drugstore on the N.W. corner of Pitt and King Streets. For many years this store maintained the record of being the only one in the State of Virginia in which three generations of registered druggists were on duty at the same time--father (Edgar, Sr.), son (Edgar, Jr.) and grandson, (Ashby).

Perhaps, the major focus of Edgar's life following the war was his participation in Confederate Veteran activities. As such, Warfield was one of the early founders of the R.E. Lee Camp Confederate Veterans-- established on July 7, 1884. He was active as adjutant in this organization until his death in 1934.

As a former Confederate soldier, Mr. Warfield frequently attended veteran reunions in Texas, Alabama, Arkansas and Virginia. And, on many occasions he was requested to speak about his wartime experiences at public

assemblies and at schools. On January 19th of each year when the R. E. Lee Camp celebrated General Robert E. Lee's birthday, Edgar Warfield was requested to recite General Lee's famous General Orders No. 9, which informed Southern troops of the surrender and disbandment of the Army of Northern Virginia.

In April 1885, Edgar Warfield became the first individual to propose to the R.E. Lee Camp of the United Confederate Veterans that a monument be erected to the Confederate dead of Alexandria. When the famous Southern artist, John A. Elder of Fredericksburg, Virginia, heard of the proposed monument, he submitted a clay model of the figure in his painting "Appomattox," which was promptly accepted. The bronze figure was executed by sculptor Casper Buberl of New York City. On November 5, 1888, the R.E. Lee Camp voted to seek approval from City Council to place the statue at the intersection of Washington and Prince Streets, the point from which Alexandria troops had mustered and subsequently marched out Duke Street on the morning of May 24, 1861.

City Council quickly gave its approval to erect the statue at this site and on May 24, 1889, the finished monument was dedicated in an impressive ceremony attended

by "a huge mass of humanity." The keynote speaker on the occasion was Virginia Governor Fitzhugh Lee, formerly a major general of cavalry in the Army of Northern Virginia and Robert E. Lee's nephew.

On this august occasion Fitzhugh Lee remarked: "This great gathering of noble women and brave men tells our people in cannon tones that though the sun went down behind the hills and the wind behind the clouds at Appomattox...the memories of the men who fell with their faces to their foe are still enshrined in the hearts of their living comrades. ... Ceremonies by Northern organizations in honor of the devotion to the Union of the States by Federal soldiers are right and proper; and celebrations in the South by Southern soldiers in honor of the memory of those who died in the defence of their States, their homes and their people should be equally be recognized as the merited tribute to their valor..."

By 1921 the grim reaper had severely depleted the ranks of the 17th Virginia Regiment and the R.E. Lee Camp. Indeed, there were only 29 veterans still alive in Alexandria.

Around the year 1913, Edgar Warfield became the first to offer a resolution suggesting that the surviving Confederate Veterans devise their property and

headquarters at 806 Prince Street to the Mary Custis Lee/ 17th Va. Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The transfer of this property was finalized in December 1921.

In 1934, General Edgar Warfield, Alexandria's last surviving Confederate soldier, marched up King Street one last time as residents paid homage to him and the hundreds of former Southern soldiers who had rallied in defence of Virginia. Citizens numbering in the thousands and many with tears in their eyes lined King Street to pay homage to this lone 92 year old veteran.

Yes, we are all proud to be strong, patriotic, united Americans. Likewise, those of us with Southern blood will also celebrate our heritage and remember the sacrifices made by men such as Edgar Warfield, truly one of the finest examples of manhood the City of Alexandria has sent forth to fight and die for the Commonwealth. Private Warfield's career can be summed up in the following words inscribed upon the northern face of the Confederate statue at Prince and Washington Streets. "They" [He - Edgar Warfield] died in the consciousness of duty faithfully performed."

Thank you.

## A Heroine on the Homefront

### My Mother's Experience during the Civil War

by

Mrs. Ada Warfield Kurtz  
of Harriman, Tennessee  
1907

[Reprinted with permission of Mrs. Suzanne Warfield Johnson, Edgar Warfield's great, great, great granddaughter]

History is not always made on the battlefield. Often for women of earlier generations, history was what happened inside their homes. This memorial, written by Ada Warfield Kurtz, is about the trauma that occurs when this traditionally safe place is disrupted and nearly destroyed by the forces of history. These few pages describe the plight of Ada's mother, Sarah A. Warfield, my great, great, grandmother, and her capacity to face danger regardless of her fears, her remarkable bravery and endurance, her spirit, and her dedication to her family. Women's writings expand our understanding of history, and show the link between the historical and the personal.

Suzanne Warfield Johnson

In May, 1861, the town of Alexandria, situated on the banks of the Potomac River, was invaded by the Federal soldiers. It was just before daybreak when the stillness was broken by the clattering of horses' hoofs on the cobblestones and men rushing in all directions, arousing the people from their slumbers, and summoning the members of the military

company to appear at their barracks immediately, with their knapsacks packed ready to march. Great excitement prevailed and the men responded quickly and cheerfully to the call, as all men should. There were many sorrowing hearts when the parting moment came.

I will ask you to follow me to the bright and happy home of Mrs. Warfield, whose husband had kissed



MRS SARAH A. WARFIELD

her and his little ones good-by, saying he hoped to be back with them soon. He left them to join his company, the Alexandria Riflemen, Co. A., 17th Virginia Infantry. Her son Edgar, only eighteen years of age, had already gone to join his company, the Old Dominion Rifles, Co. H., 17th Virginia infantry. She was almost heart-broken when her oldest son, a handsome,

finely developed young man, twenty-one years of age, approached her and folding her lovingly in his arms, said, "I, too must tell you good-by, dear little mother." Looking at him tenderly in the face she said, "George, your father and brother Edgar have gone, won't you stay at home with me?" The noble boy smiled and said, "Why, mother, I would feel that I were a coward to remain at home, a great strong, young man, and allow my father and younger brother to

go to war. It should be father to remain at home and let his boys do the fighting."

Trying to overcome her feelings, she smiled, saying, "Spoken like my own brave boy," and clasping him closely in her arms said, "My son will never be called a coward; go, do your duty, and your mother's prayers will follow her loved ones through this cruel war." Kissing her again, lovingly, he said, "Cheer up, little mother, if it is God's will we will all be with you again soon." He left her to join his company, the Mount Vernon Guards, Co. E., 17th Virginia Infantry. The fond mother watched him out of sight, breathing the prayer that God would watch over and protect her loved ones and bring them safely home again. Little did she dream that her noble boy would never return, and of the years that would pass, or the hardships she would have to endure before they would meet again. She fully realized the great responsibility resting upon her, a frail, little woman, with seven children looking to her for protection, the youngest an infant of eleven months. Roberta, the eldest daughter a beautiful girl of fourteen years, was a great comfort and help to her mother.

By daybreak the Federal soldiers had full possession of the town, which was in a great state of excitement, and which was greatly increased later in the day, when it was learned that Col. Ellsworth had removed the Confederate flag, which had floated over the Marshall House, and as he was descending the stairs with it, he was met by the proprietor, Mr. Jackson,

who shot him dead, and in turn was killed by one of Ellsworth's men. The occurrence made a sensation through the North. The people of Alexandria were in great dread for quite a while, not knowing what to expect from the soldiers. Gradually quiet was restored, though they could not enjoy the same freedom to which they had been accustomed.

Mrs. Warfield, assuming a cheerfulness she was far from feeling, tried to make her home as bright and cheerful as possible for her children and was ever ready to help others who were in distress or needed assistance, and many were the acts of kindness she bestowed upon the Federal soldiers.

The morning of July 22nd, 1861, after the battle of Bull Run, the Federal soldiers began to arrive in Alexandria, bringing gloom and terror with them, sinking down in the streets and doorways from sheer exhaustion, and fearing they were not safe even there. It was certainly a terrible scene. Many of them sick and all of them hungry. No one dared venture from their homes, though many of the suffering ones were taken in and cared for. To the home of Mrs. Warfield a young soldier was brought. He was very sick and was accompanied by an officer, who seemed deeply interested in the young man. She did all she could for the young man's comfort, and lost sight of the fact that her husband and two sons were in the Confederate Army. After bathing the sick man's torn and bleeding feet and putting on him clean socks and shoes, she looked up into

his face and sadly said: "These belong to my darling boy, who is in the Confederate Army. At this moment he may be lying on the battlefield cold in death; but you are perfectly welcome to them. I wish I could do more to relieve your suffering." The sick and many were greatly affected by her words, and very grateful for her kindness, and that good little woman was happier for what she had done. She was, however, subjected to many severe trials during the war, all of which she bore without murmuring. Her anguish of mind at times was most agonizing, especially when she knew of an approaching battle, which could be easily learned by the subdued excitement that would prevail among the soldiers on the streets, and she was always anxious to learn the news after the battle, and would ever be on the alert, hoping to hear something from her absent ones. She would frequently receive letters from them through flags of truce, but as these letters would always be read by others before reaching her, they could only tell her that they were alive and well, although occasionally she would receive long letters that had been smuggled through the lines by some friend, and those letters were anxiously looked for and perused with very great pleasure and kept as treasures. The last letter she received from George, in June 1862, was especially beautiful, and the fond mother read and re-read it many times, little dreaming it was the last letter she would receive from her darling boy. He told her they were on the eve of a great battle, and he knew his dear mother would be praying for the safety of her boy, and many were the tears shed as

the loving mother read her boy's last words. After the battle was over she would start at every sound, hoping for news. It was late at night, early in July, hearing footsteps on the sidewalk, she hastened to the window in time to hear a man's voice saying, "I wonder if she knows it yet?" They passed on and she wondered what they meant, but the dear little woman was soon to know. She was visited the next day by a lady friend, who broke to her, as gently as possible, the sad news that her son George had been killed in the Battle of Frazier's Farm, June 30th. The anguish of that fond mother cannot be described. She longed for a letter from her husband and Edgar, hoping it was all a mistake, and they would tell her that her boy still lived. But weeks passed before a letter came, and then the sad news was confirmed. It was too true. Her son George would never return to her again, and it was only by going to God in prayer that she received strength to bear her burden of sorrow.

Edgar was acting hospital steward under Dr. Lewis at this battle, and it was his duty to visit the battlefield and care for the wounded. His first thought was for his brother, and after enquiring of several, he learned that George had been seen to fall, but they did not know whether he had been killed or wounded. Edgar hastened to the spot where George had been last seen and there he found his brother lying cold in death. His heart was torn with anguish, but with assistance, a large grave was dug, and after removing a blood-stained Bible from his brother's pocket, he wrapped

him in his blanket and placed his body in the grave with several of his comrades, whom Edgar knew, and placed a board at the head of each, bearing the name, to mark the place where they were buried.

Later in the war, Mrs. Warfield was visited by her friend Miss Haislip, a maiden lady and near neighbor, who confided to her that a relative of hers, Capt. Stringfellow, of the Confederate army, had been in Washington as a spy and had been secreted in her home for several days, waiting an opportunity to get out of town. He was growing impatient, as he had very important information and must get through the lines at once, and thought Mrs. Warfield could possibly aid him. Now Mrs. Warfield had friends living at Fairfax, and after thinking a while she told Miss Haislip if she would accompany her on the trip, she would try to get a pass for herself, friend and driver, for a visit to Mrs. Arundel in Fairfax, and then Capt. Stringfellow could take care of himself. Miss Haislip agreed to accompany her, and Mrs. Warfield went immediately to the provost marshal's office, hoping to get a pass, though fearing she would be refused, as she would not taken the oath of allegiance to the United States, telling the officer that she could not conscientiously do so, having her husband and two sons in the Confederate army. They respected her for her candor, yet they would never give her a pass. However, in spite of the many refusals, she was willing to ask again. She was told at the provost marshal's office that Col. Wells was not in, but might return in an hour. She

decided to wait. The hour passed and she was growing restless, knowing she had a great deal to do before she could leave home to take the trip, so she stated her business to another officer, who also said she would have to wait until Col. Wells returned. Another hour passed and still the Colonel did not come, and she thought she must go, when there seemed to be some excitement out in the hall, and a prisoner, a woman dressed in men's clothes. In a little while quite a number of soldiers were in the office, and Mrs. Warfield soon saw that they would be glad if she were not there. In a few minutes an officer approached her, saying that Col. Wells had not yet returned, but possibly he could do something for her. She at once stated her business, and in a few minutes he handed her a pass. Overjoyed at her success, she hastened home, and the next morning very early Miss Haislip and Mrs. Warfield started from the home of the latter in a buggy, driving to the head of Duke street, where they were joined by Capt. Stringfellow, disguised as a very rustic-looking youth who crouched down between them and making himself as small as possible, acted as their driver. He gave all his valuable papers to Mrs. Warfield, who secreted them about her person. She was also very thoughtful in providing a well-filled lunch basket. There were several guards they would have to pass. The first one barely glanced at their pass and told them to drive on. Several miles further on they came to another guard, who took his time examining their pass and asked several questions. Mrs. Warfield became suddenly very hungry, and produced

the lunch basket and very kindly offered the guard something to eat. It has been frequently said that to reach a man's heart is through his stomach, and it proved so in this instance, for the guard seemed to be enjoying his lunch immensely as he told them they could drive on. The next guard from the manner in which he held the pass upside down, they decided could not read. He, too, told them to drive on, but feeling very sorry for him, they tarried long enough to give him some of their lunch which seemed to please him greatly. The next guard was a very young man, who chatted quite pleasantly, and told them they could drive on, but they took time to give him something to eat too, leaving him feeling more comfortable. There remained but one more guard to pass, and he turned and twisted the pass a number of times, and finally called to another guard, who quickly came and they talked together for quite a while, but just then Mrs. Warfield decided it was time to have something more to eat, and again the basket was brought forth, and she kindly invited the guards to partake of their lunch with them which they were not slow to do; and making sure there were no more guards for them to pass before reaching their destination, it was decided to leave the lunch basket with them. So, after a few more pleasant words, they drove on their way rejoicing. Driving a few miles farther Capt. Stringfellow left the main road and took one through the woods. Mrs. Warfield told him she could pilot him no farther, as they were going in a direction she knew nothing about. He laughingly remarked that he knew and that he would soon be within

a short distance of the house where he had left his uniform. Then he directed them to the main road again, and telling them good-by, that he could get through all right now. Mrs. Warfield returned to the Captain his valuable papers, and after thanking the ladies for their kindness and assistance, they parted, and it was not long before they reached the home of Mrs. Arundel, who was greatly surprised and delighted to see them. They only remained a day or two with her, then started back to Alexandria, arriving safely, and no one ever suspected what they had done.

The first of January, 1865, Mrs. Warfield received a letter from her husband, smuggled through by a friend. He told her that he and Edgar would get a furlough on the 4th of January for fifteen days, and would come to Mrs. Arundel's, hoping she could get through the line to see them. This greatly excited Mrs. Warfield, who was so anxious to see them, but she feared she would not be able to get a pass, and so it proved, which greatly distressed her. She then tried to arrange in some way that her daughter Roberta could get through the lines and see her father and brother. Through the kindness of a friend a pass was finally gotten for her, limited for a ten days visit to Fairfax. She was perfectly delighted that she could go and assisted greatly with the hurried preparations for her trip. Mrs. Warfield quietly told a number of friends, who had some member of their family in the Confederate army, that there might be an opportunity to get a letter through the lines, if they would let her have it

by a certain time. Roberta started near noon the next day with quite a number of letters and many articles concealed about her person, which she was carrying out for the comfort of her father and brother. Arriving at Fairfax, she was met by Mrs. Arundel's son. They were expecting some one to come and were delighted to see her. Her father and brother had not yet arrived. Day after day passed and still they did not come. Roberta was greatly distressed, fearing something had happened to them, or that she would have to return home without seeing them. Mrs. Arundel lived at the intersection of four roads and would frequently be visited by both the Federal and Confederate soldiers, so they had always to be very careful and constantly on the watch. Sitting beside a glowing fire in the huge fireplace the last night of Roberta's stay, for her pass would soon expire the following day, when she would be compelled to return home, she was feeling very sad, for her father and brother had not come. She was talking about them when the dogs in the yard began barking furiously. They knew some one was approaching. It proved to be several Federal officers, who had stopped to make some inquiries. They had been gone only a short time when the dogs began barking again, and cautious footsteps were heard on the veranda. It was Mr. Warfield and Edgar. Roberta almost fainted with joy at sight of those she had not seen for so long, and many were the questions asked about the loved ones at home. It was thought to be unsafe for them to remain at the house, and it was decided to build a shelter down in the woods at

a very secluded spot some distance from the house, and in a short time they had very comfortable quarters and named it "Fort Defiance." Mrs. Arundel very kindly loaned them blankets and everything that would add to their comfort and protection, and some one of the family was constantly on the watch. Their meals were sent regularly to them every day. Roberta returned to her home in Alexandria the next day with many letters from the Confederate soldiers to their relatives, concealed about her, which were delivered in a way as not excite suspicion how they came. She arrived early in the afternoon. Her mother was anxiously expecting her, and as soon as they were alone Roberta exclaimed, "Oh mother, you must go tomorrow; they are so anxious to see you!" After listening to all Roberta could tell her, Mrs. Warfield decided she would make another effort to obtain a pass. She thought of a lady friend from Pennsylvania, who was visiting in the neighborhood, and whose brother was in the Confederate Army. She decided she would confide in her. Possibly she could aid her in some way. Miss Dickel became greatly interested in what Mrs. Warfield told her, and after thinking a while said she thought she could get a pass to go to Fairfax, if Mrs. Warfield would be willing to assume her name. Mrs. Warfield very willingly agreed to that arrangement and hastened home to make preparation for her journey next day. It was twilight when she was visited by her friend, who to her great delight thanked her the longed-for pass, saying, "Now do be careful and remember your name is Dickel." She also gave her a letter to take to her

brother. During the night there was a heavy snow-storm, and in the morning there were several inches of snow on the ground, and near noon there was a heavy rain and sleet, but nothing daunted, this courageous little woman who started forth to take the train having concealed on her person a number of letters for Confederate soldiers and many articles of wearing apparel for her husband and son, including several pairs of shoes and gloves fastened securely to her hoopskirt, and bearing in her arms a pair of military boots and a large fruit cake. After considerable delay they finally reached Burke's station, where she hoped some one would meet her to drive her to Mrs. Arundel's, several miles distant. It was still raining and she was greatly disappointed to find no one there to meet her. Two Federal officers approached and very kindly offered to escort her to Mrs. Burke's residence, each of them taking one of her packages. She trembled, fearing their suspicions might be aroused. Arriving at the house she found everything bright and cheerful, and quite a number of Federal officers seated around a glowing log fire, unmindful of the gloom outside. Mr. Burke was very kind and entertaining, but after supper Mrs. Warfield became very restless. The rain was still falling and twilight drawing near. She felt that she must be going. Mrs. Burke insisted on her remaining over night, but she thought it best not to, and inquired if she could get some one to drive her to Mrs. Arundel's. She was told that it would be utterly impossible to cross the branches, owing to the high water caused by the heavy rains. She finally

decided to walk the distance. They tried to convince her that it would be utterly impossible also. She, however, insisted that she must make the attempt and asked that some one start her in the right direction. Mr. Burke consented to go as far as the first branch with her, saying he felt sure she would be glad to return with him. It had now stopped raining and was very cold. After walking a long distance they came to the first branch, which was terribly swollen, the log crossing being completely covered with water. Securing a long, stout stick, Mr. Burke told her to wait, that he would cross first and test the depth of the water, and he felt sure she would not attempt to go any farther that night. With great difficulty he succeeded in crossing, and turning around, found to his amazement that she had followed him across. He looked at her and exclaimed, "Well, you are certainly a very brave little woman, and I see you are determined to proceed." She very kindly thanked him for his kindness and assistance, and asking him for further direction, she bade him good-night and proceeded on her journey, feeling very lonely. But she hurried as rapidly as possible, taking with her the long stick. It was a cold, dark, dreary night in January and it seemed that she had walked a long distance ere she reached another branch. The water sounded very angry, and she could not see the crossing, but felt for it with the stick, and step by step she slowly crossed. The strain was very great, but she stopped only a moment to rest and started on again, not forgetting to thank God for so safely guiding her, and praying for strength and protection.

She walked on through the mud and slush, groping her way through the darkness. Her clothing and feet were very wet, and at times she felt she could go no farther. Then she would think of the loved ones so anxiously waiting to see hear and pressed onward with renewed strength and determination to reach her destination. After a while it cleared away. The stars shone brightly, for which she was very grateful. Later on the wind began to blow, whistling mournfully through the trees. It grew colder and colder, piercing her through and through. Hearing a sound of rushing water, she stopped to listen and found she was near another branch, which she feared she could not cross. After feeling around quite a while she finally found the log crossing, but every step she took the water became deeper and deeper, reaching nearly to her knees. Fearing to turn back, she kept on, although she could scarcely keep her foothold, but with great effort she finally reached the other side almost exhausted. After thanking God for so safely guiding her, she pressed onward, footsore and weary. She had long since lost her overshoes in the mud. Her clothing was freezing, and becoming so heavy she made very slow progress, and she felt at times she would sink from sheer exhaustion. It seemed as though she had walked several miles when she came to another branch, but on, how terribly ugly it appeared, as the water rushed on with an angry roar. Her heart became very heavy, and after finding the log crossing and testing the depth of the water with her stick, she knew she dare not venture to cross, that she

would surely be washed from the log and drown. She slowly retraced her steps for a short distance. She was very tired and leaving the road she sought a tree whose lower branches were very close to the ground. She seated herself as well as she could to rest awhile. Her thoughts wandered back to her comfortable home and her darling children, whom she loved so dearly. She felt that if she never returned to them that they would be well cared for, and that their sister Roberta would be a mother to them, and God would watch over and protect them. Then she thought of the loving husband and son, who were so anxiously awaiting her, and whom she was trying so hard to reach. All through that perilous night's journey she had not seen a living creature. She was very lonely. A drowsiness seemed to be stealing over her. What did it mean? Soon she would be sweetly sleeping, but hark! Something startled her. It was only the tinkling of a cowbell in the distance, but how sweet the sound. She felt her strength return as she made her way to the road again. She paused to listen; again the tinkling of the bell could be heard, and she felt sure she must be near some farm house and she would follow the sound. After a while she discerned a dim light in the distance, and her heart bounded with joy. She forgot how tired she was, or the weight of her frozen clothing. The light would disappear at times, only to seem the brighter when seen again. Finally she came to a picket fence, which inclosed the house, which was yet some distance from her. She could find no gateway, so she tried to call, hoping to make some one hear her, but

it was impossible for her to utter a sound, her throat was so hot and dry. A little distance from her she found a little pile of snow that the rain had not washing entirely away, and after eating some of it she found she could speak, but not loud enough to make herself heard at the house. Finally she decided to climb over the fence, first throwing her packages over, but she found climbing a fence rather difficult encumbered as she was. However, she landed on the other side though not very gracefully. Gathering herself and packages together she proceeded to the house fearing every moment she might be attacked by a ferocious watch dog, but she neither saw nor even hearing one. She ascended the porch, and after knocking loudly on the door several times, a man's voice very gruffly asked. "Who's that?" She answered, "It is only a woman entirely alone. I will not harm you. Please let me in. I am nearly frozen." She could hear him fumbling around and taking down bars, but he could not open the door, so he finally told her she would have to come around to the back door. She asked if he had a dog. He said, "Yes, and a very bad one, but he is chained." He met her at the back door, which opened into the kitchen which was scrupulously clean, having an immense cooking stove, but not a spark of fire. He called to some one upstairs to come down quickly. In a few minutes his wife appeared, and soon had a roaring fire which felt exceedingly comfortable to the weary little woman, and in a few moments she was in a perfect halo of steam from her drying garments. After relating her night's experience and telling him where she

wanted to go, he gruffly told her she would have been drowned sure if she had tried to cross that last branch, but that she was then only a half mile from Mrs. Arundel's farm. She asked if he could take her there immediately. He replied he could not. She told him she would give him ten dollars if he would take her there at once. His eyes fairly sparkled then, and he quickly asked if she could ride horseback. She told him no and asked if he did not have a conveyance of some kind. He said only a wagon without springs. Mrs. Warfield said that would do, and she would like to start alas soon as possible, but she had to wait for him to repair the harness. After paying the woman liberally for her hospitality, they started, and after an hour's driving, they arrived at their destination. Her long, perilous journey was over. It was now near daybreak, and the little woman was joyously welcomed, and was soon seated before a glowing log fire with every member of the family around her, all eager to do something for her comfort. The eldest son was despatched to the woods to accompany Mr. Warfield and Edgar to the house. One joyful moment when those loved ones met after being separated so long. Words fail to describe their joy and happiness, so I will leave it to your imagination.

It was feared she would be completely prostrated after her fearful journey, but not so. After a good rest this noble little woman went to stay with her husband and son in their home in the woods, "Fort Defiance." They were perfectly delighted with the many nice things she had brought for their

comfort, and they spent the time very pleasantly, all so happy to be together again. She remained with them until it was time for them to return to camp, and again she had to tell them good-bye. Sad indeed was the parting, not knowing they would ever meet again. In a few days she returned to her home in Alexandria, and in a quiet way delivered the many letters that had been given to her from the Confederate soldiers to their loved ones at home. Then the brave little woman settled down to her home duties, hoping it would not be long before the family would all be together again. Her hopes were soon to be realized. After the surrender of General Lee in April, 1865, Mr. Warfield and Edgar returned to their home, joyful welcomed by all, yet there was sorrow in their hearts, for on the battlefield, where he had fallen so nobly in defense of his country, their darling boy lay in his silent grave.

In a few months after the close of the war, Mrs. Warfield accompanied by Edgar, visited the battlefield where her brave boy lay, and returned to Alexandria with his remains, which now lie in their family lot in the Methodist cemetery. [Union Cemetery]

The children were never happier than when listening to their father tell of his adventures during the war. Mr. Warfield died in 1886. Roberta, the beautiful daughter, married happily in 1866, and like her mother, her life was spent in making others happy, and in 1899 she died, surrounded by her loving husband and children. Edgar is married and still living in Alexandria. Mrs. Warfield lived to see all her

children married, and was eighty years of age when after only a week's illness, the summons came, and on the 30th of June, 1904, surrounded by her sorrowing family, she fell asleep in Jesus, and her loved ones, who had gone before, were waiting to welcome her to her eternal home.

What is more beautiful than a wife's devotion and a mother's love? Truly it may be said of her, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

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## A View of Mr. Lincoln

by T. Michael Miller

Responding to President Abraham Lincoln's call for seventy-five thousand volunteers to crush the Southern rebellion, U.S. troops invaded and occupied Alexandria, Virginia on May 24, 1861. The town soon became an armed camp as private houses, churches and public buildings were seized by the Federals for use as military hospitals, prisons and administrative offices.

George Alfred Townsend, a correspondent with the New York Herald, visited Alexandria in 1863

and remarked that:

Many hamlets and towns have been destroyed during the war. But of all that in

some form survive, Alexandria has most suffered...Its streets, its docks, its warehouses, its dwellings and its suburbs have been absorbed to the thousand uses of war. Alexandria is filled with ruined people; they walk as strangers through their ancient streets, and their property is no longer theirs to possess. I do not know any Federal functionary was accused of tyranny, or wantonness, but these things ensued as the natural result of Civil War.

Following the fierce battles fought at Manassas, Fredericksburg, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor, Federal war casualties mounted as thousands of wounded Union troops were transported by train and ship to Alexandria. The city soon took on the appearance of a huge hospital center inhabited by surgeons, nurses and orderlies.

"Fairfax Seminary Hospital was

the largest facility in the region. It was located along Quaker Lane and Seminary Road in the old Protestant Episcopal Seminary buildings.

Several descriptions of the Seminary Hospital have survived including a journal kept by Mrs. Jane Stuart Woolsey, a nurse who for many years administered to the wounded patients at this facility.

Recently, another letter describing the Fairfax Seminary Hospital and its extensive facilities has surfaced. It was written by Nathan Cole, a Union soldier from Massachusetts to John E. Derby.

Little is known of Nathan R. Cole's formative years except that he was born in Kensington, New Hampshire. When the Civil War erupted in the spring of 1861, Cole, a 26 year old provision dealer, had taken up residence in Newburyport, Massachusetts. On November 19, 1861, he enlisted as a Private in Co. I of the 30th Massachusetts. For the majority of the war Cole fought in the western theater but was transferred to the east where he re-enlisted on January 1, 1864.

When hostilities ended with the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox Courthouse in April 1865, Cole was stationed at the "Fairfax Seminary Hospital near Alexandria. From this post he wrote the following letter to his friend

John E. Derby of Marlborough,  
Massachusetts:

Fairfax Seminary Hospital near  
Alexandria, Virginia [April 1865];  
Friday P.M. -- [letter mailed May 8,  
1865]

Dear friend Marcus,

I received your kind letter of the 24 and was much pleased. This has been a charming day, I have been to Washington. My room gives me a sight of the city by turning my head in that direction. The rain of last night laid the dust finely. There are now a great many soldiers about us encamped, the 57th (regiment) was over the river 8 or 10 miles from here; I went the other day and found the Marlborough boys but did know only Dallas Mehan. Patches, the boy that he took and brought up, was stout and rugged, and we were glad to meet. I am well and happy. I have fine times riding to town every day. It agrees with me. I always go to Alexandria every morning 2 miles and often to Washington, from there 6 miles or so crossing at Long Bridge. I have plenty of leisure, but how long this will continue is uncertain as our hospital may be broken up before long. But still I shall always look back to this portion of my life with wonder, love and praise. My cup was dreadful bitter last summer. Now it runs over with the sweet, and I will praise the LORD for his loving kindness. You

asked for a photograph. I send one with pleasure. Let me know if it looks natural and send me yours in your next and tell John I am sorry he had the blahs. I hope he has lost them now that summer is so near and that he is happy in view of all the blessings of Peace and Prosperity that dawn upon us. Let me inquire if it is well with your souls.

Religion, what treasons untold,  
reside in that heavenly word. Close  
to be sought for their silver and  
gold, or all this earth can afford.

I do not feel homesick and expect to stay in the service 2 years and 5 months longer as I belong to the regular army. This is a delightful place about 6 miles from Washington and 2 from Alexandria, in the country on a hill commanding a view of 3 cities of the Potomac and the country about. We have about 8 Doctors and about 400 or 500 patients and attendants. We have the Seminary buildings and some wooden houses built on purpose for the soldiers that are sick and wounded and also some barracks for the Veteran Reserve soldiers who do guard duty. Also, a stable and horses and teams of various kinds, a laundry, a bake house, a chapel and chaplains, a number of other buildings so that it is a lively place, especially now that the old troops from the Army of the Potomac are encamped near us.

Our prayer meetings are held 3 times a week evenings and also Sunday eve and are quite animated and refreshing generally. Remember me in your prayers at least once or twice that we may meet in heaven. I live well -- tea & coffee; and warm cakes for breakfast, good bread and butter & pies and cakes and meat and fish and fruit and vegetables. I expect to go after berries this summer if I stay here, blackberries high bush are plenty they say.

I have been to the Smithsonian Institute --it was not destroyed below and there is quite an exhibition of beasts, birds and fishes and reptiles stuffed and a picture gallery.

I saw the President [Abraham Lincoln] after his body was laid out in the Rotunda of the Capitol. We have all the signs of mourning still displayed (and it was an awful event.) I think society off this way would suit you & John --at any rate try to take a trip to Washington and see the ladies of Pennsylvania Avenue. It is a grand wide street and take a sail in a steamboat on the blue Potomac--Can you go to Boston now for a quarter on the Fitchburg R.R? Tell my Marlborough friends I am very glad to receive letters. It is one of the blessings being absent from home. Is Father Weeks alive? Tell Brother Wilkins the class leader that I would like a letter from him telling me what corps and regiment

his brother is in and also Brother Baker who enlisted with him as I expect they are or will be camped near me. Dallas told me a George Brigham was with him but I did not see him that day as perhaps he was off on guard somewhere. My love to all.

Ask John if he remembers our good ride to Framingham?

With respect and esteem  
(excuse poor writing)

Nathan R. Cole

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Following his wartime activities, Sergt. Cole joined the regular U.S. Army. On July 5, 1866, he was mustered out of service at Charleston, South Carolina. Thereafter, he returned home to Newburyport, Massachusetts where he died on November 6, 1910.

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