

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY IN COLUMBIA, S. C.  
BY SHERMAN'S ARMY

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SPEECH  
OF  
HON. COLE. L. BLEASE  
A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE  
MAY 15, 1930  
RELATIVE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY  
IN COLUMBIA, S. C., BY SHERMAN'S ARMY



UNITED STATES  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON : 1930

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,  
*May 16, 1930.*

*Ordered*, That the address delivered by Mr. Blease in the Senate on May 15, 1930, relating to destruction of property in Columbia, S. C., by Sherman's army, appearing in the Congressional Record on pages 9326 to 9371, both inclusive, be printed as a Senate document.

Attest:

EDWIN P. THAYER,  
*Secretary.*

## DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY IN COLUMBIA, S. C., BY SHERMAN'S ARMY

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Mr. BLEASE. Mr. President, on February 20, 1928, I introduced a bill (S. 3305) for the relief of the Washington Street Methodist Church, in Columbia, S. C., which was referred to the Committee on Claims. On April 2, 1928, I introduced a bill (S. 3863) for the relief of the Ladies Ursuline Community, of Columbia, S. C., which was likewise referred to the Committee on Claims.

On January 8, 1929, I inserted in the Congressional Record (pp. 1346-1347) an article entitled "Burning of Columbia as Related in Rhyme," written by Judge M. M. Mann, of St. Matthews, S. C., and on the same date another article entitled "The Burning of Ursuline Convent, Columbia, S. C., by Sherman's Army in 1865, from an abridged copy taken from the annals of the convent written by a member of the community who was an eyewitness" (pp. 1347-1348).

On February 7, 1929 (p. 2967), I inserted in the Congressional Record an article, The Burning of Columbia, which was referred to the Committee on Claims.

During the present Congress, on May 25, 1929, I introduced a bill (S. 1276) for the relief of the Methodist Church, and a bill (S. 1277) for the relief of the convent (see p. 1899, Congressional Record), and they were referred to the Committee on Claims, where they now are.

On April 1, 1930 (p. 6518, Congressional Record), during a discussion of the bill (S. 1760) for the relief of the St. Paul's Episcopal Church, of Selma, Ala., which was passed, I served notice on the Senate that I proposed to have reports on my bills.

On February 23, 1928, I wrote a letter to the chairman of the Committee on Claims, which I asked to have published as a part of my remarks, along with another letter under date of March 1, 1928, and his reply thereto of March 7, 1928, with a letter from my secretary addressed to the chairman under date of April 9, 1928.

There being no objection, the matter referred to was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 23, 1928.

Hon. R. B. HOWELL,

*Chairman Committee on Claims,*

*United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR SENATOR HOWELL: I am sending you copy of S. 3305, together with copies of reports on a similar bill, which allowed an appropriation for the burning of the Virginia Military Institute.

I will be glad if you will appoint a subcommittee to have this bill acted on for me as early as practicable, for there is absolutely no question of fact as to Sherman's army having burned the Methodist Church in Columbia, S. C.

This appears to be one of those things which, I think, should be properly adjusted without renewing any factional or sectional prejudices and I know that you will agree with me. It is a just claim and should be paid.

If your whole committee or the subcommittee should desire any special information, I will be very glad to appear before them or to have a committee from the church do so.

Thanking you for your attention, I am, very respectfully,

COLE. L. BLEASE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 1, 1928.

Hon. ROBERT B. HOWELL,

*Chairman Committee on Claims,*

*United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR SENATOR: In reference to my bill, S. 3305, I beg leave to submit the following proof as to how the Methodist Church at Columbia, S. C., was destroyed:

Howards' Report, Official Records, series 1, Volume XLVII, page 199.  
Logan's Report, page 227.

Cox's (March to the Sea), page 174.

Slocum's (Sherman's March from Savannah to Bentonville).

The Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 4, page 686.

Rhodes' Who Burned Columbia, in American History Review, 7, page 485.

General Halleck, Chief of Staff and military advisor to President Lincoln, wrote to Sherman as follows:

"Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed and if a little salt should be sown upon its site it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession."

And Sherman's reply in his dispatch of December 24, 1864:

"I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and don't think salt will be necessary. When I move the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them, naturally, into Charleston first; and if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreck vengeance upon South Carolina."

I desire to quote also from Ohio in the War, by the Hon. Whitelaw Reid, in which he says:

"It was the most monstrous barbarity of this barbarous march. Before his movement began General Sherman begged permission to turn his army loose in South Carolina and devastate it. He used this permission to the full. He protested that he did not wage war upon women and children. But, under the operation of his orders, the last morsel of food was taken from hundreds of destitute families that his soldiers might feast in needless and riotous abundance. Before his eyes rose, day after day, the mournful clouds of smoke on every side that told of old people and their grandchildren driven, in midwinter, from the only roofs there were to shelter them, by the flames which the wantonness of his soldiers had kindled. Yet if a single soldier was punished for a single outrage or theft during that entire movement, we have found no mention of it in all the voluminous records on the march."

I desire to quote also from The South in the Building of the Nation, Volume II, History of States, page 85:

"General Sherman immediately entered the defenseless capital. That Sherman burned Columbia, though long denied by that officer and by northern historians, is now fully established. Federal courts have judicially admitted that the city was destroyed by Union troops, and there were many trustworthy eyewitnesses to that wanton act. It may be sufficient to quote but one: The Rev. A. Toomer Porter, in a sermon in 1891, said that he was in Columbia at the time and adds: 'General Sherman's troops burnt the town; I saw that done by them.' The fact is frequently overlooked that Sherman finally confessed that he burned the city. In his memoirs he says: 'The army, having totally ruined Columbia, moved on toward Winnsboro.'"

I also desire to quote from a letter of Hugh O'Neill, of Bellevue, Nebr., in a letter dated December 7, 1890:

"One thing that I witnessed I always condemned, and always shall—that was the burning of Columbia. That town was surrendered to the brigade I belonged to. We marched into town about 11 o'clock February 17, 1865, and my regiment stacked arms in the market house; and by 4 or 5 o'clock, it seems to me, there were not 20 sober men in the brigade. The drug stores were broken open and whisky carried out by the buckets full \* \* \* and I consider the burning the work of a drunken mob \* \* \*. I know I was sober, for I

never drank of intoxicating liquor in my life, and I think that I saw things as they were as near as any man that was there. Although history is silent on a great many points, they are as fresh in my mind as when I witnessed them. As I stood there that night and witnessed these things, I could but think, if God were a just God, these things would surely come home to the parties that upheld these things."

I think from these records, Senator, that you and the other members of your committee will need no further proof as to the fact that this church was destroyed by the military authorities of the United States.

I hope that you will be so kind as to lay this communication before your subcommittee.

With my kindest regards, I am, very respectfully,

COLE L. BLEASE

UNITED STATES SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON CLAIMS,  
March 7, 1928.

Hon. COLE L. BLEASE,  
*United States Senate.*

MY DEAR SENATOR: I have your letter of March 1 calling attention to and submitting proof in support of your bill for the relief of the Methodist Church at Columbia, S. C., which was destroyed during the Civil War.

I understand that your secretary has been asked to furnish some additional information. When it is received I shall be very glad to see that the matter is brought to the attention of the committee for appropriate action.

Sincerely yours,

R. B. HOWELL.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 9, 1928.

Hon. ROBERT B. HOWELL,  
*Chairman Committee on Claims,*  
*United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR: In support of bill (S. 3863) for the relief of the Ladies Ursuline Community of Columbia, at Columbia, S. C., which was referred to your committee on April 2, 1928, Senator Blease wishes to submit the following evidence:

1. Affidavit of Mrs. H. W. Richardson, of Columbia, S. C.
2. Second affidavit of Mrs. H. W. Richardson, of Columbia, S. C.
3. Affidavit of Mrs. Ellen Lynch McQueen, of Columbia, S. C.
4. Affidavit of Mr. James F. Williams, of Columbia, S. C.
5. Affidavit of Zelia Barry, of Dallas, Tex.
6. Itemized statement of property and value thereof destroyed.
7. Excerpts from The Ursulines of the Congregation of Paris, in South Carolina.

Your attention is respectfully directed to the fact that the evidence heretofore submitted in support of S. 3305, for the relief of the Washington Street Methodist Church, of Columbia, S. C., bears directly on the merits of the above bill, S. 3863, and vice versa.

The Senator will thank you to kindly have these bills referred to subcommittees for appropriate action as early as practicable, for he is anxious to have them reported and considered during the present session of Congress.

With assurances of the Senator's high esteem, I am,

Very respectfully,

JOHN D. LONG, *Secretary.*

Mr. BLEASE. That the city of Columbia, S. C., was burned in February, 1865, by Gen. W. T. Sherman's soldiers in accordance with and in the satisfaction of what he expressed as "an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina," and particularly upon her capital city, where the first secession convention met, and that the destruction of the city by fire was committed by his soldiers in his presence, with his knowledge, consent, acquiescence, and approval, is borne out by the truth of history, as it will here be stated from the records.

The particular claims now pending are those of the Washington Street Methodist Episcopal Church and the Ladies' Ursuline Community. The church building of the former was set upon fire by Sherman's soldiers in the mistaken belief that it was the First Baptist Church near by in which the secession convention had met. The convent of the Ladies' Ursuline Community was set upon fire by Sherman's soldiers that it might be looted of its rich treasures, which could not otherwise be done, because Sherman himself had personally promised its protection. The truth of these statements will be proved by facts which are incontrovertible. But there is here a larger matter at issue. For 64 years there has been an effort to relieve Sherman and his army of the obloquy of this monstrous barbarity—an effort, coming from outside the South, first, to place the blame upon the Confederate general, Wade Hampton, and when the civilized world, and even the northern people, refused to give credence to a charge so incredible, then to make it appear an accident.

In order that the claims of the Washington Street Methodist Church and the Ursuline Community might be justified, it would not be necessary that it should be proved specifically that their buildings were directly fired by Sherman's soldiers, in pursuance of the general program of "vengeance," for every building in Columbia that was destroyed that night of February 17 was burned as a proximate result of the application of torches in the hands of Sherman's soldiers. But the proof as to the specific setting on fire of these buildings, as is the case with many other buildings, stands out in bold relief against that general conflagration when a city passed out in flames to satisfy "an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance," while, "throughout the whole of this terrible scene the soldiers continued their search after spoil."

#### THE WASHINGTON STREET METHODIST CHURCH

So well authenticated is the version of the destruction of the Washington Street Methodist Church that the Yearbook and Directory of the First Baptist Church of Columbia, issued March, 1929, with no thought of controversy but as an accepted fact, contains this paragraph in the historical sketch of the First Baptist Church:

In 1861 the Confederate secession convention met in the present church building, the legislative hall being in use by the representatives. This convention adjourned to Charleston later because of an epidemic of smallpox in the city. On the night of February 17, 1865, some of the raiders of Sherman's army were intent on burning the church where "so much mischief" had been started. Upon inquiry of a colored man, who it is said was the sexton of this church, as to which church it was, they were directed to the Washington Street Methodist Church, which was burned, and this building escaped.

With no thought of controversy but as an accepted fact the history and directory of the Washington Street Methodist Church, issued in 1925, thus briefly states the truth:

Sherman's soldiers destroyed this sacred old place in February, 1865. One of the Pritchard boys, a relative of Bishop Capers, personally witnessed the application of the torch.

Without thought of controversy but as an accepted fact Edwin J. Scott, well-known banker of unquestioned and unimpeached and unimpeachable integrity, then 62 years of age, and now long since gathered to his fathers, who was in Columbia, which was his home,

that night, records in the diary which he kept and which he incorporated in his *Random Recollections of a Long Life* (Columbia, S. C., Charles A. Calvo, jr., printer, 1884), page 181:

The Methodist Church on Washington Street was set on fire three times before its destruction was completed, Mr. Connor, the clergyman in charge, who lived in the parsonage adjoining, having twice put out the fire. When they burnt the parsonage he brought out a sick child wrapped in a blanket, and on one of the soldiers seizing the blanket he begged that it might be spared because of the child's sickness. The brute tore it off and threw it into the flames, saying, "D——n you, if you say a word I'll throw the child after it."

Without thought of controversy but in the travail of the ruin and devastation which Sherman left in his march, while almost the embers were yet smoldering, the *Southern Christian Advocate*, publication of the Southern Methodist Church, in its issue of March 16, 1865, just 29 days after the church in Columbia had been burned, the paper then being printed in Augusta, Ga., some 84 miles distant, thus stated as an accepted fact and as a matter of common knowledge the fate of the Washington Street Methodist Church in Columbia:

But the heaviest woe has fallen upon Columbia, the seat of hospitality and refinement, the beautiful capital of the State. More than half of it is in ashes—not by accident, as has been alleged, but of deliberate purpose. We have learned from friends who have seen Rev. W. G. Connor, pastor of Washington Street Methodist Episcopal Church, that the parsonage in which he lived was set on fire three times and extinguished; that the back doors of the church were entered and it fired within and by its burning his house and the district parsonage, occupied by the Rev. C. H. Pritchard, were consumed.

Mr. President, it was my honor and my privilege to know the Rev. C. H. Pritchard. He was pastor of the church to whom I gave my hand when I walked up to the chancel and became a Methodist, because my mother was a Methodist.

The means used by the Yankees to fire the houses were frequently fireballs thrown into them; and when the houses were burning and the inmates ran out, they entered and pillaged them.

A year later the *Southern Christian Advocate*, then published at Macon, Ga., on March 9, 1866, in—

An appeal for the Washington Street Methodist Church, in Columbia, S. C., which was burnt to the ground on the night of the 17th of February, 1865, by the soldiers of the invading army, commanded by General Sherman.

Without thought of controversy, but in the maner of stating an accepted fact, of common knowledge, referred, in that appeal for the church, to—

Its last pastor, William G. Connor, who, in vain, endeavored by prayers and tears to avert from it the hands of the raging incendiaries, as they yelled out, "Burn up the heathen temple."

Coinciding with these early first-hand and eyewitness accounts, given when there was not even a passing thought that it would be contended otherwise, is the affidavit of Malcolm A. Shelton, in 1865 residing just across the street from the Washington Street Methodist Church, who saw it fired, and later, when the matter was in controversy on account of Sherman's several and conflicting claims, stated what he saw on that terrible night. Mr. Shelton lived for years afterwards in Columbia, was well known to the people here in connection with the mercantile business, and bore an unimpeachable reputation. His original affidavit can not now be found. It

may be in the archives at Washington, or it may have been destroyed in the fire which some years ago consumed the city hall, and which destroyed numerous affidavits taken by the committee of citizens in 1866, of which Chancellor J. P. Carroll was chairman. But a copy of his affidavit, bearing upon its face its evidence of genuineness, and vouched for by the fact that in the pen-and-ink writing of years ago it has reposed in the archives of the church, gives this testimony of an eyewitness:

Before me personally appeared Malcolm A. Shelton, a citizen of Columbia, in said State and county, and who, after being duly sworn, deposes and says: That he has resided in Columbia for the past 35 years (the date of the paper is not given in the copy, but that has been years ago, and the affiant is now long since deceased), and during that whole period has resided on Washington Street on the square opposite the Washington Street Methodist Church and separated from said church by said Washington Street, which is 100 feet wide.

On the night of February 16-17, A. D. 1865, deponent was at his residence on the corner of Washington and Marion Streets, immediately south of said Washington Street Church, on the piazza of his said residence in company with Mrs. Shelton, the wife of deponent, Mr. M. Brennan, both of whom have since deceased, and a Federal officer—deponent believes a lieutenant—to deponent unknown. That deponent and said persons were watching the progress of the conflagration, and between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock deponent saw four or five men in the uniform of the United States soldiers go to the south-east corner of said church; they broke open the door at that part of the church and entered the building, and after remaining a few minutes inside they came out. Deponent remarked to the officer before mentioned that he (deponent) believed the soldiers entered to fire the church, and, if so, his house would go. He proposed they should go over and see, and as deponent and the officer started to cross the street they saw smoke issuing from the door of the church. On reaching the church deponent and said officer found that the building had been fired under the stairs leading to the gallery of the church near the entrance which had been broken open by the soldiers.

The officer advised deponent to remove his family to a vacant lot at some distance, which deponent did, and, as was anticipated, deponent's house was burned from the fire communicated from the burning church.

At the time of the burning of the church there were no buildings on fire within one and a half or two squares of the church, and the Columbia Female Seminary, on the corner of Washington and Marion Streets, west of the said church, and between the fire burning at the time and the church, and to the windward of the church, was not burned but remains to this day. Deponent believes from his knowledge of all the circumstances that if the church had not been fired at the time and in the manner stated by the soldiers, the church would not have been burned.

The testimony of these witnesses hereinabove given, bearing specifically upon the burning of the Washington Street Methodist Church, is presented before the general testimony as to the burning of the city of which this church was a part, and it should be borne in mind that, as is the case with the testimony as to the specific burning of the Ursuline Convent, it is only a part, and a very small part, of the general testimony which will be presented later in these remarks, showing beyond the faintest shadow of a doubt that the city was burned in accordance with the expressed desire, and in the presence and with the knowledge, acquiescence, approval, and ratification of General Sherman himself, until the destruction had reached such a point that even the "insatiable desire for vengeance" was satisfied and gratified, when, by his commands, Sherman's army immediately again became the well-disciplined soldiery of a stern general.

The evidence as to the value of the church buildings destroyed, as will also be the case with the Ursuline Convent, will be presented at the conclusion of my remarks.

Specific evidence as to the burning of the Ursuline Convent will next be presented.

#### THE CONVENT OF THE LADIES' URSULINE COMMUNITY OF COLUMBIA

General Sherman personally promised protection to the convent. General Sherman admits this himself. In his Memoirs, written by himself (New York, Charles L. Webster & Co., 1892, fourth edition, revised, corrected, and complete), pages 279 and 280, volume 2, he says:

I sat with General Howard on a log, watching the men lay this bridge; about 9 or 10 a. m. a messenger came from Colonel Stone on the other side, saying that the mayor of Columbia had come out of the city to surrender the place, and asking for orders. I simply remarked to General Howard that he had his orders, to let Colonel Stone go on into the city, and that we would follow as soon as the bridge was ready. By this same messenger I received a note in pencil from the lady superior of a convent or school in Columbia, in which she claimed to have been a teacher in a convent in Brown County, Ohio, at the time my daughter Minnie was a pupil there, and therefore asking special protection. My recollection is, that I gave the note to my brother-in-law, Colonel Ewing, then inspector general on my staff, with instructions to see this lady, and assure her that we contemplated no destruction of any private property in Columbia at all.

That was on the morning of February 17, the day he and his army entered the city. He thus speaks of the scene in Columbia 18 hours later, in the early morning of February 18:

Fortunately, about 3 or 4 a. m., the wind moderated, and gradually the fire was got under control; but it had burned out the very heart of the city, embracing several churches, the old statehouse, and the school or asylum of that very sister of charity who had appealed for my personal protection. (Sherman's Memoirs.)

Following is an excerpt from the annals of the convent, written by Madam Charles, a member of the community, who was an eyewitness:

On February 17, 1865, General Sherman's army entered Columbia. Reverend Doctor O'Connell, pastor of St. Peter's Church and chaplain to the Ursulines, asked a guard of protection for the convent. He obtained it—one man. On February 17, about noon, a cavalry officer rode up to the convent, spoke to the guard, and rang for admittance. Of the portress he asked to see the mother superior. To the superioress, Mother Baptista Lynch, he introduced himself as Major Fitzgibbons, a Catholic, and offered any service he, as an individual, could render. The reverend mother, not suspecting any danger to the convent, declined, at the same time thanking him for the offer. He, earnestly insisting, said, "Columbia is a doomed city; at least, that is the talk of the Army; and I do not know if a house will be left standing."

Such an announcement startled the superior; yet she and her companions answered that such threats could not apply to the convent since General Sherman had given a patron of the institution the assurance that her daughter, a pupil, was in a place of safety.

"Of course," replied Major Fitzgibbons, "I do not say the convent will be burned; such a thing would happen only by accident—but we all know what accidents are."

The nuns could not be convinced that danger was imminent. Finally, the major persuaded mother superior to write to the general, stating all the reasons she had given for her confidence of protection. He offered to be the bearer of the letter and said he would place it in the general's hand. The letter

was written and intrusted to the major. About 3 o'clock that afternoon Major Fitzgibbons returned, accompanied by seven soldiers whom he stated to be picked men sent to guard the convent. He also gave to mother superior the envelope which had inclosed her letter to the general, and on it Sherman had penciled orders to nearest commanding officer to protect the convent.

Scarcely had the nuns given supper to the seven guardsmen and gathered in the "community room" for the evening when the alarm of fire was given. From the windows the nuns saw the city toward the south blazing. Calling one of the guards, they asked him to go for Major Fitzgibbons. He refused. Other guards refused other services. The nuns saw that no assistance was to be expected from them.

It would perhaps be immaterial to the justice or the legality of the claim for the burning of the convent whether it caught from the fires set elsewhere by General Sherman's soldiers or whether the torch was applied directly to the convent. The fact, however, is that it was directly set on fire.

Following is an excerpt from an affidavit given on April 6, 1928, by Mrs. H. W. Richardson, of Columbia, since deceased, a venerable and a venerated woman of a distinguished South Carolina family, who was a student in the convent at the time:

Soon thereafter the convent building was on fire and the occupants fled from the building. Upon leaving the building I saw soldiers of General Sherman's army on the roof of the convent building, and they were throwing firebrands and torches. Soon the building was in flames, and, other than two relics of value, its entire contents were destroyed by the fire.

The mother superior of the convent thus gave a statement to the citizens' committee of Columbia, of which ex-Chancellor J. P. Carroll was chairman, which committee investigated the fire, and in May, 1866, made its report, after taking more than 60 depositions and statements in writing:

Our convent was consumed in the general conflagration of Columbia. Ourselves and pupils were forced to fly, leaving provisions, clothing, and almost everything. We spent the night in the open air in the churchyard. On the following morning General Sherman made us a visit, expressed his regret at the burning of our convent, disclaimed the act, attributing it to the intoxication of his soldiers, and told me to choose any house in town for a convent and it should be ours. He deputed his adjutant general, Colonel Ewing, to act in his stead. Colonel Ewing reminded us of General Sherman's offer to give us any house in Columbia we might choose for a convent. We have thought of it, said we, and of asking for General Preston's house, which is large. "That is where General Logan holds his headquarters," said he, "and orders have already been given, I know, to burn it to-morrow morning; but if you will take it for a convent, I will speak to the general, and the order will be countermanded."

Without thought of controversy, and when there could have been no such thought, Mrs. Mary Boykin Chestnut, wife of James Chestnut, jr., United States Senator from South Carolina 1859-1861, and afterwards an aid to Jefferson Davis and a brigadier general in the Confederate Army, wrote in a diary which she kept at the time and which was published after her death (London: William Heinemann, 1905, p. 358):

LINCOLNTON, N. C., March 5.

\* \* \* Father O'Connell came in, fresh from Columbia, and with news at last. Sherman's men had burned the convent. Mrs. Monroe had pinned her faith to Sherman, because he was a Roman Catholic, but Father O'Connell was there and saw it. The nuns and girls marched to the old Hampton House (Mrs. Preston's now) and so saved it. They walked between files of soldiers. Men were rolling tar barrels and lighting torches to fling on the house when the nuns came. Columbia is but dust and ashes, burned to the ground. Men,

women, and children have been left there homeless, houseless, and without one particle of food—reduced to picking up corn that was left by Sherman's horses on picket grounds and parching it to stay their hunger.

William Gilmore Simms, South Carolina historian of world repute, was in Columbia that night and was an eyewitness to the destruction of the city. On the 21st of March following he became editor of the *Phoenix*, a newspaper established in the ruins by Julian A. Selby, who had been connected with the *South Carolinian* before the great conflagration. Simms, whose historical accuracy will not be questioned, wrote for the *Phoenix* a detailed account of the "Sack and destruction of Columbia," in which he thus recounted the burning of the convent:

Beguiled to the last moment by the promises and assurances of officers and others in Sherman's army, the mother superior had clung to her house to the last possible moment. It was not merely a home but in some degree a temple, and to the professors of one church, at least, a shrine. It had been chosen, as we have seen, as the place of refuge for many other churches. Much treasure had been lodged in it for safekeeping, and the convent had a considerable treasure of its own. It was liberally and largely furnished not only as a domain but as an academy of the highest standard. It was complete in all the agencies and material for such an academy, and for the accommodation of perhaps 200 pupils. Among these agencies for education were no less than 17 pianos. The harp, the guitar, the globe, the maps, desks, benches, bedding, and clothing were all supplied on a scale of equal amplitude. The establishment also possessed some fine pictures, original and from the first masters. The removal of these was impossible, and hence the reluctance of the mother superior to leave her house was sufficiently natural. Assured besides of safety, she remained until further delay would have periled the safety of her innocent and numerous flock. This lady marshaled her procession with great good sense, coolness, and decision. They were instructed to secure the clothes most suitable to their protection from the weather and to take with them those valuables which were portable, and accompanied by Reverend Doctor O'Connell and others the damsels filed on, under the lead of their superior, through long tracts of fire, burning roofs, tumbling walls, wading through billows of flame, and taking at first the pathway to St. Peter's (Catholic) Church. Blinding fires left them almost aimless in their march, but they succeeded in reaching the desired point in safety. Here, on strips of bedding, quilts, and coverlets, the young girls found repose, protected by the vigilance of a few gentlemen, their priest, and, we believe, by two officers of the Yankee army, whose names are given as Colonel Corley and Doctor Galaghan. To these gentlemen, both Catholic Irish, the mother superior acknowledges her great indebtedness. They had need of all the watch and vigilance of these persons. It was soon found that several soldiers followed them in their flight, and were making attempts to fire the edifice, on several sides. These attempts, repeatedly baffled and as often renewed, showed at length so tenacious a purpose for its destruction that it was thought best to leave the building and seek refuge in the churchyard, and there, in the cold and chill, and among the gravestones with the dead, these terrified living ones remained, trembling watchers through the rest of this dreary night.

The above quotations referring specifically to the burning of the convent are given here, as was the case with the Washington Street Methodist Church, in order that the cases now pending might be clearly set apart in the beginning, and in the general narrative of how the city was set on fire and burned further evidence will be offered as to the particular burnings of the convent and the church along with the evidence as to the setting on fire and burning of the city generally. Before that is given, however, the evidence will be offered as to Sherman's intention to burn Columbia, formed and expressed long before he reached South Carolina, with his whole army "burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance," and with Sherman

himself "almost trembling for her," "but feeling she deserved all that seemed in store for her," as Sherman himself, in his Memoirs Written by Himself, expressed it, page 234, volume 2.

#### SHERMAN'S DELIBERATE PURPOSE WAS TO BURN COLUMBIA

That General Sherman left Atlanta, upon his march to the sea, with the intention of burning Columbia and wreaking upon it such vengeance as General Halleck, Chief of Staff at Washington, had suggested to him as to Charleston, that he and the authorities at Washington would feel it necessary to make it appear to the civilized world, and even to the people of the North, as "*some accident*"—the italics are the italics of Gen. H. W. Halleck, Chief of Staff, headquarters of the Army, Washington, December 18, 1864—and that Columbia was burned as a result of this intention and formed design, the truth of history shows, as it will here be stated from the records.

At 7 o'clock on the morning of November 16, 1864, Sherman, at the head of his victorious and well-trained and well-disciplined army, set forth from Atlanta, which behind him lay "smoldering and in ruin," as Sherman himself stated it. Let us go back to that beautiful mid-November day of nearly 66 years ago, as Sherman, turning his horse's head to the east, continued upon his journey with the flaming torch as his battle standard. In his Memoirs Written by Himself, volume 2, page 178, he thus pictures that setting forth:

About 7 a. m. of November 16 we rode out of Atlanta by the Decatur road, filled by the marching troops and wagons of the Fourteenth Corps, and reaching the hill, just outside of the old rebel works, we naturally paused to look back upon the scenes of our past battles. \* \* \* Behind us lay Atlanta, smoldering and in ruins, the black smoke rising high in air and hanging like a pall over the ruined city.

The progress of his march was marked by the desolation in its wake, but his thoughts were constantly upon South Carolina. At 8 o'clock on the night of December 18, 1864, from his headquarters in the field, near Savannah, Ga., he wrote General Grant (Sherman's Memoirs, vol. 2, p. 213):

With Savannah in our possession, at some future time, if not now, we can punish South Carolina as she deserves and as thousands of the people in Georgia hoped we would do. I do sincerely believe that the whole United States, North and South, would rejoice to have this army turned loose on South Carolina, to devastate that State in the manner we have done in Georgia, and it would have a direct and immediate bearing on your campaign in Virginia.

On the same date, December 18, 1864, Maj. Gen. H. W. Halleck, chief of staff, headquarters of the Army, Washington, wrote General Sherman, in the field near Savannah (Sherman's Memoirs, vol. 2, pp. 222 and 223):

When Savannah falls, then for another wide swath through the center of the Confederacy. \* \* \*

Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by *some accident* (italics are the italics of General Halleck, according to Sherman's Memoirs) the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be sown upon its site it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession.

Sherman, however, had not left Atlanta with the intention of going to Charleston. Columbia was his principal objective, and the line of march which took him through Columbia was the "wide

swath" which he intended to cut. On December 24, 1864, from his Savannah headquarters, he wrote General Grant (Sherman's Memoirs, p. 225, vol. 2):

Charleston is now a mere desolated wreck and is hardly worth the time it would take to starve it out. \* \* \* One reason why I would ignore Charleston is this—

And so forth, giving his military reasons. On that same Christmas eve night, knowing that he would pass Charleston by in his direct march to Columbia, he replied to General Halleck (Sherman's Memoirs, vol. 2, pp. 227 and 228):

I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston and do not think "salt" will be necessary. When I move, the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will naturally bring them into Charleston first; and, if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work pretty well. The truth is, the whole Army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel sure that she deserves all that seems in store for her. \* \* \*

I look upon Columbia as quite as bad as Charleston, and I doubt if we shall spare the public buildings there as we did at Milledgeville.

Mrs. Rachel Susan Cheves, widow of John R. Cheves, whose testimony was corroborated by that of Mrs. Langdon Cheves, who was present when the conversation referred to took place, residing in Savannah, Ga., had asked to be passed through the lines in a flag-of-truce boat.

I was warned by two officers of General Sherman's staff, Colonel Poe and Major Dayton, not to go to Columbia, as they intended to burn it, \* \* \* they said I had better stay where I was, as Sherman intended to burn Columbia.

This testimony is quoted in a letter of Gen. Wade Hampton, published in the Baltimore Enquirer, June 24, 1873. *See* Hampton, Wade. The burning of Columbia. I. A letter of Gen. Wade Hampton, June 24, 1873, with appendix. II. Report of committee of citizens, ex-Chancellor J. P. Carroll, chairman, May, 1866. Charleston, Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co., printers, 1888. From the News and Courier, Charleston, S. C., January 15 and February 5, 1888. There also is quoted the testimony of Mrs. Anna W. Barclay, wife of the British consul at New York, that she was at the house of Miss Telfair, in Savannah, in December, 1864, and heard General Sherman in a conversation refer to the city of Columbia:

He remarked that his course through Georgia had been marked by fire, and that through South Carolina it should be marked by fire and blood, and in his own words: "As to that hotbed of secession, Columbia, I shall lay it in ashes."

Somehow—

Says General Sherman, in His Memoirs Written by Himself, volume 2, page 254—

our men had got the idea that South Carolina was the cause of all our troubles; her people were the first to fire on Fort Sumter, had been in a great hurry to precipitate the country into civil war; and therefore on them should fall the scourge of war in its worst form. Taunting messages had also come to us, when in Georgia, to the effect that, when we should reach South Carolina, we would find a people less passive, who would fight us to the bitter end, daring us to come over, etc., etc.; so that I saw and felt that we would not be able longer to restrain our men as we had done in Georgia.

It was in this frame of mind, and with this purpose and with this determination, that General Sherman and his army reached Columbia, and it was the Fifteenth Corps, under command of Maj. Gen. John A. Logan, which headed the army of occupation and sack and destruction—the corps which “generally did their work pretty well”—and it might be well here to insert (that the thread of the narrative may be clearly discerned at every point) that the headquarters of General Logan were established in the Old Preston Mansion, which plays an important part in the development of the narrative of events during the occupation of Columbia by Sherman’s army.

#### ENTER THE FIFTEENTH CORPS

On the 14th (of February) the head of the Fifteenth Corps, Charles R. Woods’s division (Sherman’s Memoirs, vol. 2, p. 276 et seq.) approached the Little Congaree, a broad, deep, stream, tributary to the Main Congaree, 6 or 8 miles below Columbia. \* \* \*

During the 16th of February (Sherman’s Memoirs, vol. 2, p. 278) the Fifteenth Corps reached the point opposite Columbia, and pushed on for the Saluda factory, 3 miles above, crossed that stream, and the head of the column reached Broad River just in time to find its bridge in flames, Butler’s cavalry having just passed over into Columbia. The head of Slocum’s column also reached the point opposite Columbia the same morning, but the bulk of his army was back at Lexington. I reached this place early in the morning of the 16th, met General Slocum there, and explained to him the purport of General Order No. 26, which contemplated the passage of his army across Broad River at Alston, 15 miles above Columbia. Riding down to the river bank, I saw the wreck of the large bridge which has been burned by the enemy, with its many stone piers still standing but the superstructure gone. Across the Congaree River lay the city of Columbia, in plain, easy view. I could see the unfinished statehouse, a handsome granite structure, and the ruins of the railroad depot, which were still smoldering. Occasionally a few citizens or cavalry could be seen running across the streets, and quite a number of negroes were seemingly busy in carrying off bags of grain or meal which were piled up near the burned depot.

Captain De Gres had a section of his 20-pound Parrott guns unlimbered, firing into the town. I asked him what he was firing for; he said he could see some rebel cavalry occasionally at the intersections of the streets, and he had an idea that there was a large force of infantry concealed on the opposite bank, lying low, in case we should attempt to cross over directly into the town. I instructed him not to fire any more into the town, but consented to his bursting a few shells near the depot to scare away the negroes who were appropriating the bags of corn and meal which we wanted; also to fire three shots at the unoccupied statehouse. I stood by and saw these fired, and then all firing ceased.

As a matter of fact, during this bombardment of a defenseless town, so barbarous that General Sherman himself asked Captain De Gres “what he was firing for” and “instructed him not to fire any more into the town,” though he did “consent to his bursting” a few more shells, not only was the unfinished statehouse struck ten times—the scars left on the western front having only recently been marked with brass stars—but the yellow hospital flag, where the sick and wounded lay, received a baptism of fire.

#### FIRING UPON A HOSPITAL

William A. Nicholson, now deceased—the father of Allan Nicholson, now one of the leading citizens of Union, S. C., and of the State—who was suffering from an injury sustained while on duty with the Confederate Army, was on an assignment of duty at the

improvised hospital, under Surg. A. W. Thomson, in the college chapel on the South Carolina University grounds, and in a pamphlet, *The Burning of Columbia* (Columbia, S. C., William Sloane, book and job printer, 1895), he says:

Orders were given to hoist a yellow flag on the college chapel that the enemy might know what the building was used for. The sick and wounded from the other hospitals in the city were being sent away to different points. Those unable to take such a journey were concentrated in college hospitals Nos. 1 and 2 in the South Carolina college buildings. While this was being done I received a list from Chief Surgeon Thomson of the names of the doctors then on duty in Columbia that were ordered to report for duty at points beyond the city. While engaged in writing out those orders a number of Confederate cavalrymen concentrated in the middle of the street close to the college chapel. Their presence was discovered by the Federal forces then on the opposite side of the Congaree, who soon brought their artillery to play, notwithstanding the hospital flag was still floating from the chapel building.

#### THE FIFTEENTH CORPS ENTERS THE CITY

The next morning, February 17—

Says General Sherman in his Memoirs, volume 2, page 279:

I rode to the head of General Howard's column and found that during the night he had ferried Stone's brigade of Wood's division of the Fifteenth Corps across by rafts made of the pontoons, and that brigade was then deployed on the opposite bank to cover the construction of a pontoon bridge nearly finished.

This was across the Broad River on what is now known as the Newberry Road.

Here it was that General Sherman sat on a log watching the laying of the bridge and received the messenger saying that the mayor of Columbia had come out to surrender the place, and the note from the mother superior asking protection for her convent, which he promised.

As soon as the bridge was done—

He continues in his Memoirs, volume 2, page 280—

I led my horse over it, followed by my whole staff. General Howard accompanied me with his, and General Logan was next in order, followed by Gen. C. R. Woods and the whole of the Fifteenth Corps.

When Sherman reached the market square he says (Memoirs, vol. 2, p. 280) there—

Had collected a large crowd of whites and blacks, among whom was the mayor of the city, Doctor Goodwyn, quite a respectable old gentleman, who was extremely anxious to protect the interests of the citizens. He was on foot and I on horseback, and it is probable I told him then not to be uneasy, that we did not intend to stay long and had no purpose to injure the private citizens or private property. \* \* \*

On reaching the market square I again met Doctor Goodwyn (Memoirs, vol. 2, p. 281) and inquired where he proposed to quarter me, and he said that he had selected the house of Blanton Duncan, Esq., a citizen of Louisville, Ky., then a resident there, who had the contract for manufacturing the Confederate money, and had fled with Hampton's Cavalry. We all rode some six or eight blocks back from the new statehouse and found a very good, modern house, completely furnished, with stabling and a large yard; took it as our headquarters and occupied it during our stay. I considered General Howard as in command of the place and referred the many applicants for guards and protection to him. Before our headquarters wagons had got up I strolled through the streets of Columbia, found sentinels posted at the principal intersections, and generally good order prevailing; but did not again return to the main street, because it was filled with a crowd of citizens watching the soldiers marching by. \* \* \*

The house occupied by General Sherman as his headquarters still stands, being now the home of John L. Mimnaugh, 1615 Gervais Street. None of the houses occupied by Sherman's officers was burned, though they were in widely scattered parts of the city. As pointed out by William Gilmore Simms—

None of his generals was burned out. The houses chosen for their abodes were carefully selected and the fire was kept from approaching them in any single instance.

#### THE BURNING OF COLUMBIA

The city was surrendered by Mayor T. J. Goodwyn, who went out to meet Sherman's advance guard. The mayor was accompanied by a deputation from the city council, consisting of Aldermen McKenzie, Bates, and Stork, and they rode out toward the Broad River Bridge in a carriage bearing a white flag.

The deputation—

Narrates the historian, William Gilmore Simms—

met the column of the Federals, under Captain Platt, who sent them forward to Colonel Stone, who finally took his seat with them in the carriage. The advance belonged to the Fifteenth Corps.

The mayor reports that on surrendering the city to Colonel Stone the latter assured him of the safety of the citizens and of the protection of their property while under his command. He could not answer for General Sherman, who was in the rear, but he expressed the conviction that he would fully confirm the assurances which he (Colonel Stone) had given. Subsequently General Sherman did confirm them, and that night, seeing that the mayor was exhausted by his labors of the day, he counseled him to retire to rest, saying, "Not a finger's breadth, Mr. Mayor, of your city shall be harmed. You may lie down to sleep satisfied that your town will be as safe in my hands as if wholly in your own." Such was very nearly the language in which he spoke; such was the substance of it. He added: "It will become my duty to destroy some of the public or government buildings, but I will reserve this performance to another day. It shall be done to-morrow provided the day be calm." And the mayor retired with this solemnly asserted and repeated assurance. \* \* \*

It may be well to remark that the discipline of the soldiers upon their first entry into the city was perfect and most admirable. There was no disorder or irregularity on the line of march, showing that their officers had them completely in hand. \* \* \*

But if the entrance into town and while on duty was indicative of admirable drill and discipline, such ceased to be the case the moment the troops were dismissed. Then, whether by tacit permission or direct command, their whole deportment underwent a sudden and rapid change. The saturnalia soon began. We have shown that the robbery of persons of the citizens and the plunder of their homes commenced within one hour after they had reached the Market Hall. It continued without interruption throughout the day. Sherman at the head of his cavalry traversed the streets everywhere; so did his officers. Subsequently these officers were everywhere on foot, yet beheld nothing which required the interposition of authority. And yet robbery was going on at every corner—in nearly every house. Citizens generally applied for a guard at their several houses, and for a time these guards were allotted to them. These might be faithful or not. In some cases, as already stated, they were, and civil and respectful; considerate of the claims of women, and never trespassing upon the privacy of the family; but in numbers of cases they were intrusive, insulting, and treacherous—leaving no privacy undisturbed, passing without a word into the chambers, and prying into every crevice and corner. But the reign of terror did not fairly begin till night. In some instances, where parties complained of the misrule and robbery, their guards said to them with a chuckle, "This is nothing. Wait until to-night and you'll see h—ll."

Among the first fires at evening was one about dark, which broke out in a filthy purlieu of low houses, of wood, on Gervais Street, occupied mostly as brothels. Almost at the same time a body of the soldiers scattered over the

eastern outskirts of the city, fired severally the dwellings of Mr. Secretary Trenholm, Gen. Wade Hampton, Dr. John Wallace, Mr. J. U. Adams, Mrs Starke, Mr. Latta, Mrs. English, and many others. There were then some 20 fires in full blast, in as many different quarters, and while the alarm sounded from these quarters a similar alarm was sent up almost simultaneously from Cotton Town, the northernmost limit of the city, and from Main Street, in its very center, at the several stores or houses of O. Z. Bates, C. D. Eberhardt, and some others, in the heart of the most densely settled portion of the town, thus enveloping in flames almost every section of the devoted city. At this period, thus early in the evening, there were few shows of that drunkenness which prevailed at a late hour in the night, and only after all the grocery shops on Main Street had been rifled. The men engaged in this were well prepared with all the appliances essential to their work. They did not need the torch. They carried with them, from house to house, pots and vessels containing combustible liquids, composed probably of phosphorus and other similar agents, turpentine, etc., and with balls of cotton saturated in this liquid, with which they also overspread floors and walls, they conveyed the flames with wonderful rapidity from dwelling to dwelling. Each had his ready box of lucifer matches, and with a scrape upon the walls the flames began to rage. Where houses were closely contiguous a brand from one was the means of conveying destruction to the other.

The winds favored. They had been high throughout the day and steadily prevailed from southwest by west and bore the flames eastward. \* \* \*

The work, begun thus vigorously, went on without impediment and with hourly increase throughout the night. Engines and hose were brought out by the firemen, but these were soon driven from their labors—which were indeed idle against such a storm of fire—by the pertinacious hostility of the soldiers; the hose was hewn to pieces, and the firemen, dreading worse usage to themselves, left the field in despair. Meanwhile the flames spread from side to side, from front to rear, from street to street, and where their natural and inevitable progress was too slow for those who had kindled them they helped them on by the application of fresh combustibles and more rapid agencies of conflagration. \* \* \*

Very grand, and terrible beyond description, was the awful spectacle. It was a scene for the painter of the terrible. It was the blending of a range of burning mountains stretched in a continuous series for more than a mile. \* \* \*

Throughout the whole of this terrible scene the soldiers continued their search after spoil. The houses were severally and soon gutted of their contents. \* \* \* Ladies were hustled from their chambers—their ornaments plucked from their persons, their bundles from their hands. It was in vain that the mother appealed for the garments of her children. They were torn from her grasp and hurled into the flames. \* \* \* Nothing was sacred in their eyes save the gold and silver which they bore away. \* \* \* Commissioned officers, of rank so high as that of colonel, were frequently among the most active in spoil. The churches were at first sought by many several streams of population. But these were found to afford no security—the churches of God were set on flame. \* \* \* One of the most mournful processions of fugitives was that of the sisterhood of the convent, the nuns and their pupils. \* \* \* A gentleman was expressing to one of the Federal generals the fate of the convent, and speaking of the losses, especially of the lady superior, he replied dryly: "It is not to be forgotten that this lady is the sister of Bishop Lynch, who had Te Deum performed in his cathedral at the fall of Fort Sumter."

The first place of publication of the article by William Gilmore Simms, from which these excerpts are taken, has already been given.

THE REV. A. TOOMER PORTER, D. D., AN EYEWITNESS

Corroborating Simms is the also unimpeachable testimony of the Rev. A. Toomer Porter, D. D., of Charleston, Episcopal rector, educator, Confederate soldier and chaplain, founder of the Porter Military Academy in Charleston, with regard to whom, before introducing his testimony, a few facts may be related showing that while

always intensely loyal to the South and her cause his character and his integrity are vouched for by the acts in his behalf after the war by Generals Sherman and Howard, Presidents Johnson and Hayes, and by the Congress of the United States. At heroic self-sacrifice, following the destruction of Columbia, he saved the life of Lieut. John A. McQueen—whose home was Elgin, Kane County, Ill.—of Company F, Fifteenth Illinois Cavalry, of Gen. O. O. Howard's escort, and restored him to Sherman's army; Lieutenant McQueen having befriended the stricken people of Columbia, and a friendship having sprung up between him and the Reverend Mr. Porter which lasted through life, and which led to the friendship later of Mr. Porter with Generals Sherman and Howard. Mr. Porter was introduced to President Johnson by General Howard, then head of the Freedmen's Bureau, and the President and the general were instrumental in securing the passage of a bill through Congress authorizing the sale of the marine hospital to be purchased for Mr. Porter's educational work, and President Johnson personally contributed \$1,000 toward its purchase.

Gen. Daniel Sickles, then in command of Charleston, indorsed Mr. Porter's request for the pardon of Hon. George A. Trenholm, who had been Secretary of the Treasury of the Confederate States, as did General Howard in Washington, and it was granted by President Johnson, with these indorsements, and personally handed to Mr. Porter. These indorsements are now in the archives of the Government on a letter of Mr. Trenholm to Mr. Porter, giving Mr. Trenholm's views of what the duty of the southern people was at that time just after the war, and what ought to be the course of the Government of the United States, Mr. Trenholm having declined to ask for a pardon because he held he had committed no offense, and having written this letter instead to Mr. Porter, upon which Mr. Porter based the request.

In 1879, with the aid of General Sherman and President Hayes, he secured from Congress a joint resolution transferring the arsenal property in Charleston to his institute, known at that time as the Holy Communion Church Institute, the phenomenon being presented of the support of Sherman, General of the Army, and President Hayes of a resolution sponsored in Congress by Generals (then Senators) Wade Hampton and M. C. Butler. Surely the testimony of this churchman, soldier, educator, friend of youth of high and low degree, and friend of man, and servant of God, with whom he walked even as he walked with man, will of itself carry conviction of its truth to the minds and hearts of any people in this land, wherever they be, of whatever section or of whatever faith. In his autobiography, *Led On, Step by Step, Scenes from Clerical, Military, Educational, and Plantation Life in the South, 1828-1898* (G. Putnam's Sons, New York and London, the Knickerbocker Press, 1899), he thus tells how Columbia was burned (pp. 157 et seq.):

I ran to the main street and met the advancing column of the incoming enemy soon after they entered the town. \* \* \* On my way to the market house I saw the first bale of cotton take fire. The soldiers, who were sitting and lying on the cotton, had begun to light their pipes, and a spark or a lighted match must have fallen on the loose cotton, which, of course, took fire. I was within 20 feet of the first cotton fired that day. The flames soon spread, and the men, cursing those who had deprived them of their resting place, quickly got away from the burning piles.

I saw General Sherman and his staff ride down Main Street at about 9 o'clock a. m., and when he came in the burning cotton was still smoldering. At that time he was ignorant of the cause of the fire, and naturally supposed it had been kind'ed by the retreating Confederates. I met him that afternoon at the house of Mr. Harris Simons. He had been intimate with the family in past years and was kind and considerate in his general bearing. He seemed to deeply deplore the terrible condition of things, but said it was his duty as a soldier to stamp out the rebellion, as he called it, hurt whom it might. He gave a special protection in writing to the family, but notwithstanding this they were robbed and burned out that night. On leaving I walked some distance with the general, and had some conversation regarding the preservation of the library of the college. He remarked that he would sooner send us a library than destroy the one we had; adding that if better use had been made of it, this state of things would not exist, and that I must go and tell the ladies they were as safe as if he were a hundred miles away. I went home and told the ladies at Doctor Reynold's house, to which several families in their alarm had fled for refuge. It was about half past 8 at night when I told the ladies what General Sherman had said, and they only replied, "Do you believe him? Go on the roof of the house and see for yourself."

A captain of the Federal Army had billeted himself on us, and was welcomed by us, as we thought he could protect the house. This officer went with me to the roof of the house, and we there saw that the whole of Columbia was surrounded with flames. I pointed this out to the captain, and said I believed they were going to burn Columbia.

"No," he said, "those are camp fires."

I told him I had been four years in camp, and thought I knew what a camp fire was. Then I pointed out several residences on fire, the owners of which I knew, namely, Mr. Trenholm, General Hampton, Colonel Wallace, and a number of others. The environs of the town were ablaze. Then a fire broke out in Main Street, near Hunt's Hotel, caused by an overturned lamp in a saloon, which ignited the liquor, and as the flames spread two or three small hand engines were brought out, which I saw Federal soldiers work on. Suddenly three fire balloons went up, and in 10 minutes eight fires broke out simultaneously across the northern street of the city, about equal distance from each other, and stretched almost entirely across the town.

At once the men who had been on the engines a moment before turned in and broke them to pieces. I saw this from the roof of the house.

"See that?" I said to the captain.

He gave one long look, then darted down the skylight, and we never saw him again.

A gale of wind was blowing from the north that night, and that soon caused the fire to burn freely, so that in a short time the city was wrapped in a lurid sheet of flames. Coming down from the house, I told the family that their fears had become realized.

"Columbia is being burned by the enemy \* \* \*."

The streets were filled with soldiers, mounted and on foot, in every stage of drunkenness. The whole of General Howard's Fifteenth Corps, we learned, had been turned loose upon us. Shouts of derision and blasphemy filled the air. Cries of "There are the aristocrats," "Look at the chivalry," were yelled into the ears of these defenseless women. Men seemed to have lost their manhood and the mere beast was in the ascendant \* \* \*. I myself saw men with balls of cotton dipped in turpentine enter house after house. Some would take bottles of turpentine, throw the liquid round about, and then set it afire. It seemed as though the gates of hell had opened upon us. It did not take long to fire the whole town \* \* \*.

Through street after street we pushed our way until we had reached a house within a square of General Sherman's quarters, and, as there had been no fire set to any of the houses near the officers' quarters, we determined to stop at this house \* \* \*.

I was standing there (in the street) \* \* \* when General Sherman came by. The burning city made it bright as day; the general recognized me, and I said in reply to his remark, "This is terrible"; "Yes; when you remember that women and children are your victims."

I was desperate and had lost all fear of him.

"Your governor is responsible for this," he said.

"How so?" I asked.

He said: "Who ever heard of evacuating a place and leaving it full of liquor? My men are drunk, and this is the cause of all. Why did not your governor destroy all this liquor before he left? There was a very great quantity of whisky in the town when we arrived."

"The drunken men have done much," I replied, "but I have seen sober men fire house after house."

Just then an officer rode up and saluted the general, who recognized him and said, "Captain Andrews, did I not order you that this should stop?"

"Yes, General; but the First Division are as drunk as the first regiment that came in yesterday morning."

"Then, sir, go and bring the Second Division and have this stopped. I hold you personally responsible for the immediate cessation of this riot."

Captain Andrews rode off. The Second Division from Stark Hill, General Woods commanding, was brought in; the drunken mob was swept by them out of the city, and in less than half an hour not another house was burned. The discipline of that army was superb, and we all felt that fire and disorder could have been prevented or sooner arrested, for 1,300 houses were burned that night and 7,000 women and children driven into the streets amidst the scenes which, as an eyewitness, I have described.

#### THE SIGNAL ROCKETS AND THEN THE FIRES SET BY SHERMAN'S SOLDIERS

Suddenly three fire balloons went up, and in 10 minutes eight fires broke out simultaneously across the northern street of the city, about equal distance from each other, and stretched almost entirely across the town.

It will be noted the Reverend Mr. Porter says—and he was an eyewitness. The testimony of numerous eyewitnesses is that the setting of numerous fires followed the signal rockets, most of them denominating them as "rockets"; but whether "rockets" or "fire balloons," the facts show that they were signals for the setting of the fires and the burning of Columbia.

It will be noted also in the testimony which is presented that stress is laid upon the fact that there was no cotton burning in Columbia when Hampton and his cavalry left the town. That stress is laid because Sherman had first charged that the burning of Columbia resulted from the setting on fire of the cotton in the streets by Hampton's men—a charge which he subsequently withdrew when he saw that the world and even the North would not give credence to a charge that Hampton burned Columbia. Then Sherman contended that it was an accident—this among other contentions to which will later be called attention, and shown to have no foundation in fact not only by the testimony of eyewitnesses other than Sherman and his officers but by the subsequent admissions or confessions, be they termed what they may, of Sherman and his officers.

The following testimony was given before Sherman had retracted his charge that Columbia was burned by Hampton's men starting the general conflagration by burning cotton. It was included in and a part of the testimony upon which the citizens' committee, headed by ex-Chancellor Carroll, and which will hereafter be referred to as the Carroll committee, based its report in 1866 and 1867 immediately after the fire, and was quoted in the letter of Gen. Wade Hampton of June 24, 1873 (Baltimore Enquirer), and which letter will hereafter be referred to as the Hampton letter of 1873. The volume containing this letter, together with the report of the Carroll committee, has already been cited, and it is in the Library of Congress.

M. H. Berry, a northern man, whose sympathies were on the side of the Union, and who accompanied the Federal Army to the North when it left Columbia:

The first fire I saw, which was close to me, was set on fire by soldiers. \* \* \* The place I saw set on fire was set on fire by soldiers wearing the uniform of United States soldiers. \* \* \* General Hampton's troops left in the morning previous to the burning. They left fully four hours before I saw the cotton burning.

It has already been pointed out how the cotton was set on fire by Sherman's soldiers early in the day, shortly after they entered the city, and it is shown throughout the whole of all the narratives that this burning of cotton, though ignited by Sherman's soldiers, had nothing to do with the general conflagration that night.

Affidavit of W. B. Williams:

There was a good deal of cotton piled in the streets of the city prior to its occupation by the Federal forces; \* \* \* but none was burned before the coming in of the Federal troops.

Joseph Samson swore:

I saw colonels and captains with their soldiers while they were pillaging, and I saw no effort made by them to put a stop to these acts.

John A. Civil swore:

I saw United States soldiers, officers being present with them, put fire to houses.

Following is the affidavit of William Thompson, sworn to before Giles J. Patterson, probating officer, on May 24, 1866:

South Carolina, Chester district: Personally appeared before me this 24th day of May, 1866, William Thompson, citizen of the State and district aforesaid, and swore that he was a resident of Columbia during February, 1865, witnessed the entry of the United States soldiers under General Sherman, and that there was no fire at or in the city at that time. That the fire commenced at 8 o'clock p. m. on Bridge Street; that between 10 and 11 p. m. three rockets were thrown up and immediately the flames broke out all over the city. Deponent was a fireman, and together with other firemen endeavored to check and extinguish the flames, but the hose of their engine was cut and pierced by axes, bayonets, and other instruments in the hands of the Federal soldiers, so that the engines were rendered useless. Deponent further stated that his house was burned by two Federal soldiers, who repeatedly said, "The d---d town ought to be burned," and that it was always their intention to burn it.

T. J. Goodwyn, the mayor of the city, who surrendered it to Sherman's army out on the Newberry Road, swore, on November 3, 1866, before D. B. Miller, clerk of court and ex officio magistrate:

He (Sherman) asked me to come around in the course of the evening to see him. I went round. \* \* \* He got me to take a walk with him. \* \* \* On our return about sundown, when parting, he said, "Go home and rest assured your city will be as secure in my hands as if you had control." \* \* \* On my arrival home, about dusk, three rockets went up in front of my house, red, blue, and white. At that time there was a very quiet and good soldier sitting in my piazza; he jumped up and exclaimed: "My God, is it coming to this!" My wife asked him what it meant; he made no reply and walked off. In 15 minutes afterwards \* \* \* I went there \* \* \* and worked some time, until I was informed that the city was being set on fire in many places by soldiers with torches. Our engines were broken and our hose cut, and our city by 3 o'clock in ashes. \* \* \*

Rowland Keenan, called by General Hampton "old and worthy citizen":

I saw, during that burning, soldiers in the uniform of the United States setting fires to buildings in Cotton Town. At that time there were United States officers mingling in the crowd, and they made no effort to prevent the burning.

Ptolemy Chambers:

I was a resident of Columbia on the 17th of February, 1865. On that night I saw, early in the evening, Federal soldiers, commanded by an officer, setting fire to houses in the upper part of the city of Columbia.

Charles F. Jackson:

I witnessed United States soldiers, with balls of combustible material, lighting them and flinging them about the streets and over and under the houses, Federal officers at the same time mingling in the crowd.

John R. Niernsee, architect of the statehouse:

On the 17th of February, 1865, and on the evening of that day I met Captain Ritner, of the Seventy-seventh Illinois Regiment. I saw rockets going up and asked him the meaning of it. He drew me aside so my wife could not hear it, and said, "Major, this is the signal for the burning of your city." The brigade that set fire to the town marched past my house with the implements in their possession for setting fire.

William H. Orchard, then of Columbia:

I saw hundreds of Sherman's men setting fire to the town by means of camphine balls prepared for that purpose.

Prior to that time, when Federal cavalry was passing his house, he swore that one of them said to him:

You appear to have a large family \* \* \* if you will look out a little after dark you will see three rockets going up from the other side of the town, and if you have not taken my advice before, then it will be too late.

The advice was about saving whatever he thought he could save by concealing it.

I saw them—

He swore, referring to the Federal soldiers—

set fire to Phillips's auction room and to my house. I attempted to put it out, but was knocked down by a Federal soldier, who told me I was a damned fool for making any such effort, that my house was to be burned anyhow, and I had better save myself \* \* \*. There was a large box of them (camphine balls) concealed in my yard early in the day. At night they took them out and made use of them.

#### THE STATEHOUSE

The statehouse, then in use as such, which was located on the present statehouse grounds, was burned. The statehouse then nearing completion—the present statehouse—was not destroyed. It is a notable building, though it was never completed according to the plans of Niernsee. Bvt. Maj. George Ward Nichols, aide de camp to General Sherman, in the Story of the Great March—New York, 1865—page 155 et seq., says in the contemporaneous narrative which he puts under the date of February 19, 1865:

General Sherman has given orders for the further destruction of all public property in the city, except the new capitol, which will not be injured. I think the general saves this building more because it is such a beautiful work of art than for any other reason. The arsenal, railroad depots, storehouses, magazines, public property and *cotton* (italics not his) to the amount of 20,000 bales, are to-day destroyed. There is not a rail upon any of the roads within 20 miles of Columbia but will be twisted into corkscrews before the sun sets, while upon two of the lines the work of destruction will be continued perhaps to their terminus \* \* \*. Columbia will have bitter cause to remember the visit of Sherman's army. Even if peace and prosperity soon return to the land, not in this generation nor the next—no; not for a century—can this city or the State recover from the deadly blow which has taken its life. It is not alone in the property that has been destroyed \* \* \* nor in the loss of the

slaves \* \* \* although this deprivation of the means by which they live is of incalculable importance, that the most blasting, withering, blow has fallen. It is in the crushing downfall of their inordinate vanity, their arrogant pride, that the rebels will feel the effects of the visit of our Army \* \* \*. I know that thousands of South Carolina's sons are in the army of the rebellion; but she has already lost her best blood there. Those who remain have no homes. The Hamptons, Barnwells, Simses, Rhettts, Singletons, Prestons, have no homes. The ancient homesteads where have gathered sacred associations, the heritages of many generations, are swept away.

Just at this point in the woof and warp of the narrative, it is desired to catch up only the thread in Major Nichols's comment and description as to the statehouse and to compare it with the statement of General Sherman in His Memoirs Written By Himself, heretofore quoted:

I instructed him (Captain De Gres, then firing into the defenseless city from the hill across the Congaree River) not to fire any more into the town, but consented to his bursting a few shells near the depot, to scare away the negroes who were appropriating the bags of corn and meal which we wanted; also to fire three shots at the unoccupied statehouse. I stood by and saw these fired, and then all firing ceased. (Memoirs, vol. 2, p. 278.)

And with the statement of the Rev. A. Toomer Porter, D. D. (Led On, etc., heretofore noted as to publisher and date of publication, etc.), page 157, in speaking of the entrance of Sherman's army into Columbia:

As soon as the column halted and stacked arms the weary and drunken men threw themselves on the cotton bales in the middle of the street. Thinking the officer in command would make his headquarters at the statehouse, which stood at the head of Main Street, I went there and found a perfect orgie in progress. Many trophies and mementoes of a not inglorious past, especially of the War of 1812, the Florida War, and the Mexican War, battle flags and swords, etc., were in the possession of drunken soldiers, and were being pulled to pieces and tossed about. Some of the men were wrestling and boxing. Altogether the scene was so intensely painful and mortifying that I quickly returned.

The present statehouse to which Major Nichols referred may not have been the one to which the Reverend Mr. Porter refers. That is immaterial. They were both on the grounds now occupied by the present statehouse, and the words "that is immaterial," in discounting the saving of the new statehouse on account of General Sherman's aesthetic nature, ascribed to him by his aide-de-camp, Major Nichols, are justified by the following statement of Provisional Gov. James L. Orr in a message to the South Carolina General Assembly in 1868. Orr was the distinguished commander of the regiment in the Confederate service which bore his name, was a member of the Confederate Senate, was elected Governor of South Carolina in 1866, was later a judge during the Republican régime, and was appointed by President Grant minister to Russia, and died in St. Petersburg. At a special session of the General Assembly of South Carolina, 1868—special session, 1868, page 13, Journal House of Representatives, July 7, 1868—the following message by the late provisional governor, James L. Orr, was received and read to the house by his private secretary, Mr. F. G. DeFontaine. This excerpt is taken from page 33 of said journal:

There is no probability that the completion of the building (the statehouse, as appears from the title of the subject matter), according to the original designs, will take place for many years. Very much of the elegant marble and granite work which had been finished and was lying under the sheds waiting to be lifted to its place, was destroyed by fire or wantonly broken into frag-

ments during the occupation of Columbia by the army of General Sherman. It is estimated by the former architect that not less than \$800,000 worth of finished work was thus ruthlessly ruined.

The walls of the statehouse are some 6 feet in thickness, possibly more at the foundation, and tapering to 4 feet at the top, and of granite. The shells from across the river had left only scars. Sherman's army was in a hurry, though the South was in the agony of the realization that her cause was lost, even as it was lost, as Sherman must have realized, and did realize, superb soldier that he was, even before he entered the gates of Columbia on the Newberry Road.

#### ADMISSION OF SHERMAN AND HIS OFFICERS

General Sherman did not, except momentarily, as it were, and then only by indirection, deny that his army burned Columbia. He charged it to General Hampton but soon withdrew that charge. Later, in his memoirs, he glossed it over as an accident, but he has never yet made specific denial of the fact, with the word "*accident*" (the italics being the italics of General Halleck, according to Sherman's Memoirs) staring him in the face, from General Halleck, Chief of Staff at Washington, that it was the kind of accident that was in contemplation. On the other hand, his high officers, in Columbia at the time, have made the admission and given the facts.

That when he reached Columbia he saw an opportunity to burn Columbia, as he had already decided upon before he left Atlanta, and charge the burning to Gen. Wade Hampton, of the Confederate Army, and "distinctly" did so, and later, when the civilized world, and even the people of the North, could not be induced to accept so wild and reckless a charge, General Sherman "confessed" that he "did so pointedly to shake the faith of his—General Hampton's—people in him," according to General Sherman's own confession at a later date, the records show, and the witness who will be called upon this material point will be General Sherman himself:

In my official report of this conflagration (Sherman says in His Memoirs. Written by Himself, supra) I distinctly charged it to Gen. Wade Hampton, and confess I did so pointedly, to shake the faith of his people in him, for he was, in my opinion, boastful and professed to be the special champion of South Carolina.

#### SHERMAN'S ACCIDENT

In His Memoirs Written by Himself, Sherman says:

Many of the people thought that this fire was deliberately planned and executed. This is not true. It was accidental, and in my judgment began with the cotton which General Hampton's men had set fire to on leaving the city—

And so forth. When General Sherman wrote this in His Memoirs Written by Himself, he himself had already abandoned the cotton theory. It might be well, however, here to emphasize the "*accident*" theory which seemed to pervade his then and later explanations. The words "*some accident*" constituted the keynote (for they were in italics, according to General Sherman) of the letter from Halleck to Sherman, under Washington date of December 18, 1864. The word "*accident*" lingered in the minds of the burners, and it was the word with which Sherman finally clothed the atrocity. His charge against General Hampton and Hampton's men he himself abandoned at the bar of public judgment.

## GENERAL ADMISSIONS, INCLUDING SHERMAN'S

Neither in Columbia, nor afterwards, except when it came to the cold penning of it by himself for posterity, under his own name, whereof by himself he might be judged by posterity, did Sherman deny that his army burned Columbia. On the contrary, he admitted it. His only defense at the time was that it was inspired by liquor which his men found in Columbia. Sherman was a soldier. He was a soldier who said that war was hell. He was a disciplinarian. He was only a soldier and a disciplinarian and a general. He wrote much, including orders and including letters and reports to his superiors in military command. He never tried to explain or to make his conflicting statements coincide. He could not. He was on a mission which was ruthless, and ruthlessly he performed it. The South was stricken. Her armies were almost dissipated. There was practically no resistance in the path of Sherman's march. And yet he carried out a program which he must have formulated to be carried out in the face of stern military resistance.

When this program had been executed against a stricken people whose armies had been defeated and were then retreating to the final surrender, Sherman found it necessary, under the frowns of the civilized world and even of the people of the North, to explain and to retract, and to excuse and to deny, and even to withdraw charges which he himself had made. His only reaction was to withdraw the charges against Hampton and his cavalry. His other statements remain conflicting. He was a victor whose conscience abhorred the spoils, though they were his, whose reaction to the deeds of his own army placed him before himself in a rôle which he himself had never contemplated, and who simply did the best he could that his qualities as a soldier and as a general might not be sunk in the obloquy of an incendiary. His qualities as a military officer and as a disciplinarian stand out; he was one of the greatest generals of the armies of the North; but his biographers can not, and never will, erase the red mark—the crimson line—of his march to the sea.

## WHAT SHERMAN AND HIS OFFICERS SAID IN COLUMBIA

In addition to the testimony already quoted, which occurred in the testimony presented on other points, the following is submitted:

Affidavit of E. J. Scott (heretofore quoted, with references), quoted by General Hampton in The Hampton Letter of 1873, *supra* (Scott was the banker heretofore quoted):

At Colonel Duncan's house we were introduced to General Sherman. He referred to the burning of the city, admitting that it was done by his troops, but excusing them because, as he alleged, they had been made drunk by our citizens. \* \* \* He never mentioned or alluded in any way to General Hampton or the cotton. \* \* \*

Gen. Wade Hampton, in The Hampton Letter of 1873, *supra*:

In December, 1866, or January, 1867, Gen. O. O. Howard came into the executive office of Governor Orr in Columbia accompanied by Gen. R. K. Scott (afterwards Republican governor), and there found Governor Orr, Gen. John S. Preston, Mr. De Fontaine (the secretary of the governor), and myself. In the course of the conversation that ensued the question of the burning of the city came up. General Howard expressed sorrow at its destruction, and said that he had nothing to do with it, that he had done all he could to prevent it,

and that he regretted it greatly. He then used the following language, which I committed to writing, and left the paper with Dr. D. H. Trezevant, of Columbia, who had prepared for the press some articles relating to the destruction of the city. The memorandum is as follows:

COLUMBIA, January 9, 1867.

Gen. O. O. Howard stated in the presence of Governor Orr, General Preston, and myself that certainly no one was authorized to state that their (our) troops did not set fires in this town, for he himself saw them doing so.

WADE HAMPTON.

In that connection General Hampton called attention to General Howard's late testimony in Washington on December 10, 1872, when asked about this conversation, and General Howard said:

I stated that the Confederate troops set it on fire.

General Hampton had called on Governor Orr and General Preston for their recollection of the conversation. On December 21, 1872, Orr wrote Hampton from Washington (same reference):

I do not remember all that was said, but General Howard said in substance that the city was burned by United States troops; that he saw them fire many houses; and that he tried to arrest the conflagration; and that he regretted the destruction of the city.

General Hampton also quoted a letter of John S. Preston to Doctor Trezevant as to the conversation:

The substance of the conversation was that General Howard stated and reiterated that no one was authorized to say that the Federal troops did not burn Columbia, for he saw them doing so in numerous instances, in various localities of the town.

The Reverend Mr. Shand, Episcopal clergyman of Columbia (same reference), was quoted as saying that General Howard stated to him:

Though General Sherman did not order the burning of the town, yet somehow or other the men had taken up the idea that if they destroyed the capital of South Carolina it would be peculiarly gratifying to General Sherman.

The Reverend Mr. Shand had been brutally treated during the destruction of Columbia, as he was trying to save the communion service of his church.

T. J. Goodwyn, mayor at the time of the burning of Columbia, in an affidavit before D. N. B. Miller, ex officio magistrate, sworn to on the 24th day of March, 1866 (reference supra), said:

That on Sunday, the 19th, he called upon General Sherman, then in Columbia, and was accompanied by the following gentlemen: Rev. N. Talley, Reverend Mr. Connor, Rev. Thomas Rayner, Dr. C. H. Miot, W. M. Martin, Mr. J. J. McCarter, and Edward J. Scott \* \* \*. General Sherman was in good spirits and courteous. A conversation ensued in relation to the burning of the city, in the course of which General Sherman distinctly admitted that his troops had burned the city, but excused them because, as he alleged, our citizens had given them liquor and made them drunk, whereas they ought to have destroyed the liquor in the city upon the entry of the army.

The testimony of the Rev. A. Toomer Porter as to the admission of General Sherman, as related by the circumstances, has already been given.

E. J. Scott—reference already given, *Random Recollections*, page 183—says:

The fire he (Sherman) admitted (February 19, 1865) was caused by his troops, saying: "It is true our men have burnt Columbia, but it was your fault." And when Doctor Goodwyn inquired, "How so, General?" he replied that our people had made his soldiers drunk, citing an instance of a druggist who he was told brought out a pail of whisky to them. Doctor Miot here interrupted him to remark that he was a druggist, but he had heard of no such case. Mr. McCarter also stated that a soldier had demanded his watch, while pointing a pistol at his head, but the general only laughed and told him he ought to have resisted, etc.

#### THE VERDICT OF HISTORY

Having utterly ruined Columbia the right wing began its march northward toward Winnsboro, on the 20th. (Sherman's Memoirs.)

Percy Greg, English historian—History of the United States, by Percy Greg, in two volumes, volume 2, London, W. H. Allen & Co., 1887, pages 457 and 458—says:

On February 1, 1864 (?), Sherman, with more than 60,000 men, commenced his northward march through the Carolinas, a march whose first and chief object was the ruin of the State which had incurred the vindictive hatred of the northern people and Government. He commenced the work of devastation as soon as his army entered South Carolina. \* \* \* Along his whole line of march his army was attended by numerous bands of incendiaries, foraging, pillaging, and burning on their own account. \* \* \* Wade Hampton, who had been detached to the rescue of his native State, and Wheeler were unable to offer serious resistance, and Sherman without a battle reached Columbia, the capital of the State, and one of the most beautiful cities in the South. Wade Hampton denies that he burned the cotton, to which the destruction of the city has been ascribed by Sherman's apologists. His word is entitled to full confidence; the more so that, save for the danger to the town, it would have been his duty to burn what otherwise would be seized by the enemy as prize of war. After Sherman had entered the place a number of private houses were fired and the city burned to ashes. From this disgrace he strove to clear himself at Hampton's expense. It is certain that the fires were lighted, and those who attempted to rescue their houses were driven back by his soldiers with the sanction of their officers; clear that Sherman made no attempt to restrain and no serious effort to punish acts he afterwards thought it prudent to disown. (Sherman expressly contradicts himself by saying that in his belief the fire was accidental. The sufferers declare that Federal troops prevented them from putting it out. Sherman boasts that a plantation belonging to an Englishman "was pillaged, of course." He wrote with the knowledge that Hampton had flatly denied his accusation. Sherman, 2, Chap. XXII.)

Mr. President, before going further as to the verdict which history has rendered, it is desired to record in this conspicuous place an excerpt from the narrative of James G. Gibbes, Columbia merchant, now deceased these several years, who took over the reins of city government at the request of Mayor Goodwyn shortly after the burning, on account of the strain upon the mayor, then in advanced years. Mr. Gibbes wrote an account of the burning of Columbia to the Philadelphia Times, which was published in that newspaper on September 20, 1880, and he incorporated this article in a book, Who Burnt Columbia—Newberry, S. C., Elbert H. Aull Co., 1902—in which he added statements of General Sherman himself, taken from his own Memoirs, "besides statements and admissions of General Howard, second in command, General Stone, Colonel Palmer, Gen. W. B. Hazen, Captain Conyngham, Colonel Nichols, and Major General Halleck," and it is desired to make this book of Colonel Gibbes, and the other books and writings referred to, a part of this record.

## TESTIMONY OF AN EYEWITNESS INTERSPERSED TO EMPHASIZE THE VERDICT OF HISTORY

As soon as it was known—

Says Mr. Gibbes—

that Sherman or a part of his army had crossed the river, the mayor, Doctor Goodwyn, and two or three of the aldermen, among whom, I believe, were Mr. John McKinziey, John Stork, and O. Z. Bates, who are still residents of Columbia—

Then, but not now—

went out to meet him. Doctor Goodwyn informed Colonel Stone, who was in command of the advance, that the city was in no condition to make any defense, and that he had come out for the purpose of making a formal surrender of it. After some conversation Colonel Stone said: "Mr. Mayor, you can say to your people that they have nothing to be afraid of; that they are as safe as if there was not a Yankee within a thousand miles of them." After this assurance the mayor returned to the city. Colonel Stone afterwards, in reply to a question of Mr. Edward T. Scott as to how private property would be protected, said: "Fully; we are not savages." But, later in the day, when asked by Mr. Scott for a guard to protect the Commercial Bank, he turned off, merely saying, "He had no time." This occurred about 10 a. m., Friday, February 17. About 11 o'clock the army entered the city, marching down Main or Richardson Street. On reaching the courthouse and market, the troops seemed to be all simultaneously disbanded and released from any restraint. The streets were soon all crowded with soldiers; but at first all seemed quiet and well disposed. About 1 o'clock an alarm of fire was given, and the fire bells rang out.

The writer hurried to the place of alarm and found about 60 bales of cotton had been rolled into the center of Richardson Street, in front of the store of O. Z. Bates, and was on fire. As I approached I found a few men (citizens) had run out the independent engine from its house near the market, not over 100 yards from the burning cotton, and began playing on the fire. They soon extinguished it, and continued playing on the smoking bales till all sign of fire was over. Not less than 1,000 Federal soldiers were on the sidewalks and streets looking on, but took no part at the fire until just as it was about all controlled, when a drunken soldier took his musket and plunged the bayonet into the hose pipe. Instantly a number of others joined in and with their bayonets soon cut the entire hose to pieces. The men working the engine remonstrated, but with no avail. They then ran the engine back into the engine house. Fortunately the fire was all over before this destruction of the hose, or the town might have been fired from it. Before 2 o'clock p. m. all sign of the fire was over. \* \* \*

About 7 p. m. signal rockets were thrown up from three several points, all in the northwest part of the city, in what was known as Cotton Town. Very soon it was known what the signal rockets meant. \* \* \*

I spent almost the entire night in the streets and witnessed many houses fired by the soldiers, and I never saw (nor did I ever see anyone who did) a single instance in which any assistance was rendered by the soldiers to save property from flames. \* \* \*

The book which Mr. Gibbes published, containing his own narrative and that of others and the testimony of various persons, including Generals Sherman, Howard, and various others, includes 137 printed pages. That book was published 27 years ago. Although that was 37 years after Sherman burned Columbia, time had not elapsed for a proper perspective in view of Sherman's conflicting claims. That time has now elapsed several years ago and the truth of history is now presented.

WHITELAW REID

The conclusion of the whole matter has been expressed by the Hon. Whitelaw Reid in Ohio on the war:

It was the most monstrous barbarity of this barbarous march. Before his movement began General Sherman begged permission to turn his army loose in South Carolina and devastate it. He used this permission to the full. He protested that he did not wage war upon women and children. But under the operation of his orders the last morsel of food was taken from hundreds of destitute families that his soldiers might feast in needless and riotous abundance. Before his eyes rose day after day the mournful clouds of smoke on every side that told of old people and their grandchildren driven in midwinter from the only roofs there were to shelter them by the flames which the wantonness of his soldiers had kindled. Yet if a single soldier was punished for a single outrage or theft during that entire movement we have found no mention of it in all the voluminous records of the march.

Narratives, statements, publications of various kinds have come from those who accompanied Sherman on that march. Search the records as one may, they contain either explanations or admissions. Nowhere is there a denial. All of them are apologetic. There is an underlying admission that the rules of civilized warfare had been suspended by Sherman or that there was a general understanding that these rules should not be enforced when Columbia was reached.

Mr. President, history shows that Sherman was a soldier of iron will, of determination which was stern and unyielding, of strength of mind, and of military ability, perhaps, unsurpassed among the officers of the Federal armies. He was both a tactician and a disciplinarian. Otherwise he could not have organized and directed and controlled the splendid fighting machine with which he left Atlanta in smoldering ruins and started toward Columbia. His letters to General Grant and to General Halleck, and their letters to him, show that on this march he was supreme—that his was the judgment which governed.

But the South was stricken. The end was approaching, and none knew it better than General Halleck in Washington and General Sherman before Savannah. From Atlanta Sherman's march was vengeance and not the stern necessity of war.

Sixty-four years is sufficient time for a proper perspective. With destruction and desolation in his wake, carrying destruction and desolation as he went on from Columbia, it is inconceivable that an accident or the act of God should have coincided with his occupancy of Columbia to bring about the destruction of the city without the guiding hand and the flaming torches of his soldiers. Sufficient time has elapsed that sectional patriotism or prejudice, as one may choose to call it, should give way to the truth of history. That truth of history has here been stated from the records, and a large part of those records were penned by General Sherman himself.

#### THE PARTICULAR CLAIMS AT ISSUE

Mr. President, this cause is before the bar of public opinion as well as before the Congress of the United States. The buildings of the Washington Street Methodist Church and of the Ursuline Community at Columbia were burned by Sherman's soldiers—the former deliberately, because it was mistaken for the First Baptist Church, and the latter deliberately for spoliation, though it had been promised by General Sherman personally specific protection. That, the proof which has been offered shows as to both buildings. But, as stated at the beginning, there are larger issues. These have been

dealt with in this narrative. There are voluminous records which have not been included, and some of them not even alluded to. It has been endeavored to hold within a reasonable limit the most important testimony which will clearly and succinctly present the facts.

The summary of these facts is this: That when he left Atlanta, Sherman rode toward Columbia with the intention and purpose of laying it in ashes. He did. And, in his own words:

Having utterly ruined Columbia, the right wing began its march northward, toward Winnsboro, on the 20th.

#### A SIDE LIGHT

The following letter is from Henry C. Davis, professor of English language and rhetoric at the University of South Carolina. It throws an interesting side light upon the attitude of the soldiers who were here with Sherman:

The following letter, which is unsigned, has a slight bearing on the attitude of the soldiers. The writer puts together that they are in possession of the capital of the first rebellious State and that it is mostly destroyed by fire. It came into my possession when I bid in at auction two scrapbooks of James F. Troy, of Columbia, S. C. I bought also several contemporary papers, 1863-1866, from the same source. The letter, with indorsements, is as follows:

COLUMBIA, S. C., Feb. 19th/64 (sic).

Columbia was evacuated by the Confederate troops to the Federal Army under Gen. Wm. Sherman without much of a fight, so we are in possession of the capitol of the first rebellious State. It is mostly destroyed by fire at this writing, which is on the 19th day of February, A. D. 1865, and I hope this strife and contention will cease between this and the 19th of March/65. If it does we will all get a long furlow to go and see our families, so good by for the present.

On the first inside page, in another hand, is written (pencil):

"COL., S. C., 1865.

"This sheet was picked up by —— Troy in the store of James Troy & Son just after Sherman left the city.

"(Signed) J. F. TROY."

The next inside page is blank; then on page 4 (in ink):

"The Federal Army entered Columbia on the morning of the 17th and burned the city that night."

(See also LeConte's Autobiography.)

#### SIGNAL ROCKETS NOW ESTABLISHED AS MATTER OF COURSE

"My mother," says Prof. Henry C. Davis, of the University of South Carolina, "often told me she saw rockets as a signal for the destruction of the city. She was Sallie LeConte, whose father, Dr. Joseph LeConte, tells of the burning of Columbia in his autobiography. He came in along the Monticello Road in company with Captain Green about the 24th of February. The family huddled in the back yard of the campus residence during the night of terror. Doctor LeConte found them safe when he returned; 'the campus buildings had been spared.' (From manuscript interview taken by R. Means Davis on the occasion of Doctor LeConte's visit to the old home.)"

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there may be printed in the Record as exhibits a number of affidavits, documents, and two newspaper articles, as set forth in the following list:

## LIST OF AFFIDAVITS AND DOCUMENTS MADE A PART OF THE RECORD, BURNING OF COLUMBIA, S. C.

The Burning of the Ursuline Convent, Columbia, S. C., by Sherman's army in 1865. (An abridged copy taken from the annals of the convent, written by a member of the community who was an eyewitness.)

Items of property of the Ursuline Convent, which was destroyed by United States Army in 1865, with their values at that time. Total amount, \$112,538.

Excerpts from The Ursulines of the Congregation of Paris, in South Carolina.

Affidavits of Mrs. H. W. Richardson, Columbia, S. C.: First, April 6, 1928; second, March 26, 1928.

Affidavit of Mrs. Ellen Lynch McQueen, Columbia, S. C., April 6, 1928.

Affidavit of J. F. Williams, Columbia, S. C., April 5, 1928.

Affidavit of Zelia Barry, Dallas, Tex., April 2, 1928.

Affidavit of J. C. Abney, Columbia, S. C., March 26, 1928.

Affidavit of Jesse Thomas, Columbia, S. C., March 26, 1928.

Affidavit of D. D. Wallace, Spartanburg, S. C., March 12, 1928.

## ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVITS AND DOCUMENTS

G. M. Berry, Columbia, February 26, 1929.

Mary E. Bultman, Columbia, S. C., February 26, 1929.

Frank F. Whilden, Columbia, S. C., February 26, 1929.

A. C. Squire, Columbia, S. C., February 25, 1929.

Mrs. Rose C. King, Columbia, S. C., February 26, 1929, in re copies of original articles on file of Southern Christian Advocate.

Letter, Reverend Gunter, February 18, 1929.

Letter, Reverend Gunter, March 23, 1928.

Letter, Madame Spann, April 4, 1928.

Article by Frank F. Whilden, The State, February 17, 1929.

Letter, Hon. Cole L. Blease, February 18, 1929.

Letter, Hon. Frank F. Whilden, February 27, 1929.

Whilden State article, August 19, 1929.

Affidavit, J. F. Williams, Columbia, S. C., April 1, 1929.

Affidavit, Jacob Pinkussohn, Savannah, Ga., April 19, 1929.

Article from book, Jefferson Davis.

Book, The Burning of Columbia, by Anna Swindell.

Book, The Destruction of Columbia, S. C., by August Conrad.

The Wade Hampton letter of June 24, 1873, in book, Burning of Columbia; also report committee of citizens, ex-Chancellor J. P. Carroll, May, 1866.

Two articles Columbia Record, February 17, 1929; Columbia Burned 64 Years Ago To-day; A Reminiscence Sherman's Raid in South Carolina.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibits at the conclusion of Mr. Blease's remarks.)

Mr. BLEASE. Mr. President, here [exhibiting] is a picture that was taken when the city of Columbia, S. C., was burned by Sherman's army; there can be no question of its authenticity.

Other churches have been reimbursed; other religious institutions have been reimbursed; other schools have been reimbursed; but when South Carolina comes to the door and presents her claim somebody—I do not lay it to the chairman of the committee—closes the door to South Carolina and she is told, "The committee will not even hear you."

Here [indicating] is the correspondence which I myself wrote to the chairman of the committee asking him to give me a hearing. I asked him to let the Catholic ladies in Columbia, who have charge of the Ursuline Convent to-day, come before the committee and present their claims; I asked that the pastor and members of the Methodist church be permitted to come and present their claim; but during all this time, despite my pleadings, I have not been able to get a hearing before the committee. I even asked that the committee submit an unfavorable report on these bills in order that the Senate of the United States, after hearing the facts, and after reading the record, might determine whether or not this Methodist church and this Catholic convent should be reimbursed for the damages suffered by them.

They do not come here as beggars; they come here and ask to be put on an equal footing with others whose claims for property destroyed have been paid. Just a few days ago the Senator from Alabama [Mr. Black], who is a member of the Committee on Claims, submitted a report—or it was submitted by someone else for him—on a bill providing for the reimbursement of a church which had been destroyed in Alabama, and that bill was passed. Why so strict a discrimination against the Catholics in Columbia? Why the line so closely drawn on the Methodists of Columbia? I want the Senate to take that into consideration.

I did not want to bring this matter to the floor of the Senate. I had hoped the committee would give us a hearing of all sides of this question and make a report on it. I hoped they would bring these records here. When the committee refused to give me a hearing, however, when they refused to give my people a hearing, I had but one redress, and that was to do what I have very reluctantly done.

I have waited for five years—since March 4, 1925—hoping that I should be spared the necessity of bringing this matter here; that reimbursement would be made for the destruction of these churches; that these good Catholic sisters would be reimbursed for the destruction of their convent and for the property which was taken from it. But no; I am confronted by this necessity. Now, as the close of my term of service here is approaching, I feel that it is my duty to show to the American Nation who it was that burned Columbia, S. C., and show it by William T. Sherman's own documents, and to show that the claim that it was burned otherwise is a slander upon Wade Hampton and the soldiers of the southern Confederacy, and that Sherman himself admitted that he had slandered him; and there are the records.

I again request the members of this committee to ask themselves the question, Do you think you have treated the Methodist people of Columbia, S. C., and the Catholics of Columbia, S. C., fairly in refusing to give them a hearing or to report these bills, either favorably or unfavorably?

## EXHIBITS

The following affidavits and documents are made a part of this record:

THE BURNING OF THE URSULINE CONVENT, COLUMBIA, S. C., BY SHERMAN'S ARMY  
IN 1865

[An abridged copy, taken from the annals of the convent, written by a member of the community who was an eyewitness]

On February 17, 1865, General Sherman's army entered Columbia. Reverend Doctor O'Connell, pastor of St. Peter's Church and chaplain to the Ursulines asked a guard of protection for the convent. He obtained it—one man. On February 17, about noon, a cavalry officer rode up to the convent, spoke to the guard, and rang for admittance. Of the portress he asked to see the mother superioress. To the superioress, Mother Baptista Lynch, he introduced himself as Major Fitzgibbons, a Catholic, and offered any service he, as an individual, could render. The reverend mother, not suspecting any danger to the convent, declined, at the same time thanking him for the offer. He, earnestly insisting, said: "Columbia is a doomed city; at least, that is the talk of the Army; and I do not know if a house will be left standing."

Such an announcement startled the superioress; yet she and her companion answered that such threats could not apply to the convent, since General Sherman had given a patron of the institution the assurance that her daughter, a pupil, was in a place of safety.

"Of course," replied Major Fitzgibbons, "I do not say the convent will be burned; such a thing would happen only by accident—but we all know what accidents are."

The nuns could not be convinced that danger was imminent. Finally the major persuaded mother superior to write to the general, stating all the reasons she had given for her confidence of protection. He offered to be the bearer of the letter and said he would place it in the general's hand. The letter was written and intrusted to the major. About 3 o'clock that afternoon Major Fitzgibbons returned, accompanied by seven soldiers, whom he stated to be picked men sent to guard the convent. He also gave to mother superior the envelope which had inclosed her letter to the general, and on it Sherman had penciled orders to nearest commanding officer to protect the convent.

Scarcely had the nuns given supper to the seven guardsmen and gathered in the "community room" for the evening when the alarm of fire was given. From the windows the nuns saw the city toward the south blazing. Calling one of the guards, they asked him to go for Major Fitzgibbons. He refused. Other guards refused other services. The nuns saw that no assistance was to be expected from them.

Reverend Father McNeal called to remove the blessed sacrament. The suppressed sobs of the younger sisters but feebly expressed the deep emotion that filled all hearts.

Parents came running for their children, yet knew not where to take them for safety. The danger became so imminent and the crowds of soldiers so great that the pupils and the younger sisters were given bundles of clothing and marshaled into line as for a promenade. At a signal given by mother superior they marched quietly out. Reverend Father O'Connell accompanied them to the Catholic Church—the wind being from that direction, the edifice was deemed safe.

About midnight, by the light of the fast approaching flames, the plundering of the convent began. Heavy flakes of fire were falling over the premises. The nuns who had remained were admonished to leave. Reverend Doctor O'Connell wished to lead the nuns down Main Street, but the flames were lashing one another from building to building. As the sisters stood bewildered, not knowing their own city, a gentleman on horseback called, "Follow me, sisters; I will lead you to safety." As they followed, flakes fell so fast on and about them that holes were burned in their veils and cloaks. In a short while, however, they were with their sisters in the churchyard.

The morning of February 18, 1865, dawned upon the group of nuns and children—cold, hungry, and homeless. Three families, whose near-by homes

had escaped the burning, sent food, which all the group needed sadly and accepted gratefully.

Crowds gathered about the churchyard fence—some curious, some sympathetic. General Sherman rode up and was addressed by mother superior. During their short interview the general told her to choose any home in the city for a refuge and it should be protected. He appointed Colonel Ewing to see the nuns and children to safety. Colonel Ewing, learning that they wished to go to the Methodist College, came with ambulances to convey them thither. Finding the trustees of the college unwilling to admit the convent refugees, Colonel Ewing insisted, demanded the keys, and gave them in charge to mother superior.

Here the nuns and their pupils suffered much from overcrowding, scant food, poorly cooked—for they had neither kitchen nor proper utensils—and other discomforts. Colonel Ewing called often, and noting their sad state reminded mother superior of General Sherman's words that she might choose a home. She said they had thought of asking for General Preston's mansion. Colonel Ewing asked, "Is that where General Logan has his headquarters?" Mother superior answered, "It is." Colonel Ewing replied, "That building has been ordered burned to-morrow morning when the Army leaves the city; if you choose it for your convent, I shall apply to the general to have the order countermanded." This was done, and the next morning the nuns took possession.

Mother Etienne Vassas was placed in charge of this house, where she cared for the invalid sisters, while mother superior, with the pupils and their teachers, remained at the college (now Colonial Hotel) till the surrender of General Lee and the return of families to their homes.

In May, 1865, General Preston and family returned. Mother Etienne and her charges left the mansion and rejoined their companions in the Methodist College.

In the latter part of August they were notified they must leave the college by September 1. They had no place to look for shelter. Day after day they vainly sought a residence for themselves and the 30 pupils still with them. A little later they found means of sending the pupils to their homes, and acting on the advice of Doctor Lynch and other good friends they went to Valle Crucis, a country seat belonging to Bishop Lynch, who was then in Rome, Italy, and situated about 3 miles from the city.

Later the nuns bought Valle Crucis, and there, under difficulties and privations that would adorn the annals of missions in pagan lands, the nuns continued their work of education with the heroism of true missionaries for 22 years.

*Items of property of the Ursuline Convent, which was destroyed by United States Army in 1865, with their values at that time*

1 large brick building of 72 rooms and outbuildings-----	\$60,000
Altars and statues in chapel-----	1,000
1 oil painting, original Corregio-----	2,000
1 oil painting, original Caracci-----	1,000
1 oil painting, Guiraine-----	1,500
1 oil painting, Carlo Dolce-----	1,000
1 oil painting, modern school-----	300
Contents of art room—frames, studies, materials for painting, drawing, etc-----	1,000
1 organ-----	750
14 pianos, at \$600-----	8,400
3 harps, with covers, at \$600-----	1,800
5 guitars, with boxes, at \$25-----	125
Music stands-----	35
14 piano covers, at \$12-----	168
4 bookcases, at \$35-----	140
3 marble-top tables, at \$30-----	90
20 stained wood tables, at \$10-----	200
600 chairs, Windsor, etc., at \$1.50-----	900
200 school desks, double, at \$20-----	4,000
4 teachers' desks, at \$20-----	80

Chemical, philosophical, and astronomical apparatus-----	\$1,000
30 benches, at \$5-----	150
6 carpets, velvet and Brussels-----	600
5 carpets, stair-----	125
Books (a rough estimate)-----	1,000
200 bedsteads, at \$7.50-----	1,500
10 bureaus, at \$15-----	150
150 washstands, at \$3-----	450
2 wardrobes, at \$50-----	100
250 pillows, at \$3-----	750
250 mattresses, at \$10-----	2,500
350 pairs sheets, at \$2-----	700
250 bed spreads, at \$3-----	750
150 bed comforts, at \$4-----	600
150 pairs blankets, at \$7-----	1,050
100 work boxes, furnished, at \$3-----	300
200 writing desks, furnished, at \$3-----	600
75 portfolios, at \$3-----	225
Kitchen range and furniture-----	500
China, glassware, crockery, clothing, large quantities of music, provisions, etc-----	15,000
 Total-----	112,538

EXCERPTS FROM "THE URSULINES OF THE CONGREGATION OF PARIS, IN SOUTH CAROLINA"

First established in Charleston, S. C., in May, 1834. Work relinquished in 1847, the original mothers returning to Blackrock Convent, Ireland, the majority of the younger members going to Cincinnati, Ohio, and later to St. Martins, Brown County, Ohio.

THE URSULINE CONVENT AND ACADEMY, COLUMBIA, S. C.

Established in Columbia, S. C., September 1, 1858, by Mother Baptista Lynch, superioress, Mother Ursula Dignam, Mother Augustine England, Sister Agnes Coffey, Sister Martha Lamb, Sister Loretto Moran, who returned to South Carolina from St. Martins, Ohio.

Story of the burning of the convent and academy by Sherman's Army, February 17, 1865.

Building was located at the corner of Main and Blanding Streets (southeast). Building formerly known as the American Hotel. Main Street then known as Richardson Street.

AFFIDAVITS OF MRS. H. W. RICHARDSON

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me, a notary public duly authorized for the State and county aforesaid, Mrs. H. W. Richardson, whose residence is 1006 Barnwell Street, Columbia, who, being sworn, says that in February, 1865, she was 13 years of age and was a student at the Ursuline Convent and Academy, located in Columbia at the corner of Richardson (now Main Street) and Blanding Streets.

Deponent states of her own knowledge that on February 16, 1865, the city of Columbia was shelled by the troops of Gen. W. T. Sherman from a point across the river, now known as New Brookland.

On the morning of February 17, 1865, the troops of Gen. Wade Hampton, then occupying Columbia, retreated and by noon of that date his army had gone, and deponent can state to her own knowledge that at the time no buildings had been set on fire in the city. The troops of General Sherman entered the city, and Columbia was surrendered by its then mayor, Goodwin.

During the afternoon an officer of General Sherman's army came to the mother superior and suggested that the building be vacated, as Columbia was

a doomed city. The mother superior replied that General Sherman had promised protection for the convent, and she sent a note to him reminding him of his promise. He did send some soldiers to the convent, but early in the evening of February 17, 1865, upon seeing the buildings south of the convent on fire, the mother superior sent for the soldiers, but they declined to see her.

Soon thereafter the convent building was on fire, and the occupants fled from the building. Upon leaving the building, I saw soldiers of General Sherman's army on the roof of the convent building, and they were throwing firebrands and torches. Soon the building was in flames, and other than two reliques of value its entire contents were destroyed by the fire.

The nuns and the students of the convent were terrified, and upon leaving the building they went to the churchyard of St. Peter's Church, located on Assembly Street, remaining there for the night.

Early the next morning, upon the request of the mother superior, General Sherman called and offered her any building left standing from the fire of the previous night. The mother superior, including the nuns and students, found temporary abode at the Methodist College, then located on Hampton Street (now known as the Colonial Hotel), but as the building had been vacated for some time it was suggested that they remove to the home of General Preston, on Blanding Street. An officer of Sherman's army stated that the Preston home (then used as headquarters of the invading army) was to be burned as the army retired from the city, but he did accede to her request and the Preston home was occupied until the owners returned to Columbia.

Deponent would regard \$75,000 as a moderate sum necessary to replace the building owned by the Ursuline Convent and Academy, burned without a doubt by the soldiers of General Sherman's army. It was a building of two stories, an attic, and a basement, brick construction, and was formerly a hotel. The furnishings of the convent were valuable for many reasons; there were tapestries of great value and there were also many articles of value which had been received from friends in France. It would be difficult to give any idea as to the replacement values of the furniture and equipment, which were entirely destroyed.

Mrs. H. W. RICHARDSON.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 6th day of April, 1928, A. D.

W. SMEDES HENDLY,  
*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me Mrs. H. W. Richardson, whose residence is 1006 Barnwell Street, Columbia, S. C., whom being sworn, deposes and says that on February 17, 1865, she was a student at the Ursuline Convent and Academy, then located at the southeast corner of Richardson (now Main Street) and Blanding Streets, Columbia.

Deponent further says that Gen. W. T. Sherman had given a patron of the convent assurance that it would be protected from fire; however, about noon of that date a cavalry officer of Sherman's army, introducing himself as Major Fitzgibbons, came to the mother superior, Baptista Lynch, and announced that "Columbia is a doomed city and I do not know that a house will be left standing." The mother superior wrote a letter to General Sherman reminding him of his offer for protection, and later in the day Major Fitzgibbons returned with seven soldiers to guard the convent. Soon after supper of that day, deponent saw buildings south of the convent burning and the mother superior sent for the guards asking them to go for Major Fitzgibbons; the guards declining to go. Soon after, the convent was burning and its occupants fled to the churchyard of St. Peter's Church where they remained for the night.

It was the general accepted theory that the soldiers of Sherman's army, who were boisterous and apparently beyond control, had determined to leave Columbia in ashes.

The same night, February 17, 1865, the Washington Street Methodist Church building, located at the corner of Washington and Marion Streets, Columbia, was burned and it was the generally accepted theory that this church was burned in the belief that it was the Baptist church located in an adjoining

block; the latter church being where the ordinance of secession had been signed or at least the secession convention had been held there.

Deponent further says that she recalls the appearance of the Washington Street Church building, a brick building of attractive architecture, and deponent would regard \$25,000 as a very modest sum in valuing the building.

Mrs. H. W. RICHARDSON,

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 26th day of March, 1928, A. D.

[SEAL.]

W. SMEDES HENDLEY,

*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

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AFFIDAVIT OF MRS. ELLA LYNCH MCQUEEN

STATE OF SOUTH OF CAROLINA,

*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me, a notary public duly authorized for the State and county aforesaid, Mrs. Ellen Lynch McQueen, whose residence is 1005 Wheat Street, Columbia, whom being sworn deposes and says that she was born in 1853 and is a daughter of the late Dr. John Lynch, surgeon.

Deponent says that her home in 1865 was at 1514 Assembly Street, Columbia, and she was in this city during the time and prior to the occupation of Columbia by the troops of Gen. W. T. Sherman. Deponent recalls that all day long on February 16, 1865, the city was shelled by Sherman's troops from a location across the river, and her mother, Mrs. John Lynch, took deponent to the grounds of the State hospital for safety, remaining there until dark of the date in question. On February 17, 1865, about 10 o'clock in the morning, General Hampton's troops retreated from the city of Columbia. General Sherman's troops entering the city afterwards from a point across the Broad River, northwest. Deponent can say from her own knowledge that at no time did she see any of General Hampton's troops use a torch and, in fact, no buildings were burning when the troops of the Confederate Army had retired from Columbia.

An officer of Sherman's army stated to deponent's father, Dr. John Lynch, that the city of Columbia was doomed. During the evening of February 17, 1865, the deponent personally saw soldiers of General Sherman's army with torches setting fire to buildings near her home, 1514 Assembly Street, which is one block off Main Street, a paralleling street. She saw soldiers with torches setting fire to the curtains in the post-office building. The postmaster at the time being a Mr. Glass, who lived on the second floor of the building. The post-office building was within two blocks of the corner of Richardson (now known as Main Street) and Blanding Streets, where the building of the Ursuline Convent and Academy was located, occupying space which ran back to Sumter Street.

Deponent recalls that the convent building was constructed of brick and it was well furnished with necessary fittings—furniture and tapestries. In it was a valuable library, harps, and many articles of value which were destroyed, and in the opinion of the deponent it would require at least \$75,000 to replace the building alone.

Deponent recalls that the Ursuline Convent building was burned during the evening of February 17, 1865, and there is no doubt in her mind whatsoever as to the destruction of the building, being a result of torches used by soldiers of General Sherman's army. Deponent also recalls that the nuns and the students at the convent found it necessary to spend the night of February 17, 1865, in the churchyard of St. Peters Church, located across the street from deponent's home, 1514 Assembly Street, at the time. Deponent had to leave her own home on account of the firing of the buildings in the rear of same and she also spent the night in the churchyard of St. Peters Church.

Mrs. ELLEN LYNCH MCQUEEN.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 6th day of April, 1928 A. D.

[SEAL.]

W. SMEDES HENDLEY,

*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

## AFFIDAVIT OF J. F. WILLIAMS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me, a notary public duly authorized for the State and county aforesaid, James F. Williams, of 1931 Bull Street, Columbia, who, being sworn, deposes and says that he was born in 1850 and since he was 6 years of age has been a resident of Columbia.

DepONENT further says that he was in Columbia on February 16, 1865, at which time the city was shelled by the artillery of Gen. William T. Sherman's troops, these troops being on that date located across the river in sight of the city. On the following day, February 17, 1865, General Sherman's troops entered Columbia and city being surrendered by the then Mayor Goodwyn at a point near Main Street, now known as the Broad River Road.

DepONENT further says that prior to the entry of the troops described the troops of Gen. Wade Hampton, of the Confederate Army, retired from Columbia, and at the time of their leaving no buildings had been set on fire, nor were there any burning buildings in the city. In the evening of February 17, 1865, there was early evidence of the torch, and buildings on Main Street were soon in flames. Among the buildings burned was that occupied by the Ursuline Convent and Academy, at the corner of Richardson (now known as Main) and Blanding Streets, a brick building formerly known as the American Hotel. This building was worth, or its replacement value at that time, in the opinion of the deponent, was \$25,000 to \$35,000, to say nothing of its furnishings, which were also destroyed.

DepONENT can state from his own knowledge that the burning buildings of the evening of February 17, 1865, were not set on fire by troops of General Hampton, his troops having left the city at least six or more hours before the fires began to break out. On the contrary, the deponent is satisfied that the buildings were set on fire by troops of General Sherman, whether under his direct orders or not. Officers of his army stated to responsible citizens of Columbia that the town was doomed.

Further evidence as to the deliberate manner of burning various buildings is shown by the fact that of three churches located within a block of each building the Washington Street Methodist Church was burned, leaving the Baptist and Presbyterian churches standing. It was the accepted opinion of the citizens at the time, obtained from eyewitnesses, that the Washington Street church was burned under a misapprehension as to its being the Baptist church where the secession convention had been called, later going to Charleston, S. C. Further evidence is that of many buildings in the near-by suburbs of Columbia the troops sought out and burned the handsome home of Gen. Wade Hampton.

J. F. WILLIAMS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 5th day of April, 1928 A. D.

[SEAL.]

W. SMEDES HENDLEY,  
*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

## AFFIDAVIT OF ZELIA BARRY

This is to certify that I, Zelia Barry, was a boarder in the Ursuline Academy in Columbia, S. C., at the time of its burning by the Federal troops in 1865, the convent and its contents being a complete loss.

ZELIA BARRY.

Sworn and subscribed to before me, a notary of Dallas, Dallas County, Tex., this April 2, 1928.

[SEAL.]

A. J. NEBIS.

## AFFIDAVIT OF J. C. ABNEY

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared J. C. Abney who being duly sworn deposes and says that he is lieutenant colonel and chaplain general of the South Carolina Division of United Confederate Veterans; that he is 83 years of age; that on February 17, 1865, he was a member of Company D, Nineteenth South Carolina Regiment,

Manigault's brigade, and stationed in the city of Columbia; that on the early evening of February 16, the southern troops burned the lower, or Gervais Street Bridge, and in the night or early in the morning of the 17th the southern troops burned the upper, or Broad River Road Bridge; that about 8 o'clock a. m., February 17, the southern troops began to leave the city of Columbia and between 9 and 10 o'clock a. m. of the same day the Federal troops began coming into the city, having crossed the river on pontoon bridges; that when he left the city some cotton was burning on Main Street, but as the wind was blowing in an easterly direction said cotton fires could not have caused the fires that began to appear in the western part of the city toward the river; that in the fall of 1863 this deponent visited in the city of Columbia and frequently worshipped in Washington Street Methodist Church, and that while stationed in the city of Columbia in February, 1865, he again worshipped in said church and observed same; that said church was an elegant brick church and well equipped city church; that said building was a very large brick building nearly as large as the present church building; that there were very few buildings in the vicinity of the church and no near buildings; that said building and equipment was worth about \$25,000, and that as said church was burned by the Federal troops the congregation was badly scattered and disorganized; that upon his return to the city of Columbia a few years after 1865, he was told, and it was the rumor and generally accepted theory, that the Federal troops had burned the Methodist church thinking that it was the Baptist church where the secession convention was held, and that they had been told by the janitor of the Baptist church that the Methodist church was the Baptist church; that the Baptist church less than a block from the Methodist church was not burned nor was the Presbyterian church in the next block or the Episcopal church three blocks away burned either.

J. C. ABNEY.

Sworn to before me this 26th day of March, 1928.

[SEAL.]

EDWARD P. HODGES,

*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

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AFFIDAVIT OF JESSE THOMAS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared Jesse Thomas, who, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is 84 years of age; that during the War between the States he was a member of Company H, Seventh South Carolina Battalion; that he was born at Horrell Hill, Richland County, about 10 miles from the city of Columbia, and frequently visited the city before the war; that he was wounded at Battery Wagener, Morris Island, on July 10, 1863, and went home on a furlough; that from September, 1863, to April, 1864, he was in a hospital in Columbia; that before the war and while on said furlough he worshipped in Washington Street Methodist Church, which was the nicest church in the city and considered the strongest church in the city; that said church was a well-equipped city church; that said church was worth at least \$25,000 or \$30,000; that on the 16th day of February, 1865, he went to General Hampton, who had his headquarters on Congaree Creek, about 4 miles from the city of Columbia, in Lexington County, and applied for a place as courier; that General Hampton told him to come back the next day and that he could probably use him then; that on the night of the 16th Hampton's men began to leave Columbia and burned both bridges over the river west of Columbia; that in the early morning of February 17 all the Confederate troops were out of the city and Sherman's men began to come in, having crossed the river on pontoon bridges; that he left the city late in the late afternoon on February 17 and at that time there were no fires in sight; that in the early evening of that day he could see the lights of the burning city from his home; that a few days later he returned to the city and found that Main or Richardson Street from Gervais Street to Elmwood Avenue did not have a building left, and that all buildings had been burned between Gervais Street and Elmwood Avenue from Sumter Street to Assembly Street; that Washington Street Church and many residences had been burned; that Washington Street Church was the only church burned; that he was told on the first visit to the city that Sherman's men had asked the janitor of the Baptist church if it was the Baptist church, and that the negro told him that said church was the Methodist church and that the Baptist church was around the corner, and

that said negro janitor pointed out Washington Street Methodist Church as being the Baptist church; that it was generally understood that Sherman's men were looking for the Baptist church, as they wanted to burn it because the secession convention was held there.

JESSE THOMAS.

Sworn to before me this 26th day of March, 1928.

[SEAL.]

EDWARD P. HODGES,  
Notary Public for South Carolina.

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AFFIDAVIT OF D. D. WALLACE

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Spartanburg:*

I, D. D. Wallace, of the city of Spartanburg, State of South Carolina, do depose and say as follows:

I have for more than 20 years been professor of history and economics in Wofford College at Spartanburg, S. C., and also curator of the South Carolina Conference and Upper South Carolina Conference Historical Societies. I have examined the files of the officially published South Carolina minutes to ascertain the value of the Washington Street Methodist Church building in Columbia, S. C., which was burned on February 17 or 18, 1865. The minutes for 1860 give the value of the Washington Street Church property as \$20,000, and the value of the Medium Street Mission, operated by the Washington Street Church, as \$400. The minutes for 1861 give the value of Washington Street Church property as \$20,400, stating that all statistics for the Medium Street Mission are included in those for Washington Street Church.

The published minutes for 1862-1866 are reduced to very brief form and contain no statistics of property values of individual churches. The published minutes from 1867 on contain statistics of the value of individual churches, and for some years show a blank for any values belonging to Washington Street Church property.

The published minutes for 1868 contain a resolution of the conference welcoming the pastor or agent of Washington Street Church to all our charges in efforts to raise funds for the rebuilding of that church.

All references in the above to churches or conferences are to churches or conferences forming a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

D. D. WALLACE.

Sworn to before me this 12th day of March, A. D. 1928.

[SEAL.]

H. B. CARLISLE,  
Notary Public for South Carolina.

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ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVITS

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*Richland County:*

Personally appeared before me, G. M. Berry, who being duly sworn, says that he is president of the Columbia National Bank; that he has been in the banking business in Columbia for a number of years; that he knows Mrs. Mary E. Bultman, Frank F. Whilden, A. C. Squire, and W. J. Heidt; that he has known these persons for a number of years and that they are highly respected and trustworthy citizens.

G. M. BERRY.

Sworn to before me this 26th day of February, 1929.

[SEAL.]

W. E. McNULTY,  
Notary Public for South Carolina.

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*Richland County:*

Personally appeared before me, Mary E. Bultman, who being duly sworn, says that she is a life-long resident of the city of Columbia, S. C., and that she was born on May 15, 1869, and that she is now the owner of the property at the northwest corner of Main and Blanding Streets, and that prior to February 17,

1865, her mother and father had a home and resided on this corner, and that the following, according to statement of her mother to her, is what happened on February 17, 1865: "That on the morning of February 17, 1865, her mother was in their home on above-described corner and was sick in bed when a number of soldiers of the Northern Army entered the house. They were quite noisy except one soldier who reprimanded the others, saying that he had left a mother at home, and that when this soldier left he told my mother that the house would be in ashes by 9 o'clock that night and he advised her to get out; that my father moved a bed and some of the furniture down into the rear end of the lot under a grape arbor and put some blankets or quilts over the top as a shelter and moved my sick mother to this location, and that by 9 o'clock that night as predicted by the friendly soldier, the house was burned.

MARY E. BULTMAN.

Sworn to before me this the 26th day of February, 1929.

W. E. McNULTY,  
*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared Frank F. Whilden, who being duly sworn, deposes and says that the following is a copy of a memorandum written in the Whilden family Bible by his mother, Mary Stephens Whilden, at the time of the event therein referred to:

"This Bible is the only copy of the word of God which was left me after the burning of Columbia by Sherman. It chanced that this volume always stood on the mantelpiece of my bedroom and was the one which I always read from, having been presented to me by my father in 1856. In leaving my home when it was set fire by the soldiers, I took with me this book. It contains our family record, all other records reaching beyond the present generation were at that time destroyed.

"It is my desire that this volume shall be preserved for my children; it contains many marked passages, which may strike them when their mother shall have passed away.

"At the time of the destruction of Columbia our family consisted of my husband and four children, Frank, Walter, Mary, and Hattie; the last-named was born in Columbia and was at the time of its destruction just 1 year old.

"Of the scenes through which I passed during the night of the terrible conflagration and the succeeding days, language would fail to describe. My husband was at the time in the discharge of those duties which devolve upon every true man of the South, and I was left in charge of my family without a protector.

"We were driven from our home at midnight; it was burned with everything in it. We were not allowed to carry with us provisions. That memorable night, the 17th February, 1865, shall never be forgotten.

"We remained without shelter in the streets until daylight, when on the afternoon of the 18th we succeeded in obtaining a room in the theological seminary. We were here surrounded by thousands of Sherman's brutal soldiers for three days. How we escaped starvation is a miracle. We subsisted for a month on the coarsest fare, and scanty supply at that; it was the most difficult matter to procure provisions. Rations were allowed out of supplies sent from parts of the country that had escaped the ravages of the army, but these rations were not sufficient to supply the many needy, and had it not been for the kindness of some friends who had saved some provisions we must have suffered from extreme hunger. As it was, we had to deal out with sparing hand from day to day.

"This little record of my experience I write that my children, some of whom were too young to remember, and others who have been born since the war, may refer to it in years to come, when the incidents of the war shall have passed into history and the burning of Columbia be attributed to other causes than the incendiary torch of Sherman and his brutal soldiery.

"I record this in my Bible where aught but truth dare not be written, that my eyes saw the United States soldiers, under the command of Gen. W. T. Sherman, set fire to and burn not only my own but other houses in my immediate neighborhood.

"This Bible, together with a small Episcopal prayer book, were the only books left me after the fire, and I desire to bear record to the circumstances under which it was saved, and how it is that so high value is attached to this volume.

"Columbia, S. C., February 17, 1865.

"MARY STEPHENS WHILDEN."

Deponent further states that at the time of the burning of Columbia he was 10 years of age and was residing with his mother in the city of Columbia, on Laurel Street, next to the northeastern corner of the intersection of Laurel and Sumter Streets; that on the evening of February 17, 1865, the Whilden home was set fire to in the rear by Federal soldiers, and the family was forced to take to the streets; that while his mother and her children were huddled under some trees on Laurel Street between Bull and Marion Streets, on the evening of the fire, between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock p. m., Capt. James G. Crozier, of the Twenty-first Illinois Regiment, who kindly acted as the guardian of the family, said: "Here comes General Sherman and his staff"; that General Sherman and his officers passed slowly by and were apparently indifferent to the burning houses about them.

That on information and belief this deponent says that the Washington Street Methodist Church building and the Ursuline Convent were set fire to and destroyed by the troops of Gen. W. T. Sherman; that as to Washington Street Methodist Church, the source of his information is his mother, who told him upon more than one occasion that said church had been destroyed by Sherman's troops, and that only a few days after the fire he saw the remaining débris of the building; that as to Ursuline Convent, he saw it burning on the night of February 17, 1865, and the next day visited the scene of the destruction, and it was the talk of the morning, including the statements of some of the nuns who were in the convent, that Sherman's men had broken into the convent, robbed it, and then set it on fire.

That upon information and belief, this deponent further says that on the morning of February 17, 1865, the Federal troops released their fellow troops from the Columbia jail and set fire to said jail, and when the Columbia fire department arrived on the scene the Federal troops cut the hose with their bayonets, broke the engines up with axes, completely destroying the same, and ran off the fire department, which was largely composed of negroes.

FRANK F. WHILDEN.

Sworn to before me this 26th day of February, 1929.

[SEAL.]

W. E. McNULTY,  
Notary Public of South Carolina.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me, A. C. Squier, who, being duly sworn, says that he was born in Columbia, S. C., on March 31, 1851, and that he is a life-long resident of said city; that he was in Columbia on February 17, 1865, when General Sherman's army arrived in Columbia, and at that time he was 13 years 10½ months old, and remembers very distinctly things that he saw on that occasion; that his father was at that time operating a furniture store at the southeast corner of Main and Hampton Streets; that about twilight on Friday night, February 17, 1865, he was standing on the southeast corner of Washington and Sumter Streets and saw three rockets go up from the vicinity of the State capitol, one red rocket, one white rocket, and one blue rocket; that previous to this time some fires were in progress in the "red-light district" on West Gervais Street; in a very short time after the rockets went up the fires appeared generally over the entire city; that the advance guard of General Sherman's army began to arrive during the morning of February 17 through the northern end of the city, and that in a few hours the city was thronged with thousands of soldiers; that he followed a crowd of soldiers into a grocery store and saw them ransack it, and while he was in there the soldiers offered him some prunes out of a large jar which they had opened; that he saw them smash all of the glasses in Allan & Dial's hardware store as they entered it and saw them get upon the counters and throw the goods from the shelves about over the floor; that he was on the corner of Hampton and Main Streets and saw smoke begin to pour out of the rear of Burdell's dry goods store across

the street at the southwest corner of Main and Hampton Streets; that the local firemen attempted to put the fire out, and that he saw the northern soldiers take their bayonets and punch holes through the fire hose; that the Ursuline Convent building at the southeast corner of Main and Blanding Streets was burned on this occasion, also the Washington Street Methodist Church and Sunday school building and two parsonages at the northeast corner of Washington and Marion Streets; that every building on Main Street from the State capitol to Richland Street and many private homes east of Main Street were burned; that the southern soldiers had all left the city early on the morning of February 17, 1865, when General Sherman's army began to arrive; that there were no southern soldiers left in the city; that while he did not actually see the northern soldiers set any of these fires, there was every indication that the city was burned by them.

A. C. SQUIER.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this the 25th day of February, 1929.

W. E. McNULTY,  
*Notary Public, S. C.*

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me W. J. Heidt, who, being duly sworn, says that he will be 81 years old on the 13th day of March, 1929; that he is a resident of the State of South Carolina, and that he was living in Columbia, S. C., in February, 1865, when Sherman's army passed through Columbia, and that he was nearly 18 years old at that time and remembers very distinctly things that happened on that occasion; that he in company with several other young men was passing Chaney's Hotel, at the northwest corner of Main and Lady Streets; that there were about 25 bales of cotton on the edge of the sidewalk in front of the hotel which was on fire; that he and the other young men hastened to the Independent fire-engine house and got out the hose reel and connected same to fire hydrant and was attempting to put the fire out when the northern soldiers cut the hose up and drove them away; he further states that his father was operating a store at that time on the east side of Main Street between Taylor and Blanding Streets, just four doors south of the Ursuline Convent, and that this store, along with the Ursuline Convent, was destroyed by fire on the night of February 17, 1865.

W. J. HEIDT.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th day of February, 1929.

[SEAL.]

WALTER E. McNULTY,  
*Notary Public, South Carolina.*

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me, a notary public duly authorized for the State and county aforesaid, A. C. Squier, of 2212 Main Street, Columbia, S. C., who being sworn, deposes and says that he was born in Columbia on March 31, 1851, his father, the late A. C. Squier, sr., being from Rahway, N. J., and his mother being from Elizabeth, N. J., they moving to Columbia in 1826.

Deponent further says that he was in Columbia in February, 1865, and recalls that on February 16 of that year the city of Columbia was shelled by Sherman's troops from a position across the river at or near Gervais Street. He recalls that on February 17, 1865, Hampton's troops retired from Columbia and the troops of General Sherman entered the city about midday, entering from a position where the Broad River bridge is now located. It was understood that the mayor, Mr. Goodwyn, when surrendering to the invading troops was given assurance that only the public buildings would be damaged.

On the contrary, during the afternoon the troops of General Sherman were boisterous, many of them being drunk, and about twilight of the evening of February 17 the rockets were sent up from a point near the statehouse and almost immediately afterwards it was noticed that many houses were in flames. The soldiers went into the homes and buildings, confiscating such valuables as they could, and usually set fire to the buildings on leaving.

Deponent recalls that the Washington Street Methodist Church was burned during the evening of February 17, 1865, as were the Sunday-school room, its furnishings, and the church parsonage; in fact, every building on that block was burned, with the exception possibly of a small house with little value. Deponent would say that \$25,000 wou'd be a moderate estimate as to worth of the building and furnishings destroyed on this church property.

Deponent recalls that during the early evening, when the firemen were trying to control the flames by using leather hose, the soldiers of General Sherman used their bayonets in sticking the hose, thus making it useless and the flames thereby got beyond all control, resulting in the burning of practically every building on Main Street, then known as Richardson Street.

Deponent has no reason to believe other than that the church was set on fire by General Sherman's men, and it was the belief at the time that it was burned with an idea of its being the Baptist Church where the secession ordinance convention had been held. This is plausible for the reason that the Presbyterian Church, across the block, and the Baptist Church, within a block and a half, were left standing.

A. C. SQUIER.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 13th day of April, 1928, A. D.

[SEAL.]

W. SMEDES HENDLEY,  
*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared before me Mrs. Rose C. King, who, being duly sworn, states that to her personal knowledge the attached articles are copies of the original articles on the same subject now held in the files of the Southern Christian Advocate at Columbia, S. C., and that said copies were made by her and are exact in every detail.

Mrs. ROSE C. KING.

Sworn to before me this 26th day of February, A. D. 1929.

[SEAL.]

J. B. CAUGHMAN,  
*Notary Public of South Carolina.*

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Augusta, Ga., March 2, 1865]

#### SHERMAN'S MOVEMENTS

The dispatches prepared by the agent of the Associated Press furnished the following items:

On Friday, the 17th of February, a body of the enemy entered Columbia and burned the buildings on both sides of Main Street, its whole length. Not a house left standing. A Government courier line has been established between Augusta and Columbia. The railroad between Branchville and Charleston is unmolested. Repairs are being made on the road between Augusta and Branchville. The Wilmington road beyond the Wateree River is undisturbed. Orangeburg is reported as partially destroyed. The trestling on all the South Carolina roads, north and west of Branchville, has been destroyed. Lexington courthouse was burned, and only a dozen houses left standing. Charleston was quietly occupied by the forces at Foster and Gilmore. The citizens from the surrounding country came within the city to obtain subsistence.

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Augusta, Ga., March 2, 1865]

#### RELIEF FOR COLUMBIA, S. C.

The Hon. R. H. May, mayor of Augusta, has issued the following proclamation to the people of Augusta—the appeal so touchingly made will not be unheeded elsewhere:

"With a sorrowful heart, I am again impelled to appeal to you for relief to the destitute, homeless, and suffering inhabitants of our sister city of Columbia, S. C. We are but now beginning to understand the awful condition to which these our stricken brethren have been reduced by the ravages of war and the unnecessary cruelties of a remorseless enemy, who, like the savages of the

days of the Revolution, spared, neither age, sex, nor condition. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the people of Columbia are now destitute of food, clothing, or shelter, and from the depth of their misery they cry to us for assistance. They have been stripped of all their earthly possession, and in the midst of an inclement season have been abandoned to starvation. Two-thirds of their beautiful city are in ashes, and every horse and mule, many negroes, and all of their clothing and provisions have been carried away. They appeal to us for help in this dreadful day of their calamity, their suffering women and children, and I know you can not fail them but will respond now as in days past you have responded to far less urgent needs. Hitherto we have escaped the presence of a conquering foe—can we ask God to continue to bless and preserve us and ours if we show ourselves unwilling to aid those who are banded within the same great struggle? I bring their case before you, assuring you that never before since the devastations of this war commenced has there been a time when your sympathy and liberality could have been better bestowed.

"The following gentlemen will receive and dispense all contributions for Columbia: L. Cohn, H. W. Carr, Henry Moore, E. LaFitte, T. J. Jenning, James Miller, and J. T. Pace.

"ROB'T H. MAY, *Mayor.*"

[From the *Constitutionalist*]

#### GEORGIA TO THE RESCUE

The proclamation of his honor the mayor, calling upon all the benevolent of this city to contribute their mite to alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate people of Columbia, who now amid their smoking homes and desecrated hearts appeal to us for sympathy and assistance, is a document to be read and acted upon by all immediately and liberally. Lest there should be any misgivings with regard to the poignancy and extent of the calamity now stalking giganticly amid the blasted streets of the fair Carolina city, we append a letter from Mayor Goodwin, which tells a plain, unvarnished tale, and one of grim significance:

[Copied from the *Southern Christian Advocate*, Augusta, Ga., March 2, 1865]

"RUINS OF COLUMBIA, S. C., February 22, 1865.

"To the People of Augusta:

"Fellow citizens, the threat of the cruel and hellish enemy to wipe out South Carolina has been fully commenced in Columbia—two-thirds of our city is in ashes. Every horse and mule and many negroes—all, yes, all, clothing and provisions have been carried off or destroyed—Sherman says: 'The rebellion must be put down by starvation.' Thousands of our people are verging on it now; we appeal to you, our neighbors, to help our homeless women and children. Sherman told us if our people want to move west of Broad River that they would not be disturbed further. He has gone east, seeking to destroy the mills around us; the plantations have been swept of everything. Our only outlet now is West Broad River, as the armies are north and east, and south of us for 30 miles is a wilderness.

"We are homeless and threatened with starvation; but, thank God, the spirit of our people, though in fetters, is proud and confident that God will not allow the cause of truth, justice, and humanity to be sacrificed to unprincipled diabolism."

We trust and believe that our citizens and the people of Georgia at large will answer this petition by accumulating a lavish sum of money and a pyramid of provender for the stricken children of our sister State. Those who have much let them give much. Those who have little let them give their dole, which like the widow's mite shall be "reckoned up hereafter." Let us all give something, no matter how small. Everything helps, whether it be a bushel of potatoes, a loaf of bread, or a \$5 bill.

It will be seen by Mayor Goodwin's letter that Sherman proposes to crush our independent aspiration by the base alternative of starvation. Let our compatriots know that we can and will make his scheme futile and barren. Every dollar given to the succor of the people of Columbia is a ransom for us in heaven, a good deed on earth, a terrible blow to the enemy.

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Augusta, Ga., March 16, 1865]

#### THE ENEMY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

We regret that we have as yet heard nothing directly from our friends beyond the Savannah respecting the ravages of the enemy at the points over which we passed. There are no mails and perhaps few means of writing left in the desolated districts. What we gather from a passenger now and then, and what is received through the daily papers—meager at best—is all that we can learn. From such sources of information we gather the fact that widespread desolation marks the path of the enemy through our devoted sister State. Houses were plundered and burned. Even the little left was often torn from the grasp of those removing from the burning building and thrown into the flames. Food was carried off, or else destroyed, and the people left in pitiable condition. The largest license was given to the slaves, and since the passing of the enemy they have evidenced considerable insubordination. Churches were emptied of their benches and turned into dance houses, where white and colored were mingled in profane revelry. What Sherman's army did elsewhere was merciful compared with the atrocities they have perpetrated in this later march, according to all the reports that have reached us.

But the heaviest woe has fallen upon Columbia, the seat of hospitality and refinement, the beautiful capital of the State. More than half of it is in ashes—not by accident, as has been alleged, but of deliberate purpose. We have learned from friends who have seen Rev. W. G. Connor, pastor of Washington Street Methodist Episcopal Church, that the parsonage in which he lived was set on fire three times and extinguished; that the back doors of the church were entered and it fired within; and by its burning his house and the district parsonage, occupied by the Rev. C. H. Pritchard, were consumed. The means used by the Yankees to fire the houses were frequently fireballs thrown into them, and when the houses were burning and the inmates ran out they entered and pillaged them. The scenes that were enacted on that memorable night of the 17th of February, 1865, defy all description, and unspeakable suffering has followed. Hundreds of wealthy families were turned into the street, stripped of everything but the clothing they wore. And those who were not made homeless were mostly robbed, so that they could give nothing save shelter to their suffering fellow citizens.

If there was ever a case that appealed to the sympathy of the more fortunate, it is that of the citizens of Columbia. We have heard of some who have never known want reduced to the necessity of drawing daily a very scanty ration from the contributions made from abroad; and the state of the roads and the condition in which the enemy has left the surrounding country made even these a very precarious mode of supplying the most pressing demands of nature. Let all who can contribute something to our distressed fellow citizens—not money only, but, better still, food and raiment. This is what is now most needed, and if any can throw open their doors to the homeless and give some of them shelter they will give yet further testimony of their subjection to the self-sacrificing of Christianity.

#### FURTHER FROM COLUMBIA

We have seen an intelligent gentleman from Columbia, who, being a member of the fire brigade, is able to state definitely the fact that Columbia was fired in many places at once by the Yankees. It was pretended by them that cotton in the streets took fire and was communicated by a high wind to the houses. He says that some cotton in the street was fired about noon, but he aided in extinguishing it, and long before the houses were generally burning it was completely out. He says he saw fire set to one house, and he himself put it out; and that when the flames appeared later in the afternoon on Main Street, they broke out simultaneously all along the street in many different places. Besides this, isolated houses were burned, to which the fire could not be communicated from other houses. It is asserted, too, that in numerous cases the houses were fired by the guard set for the protection of the inmates and their property. The Masonic and Odd Fellows' halls were deliberately fired by the Yankees, and all records, regalia, jewels, and furniture burned. The

Yankees may now add to their previous boastings the assertion that no race has ever surpassed them in wanton and malicious fiendishness.

We learn that Messrs. Evans & Cogswell saved a good deal of their machinery, yet lost also a large amount—and also lost much stock. The new abridged edition of our hymn book, recently noticed in the Advocate, was still in their hands; and we have not learned whether it was saved or lost, though we fear the latter. If so, this will prove a serious inconvenience to the church. Major Evans's dwelling, too, was burned, though his family had been removed. Mrs. John Bryce's house was burned. Mr. Robert Bryce, we believe, had sold his house in town and removed to the suburbs. His former house was burned, but not that he then occupied, we have been informed. Major Evans got away almost all the machinery and material for printing the government bonds and money, though some small portion of this was burned on a delayed train. We are told that it is a melancholy sight to see the plundered citizens walking about the ruins of their former homes, meditating upon the sudden calamity that has overtaken them, and trying to gather whatever comfort the community in sorrow affords, while they unite in praying that God may bring righteous retribution upon the spoiler.

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Macon, Ga., Thursday, November 23, 1865]

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SOUTH, CHARLOTTE, N. C.

\* \* \* W. Martin presented a communication setting forth the condition of the church in Columbia. It appears that the Washington Street Church, the Sunday School room, and the station and district parsonages were all consumed in the late disastrous conflagration, and most of the members of the church lost nearly all they possessed.

On motion of Doctor Smith, the cordial sympathies of the conference were tendered to the brethren in Columbia, and the ministers pledged themselves to use prompt and energetic efforts to contribute and collect funds for the erection of a temporary place of worship in that stricken city. The document was referred to the committee on church extension.

The examination of elders followed, and many were called and approved. G. Bright was approved and transferred to the Georgia Conference.

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Macon, Ga., February 23, 1866]

A THOUSAND CHURCHES BURNED

A correspondent of the N. O. Christian Advocate writes: I have been making inquiries all over the South respecting the destruction of churches during the war, and while I am not prepared to speak with anything like exactness from statistical information, yet, from all I can learn, I am led to believe that not less than from 1,000 to 1,200 churches were destroyed by the Christian army of the most religious people in the world. These buildings cost the southern churches of all denominations not less than \$5,000,000. The Baptist and Methodist suffered the most, the Presbyterian next, and the Catholics the least. A full report ought to be obtained and recorded in letters of brass as a perpetual memento of the affection and love which have been cherished for us for 40 years, and is still felt toward "erring brethren." Whole districts of country, where formerly many churches stood, the evidences of at least some civilization, if not "genuine Christianity," are now without a shingle to cover the Sabbath worshippers. Northern ecclesiastics boasted to the administration of the large numbers the church had sent to army, every company, regiment, and brigade swelling with church communicants, "making a league with death and a covenant with hell" to exterminate all "bogus Christianity," and adopting as a primary measure the destruction of church edifices. Is not that a sight to make angels—of a certain order—glad? Now, would it not look like doing a right thing for the great Northwest to raise \$500,000 and send "down South" to pay for the rebuilding of some of these ruined churches? Five millions of dollars would hardly restore them.

[Original poetry copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, published in Macon, Ga.  
Friday, March 9, 1866]

## THE BURNT CHURCH

(Written near the ruins of Washington Street Methodist Church of Columbia, S. C.)

As I stand beside the crumbling walls,  
Thy charred and blacken'd walls—  
And weep thy fate, thou blessed church,  
Oh! how my heart recalls  
The sacred epoch, long since gone,  
That memory brings to me,  
When on thy consecration morn,  
A fair new sanctuary,  
Like doves unto their windows came  
God's worshipers to thee.

\* \* \* \* \*  
O God! rebuild our ruin'd church;  
Ere long, ere very long,  
Be heard in it the sound of prayer,  
The voice of sacred song;  
The gospel of the grace of God  
Be preached in it once more,  
With all the energy and power  
That it was preached of yore,  
And the foe's sacrilegious hand  
Destroy it never more.

—M. M.

COLUMBIA, S. C., February, 1866.

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Macon, Ga., March 9, 1866]

AN APPEAL FOR THE WASHINGTON STREET METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN COLUMBIA, S. C., WHICH WAS BURNT TO THE GROUND ON THE NIGHT OF THE 17TH OF FEBRUARY, 1865, BY THE SOLDIERS OF THE INVADING ARMY COMMANDED BY GENERAL SHERMAN

Mr. EDITOR: We are made glad in the midst of our gloom by the visits of our old friend, the Southern Christian Advocate. I send a small pen-and-ink contribution to it. Would that instead I could send what it needs more at this time—greenbacks. The verses were printed in our little *Phoenix*, a daily, at the time, of very limited circulation. If you think woman's voice can aught aid the causes so near the heart—religion and humanity—you may give a corner of your paper to these feeble utterances of mine.

How many will recollect this dear old church, now reduced to ashes? To how many was it endeared by a thousand sacred associations? Its founder, the saintly Capers, with his cenotaph on its walls and his monument in its graveyard just in rear of the pulpit which he graced in a manner I have never seen another do. Then its consecrator, the noble Andrew—how powerful he then was in the palmy day of his strength and vigor, making by his ministrations the pulpit a throne of thunder. Then its first pastor, the apostolic Free-man, so successful in winning souls; and its first presiding elder, the indefatigable Kennedy, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Its last pastor, William G. Connor, who in vain endeavored by prayers and tears to avert from it the hands of the raging incendiaries as they yelled out, "Burn up the heathen temple"; its last missionary, William Martin, so faithful to its immense colored membership, besides many pastors intermediate whose praise was in this and in all the churches. What a ministering church it was from the beginning! How successful, how efficient, how many thousands of rich and poor, bond and free, were converted and sanctified at its altar! How aggressive it was, yet how conservative; how zealous, yet how sound. How it devised liberal things, how ready to distribute, to help, a leader in every cause of benevolence, in every case of distress, never appealed to in vain. The burnt book room, the burnt churches of Charleston, if Wilmington, all will remember this. It is hoped not only these but all the churches of our land will remember this church, what it

was, and consider what it was. Once its membership among the wealthiest in the land, now the poorest of the poor. Burnt out, as their church was burnt down, what can they now do for it but pray God to open the hearts and purses of those that can afford it relief. Alas! the ark of God with us the members of this poor burnt church, dwells not now even in curtains. We have not even a tabernacle in the wilderness in which to worship God after the manner we have been accustomed. We would be thankful for the humblest shelter that we might call our own to worship in, for without this soon we fear our large membership will be as sheep scattered and lost, having no fold. Oh, how can our comparatively rich brethren dwell in their ceiled houses when this temple of God is in ashes! Surely those even of moderate means can spare a small pittance for the resuscitation of a ruined church. The widow's mite, even, will, as of yore, be accepted and blessed. Doctor Myers, we are assured, will receive gladly any contribution for our poor church; so will its pastor and agent, Rev. W. T. Capers; so will its trustees or any member of the South Carolina conference. O Christians! if you could but behold the unsightly ruins of our temple, how mutely and piteously they seem to be imploring help, you could not, I am sure, withstand the appeal to your charity. True, you are all impoverished by this cruel war, but not many among you have had an enemy to throw "fire into your very sanctuary," to curse God's house, and then destroy it, to burn the very grass over the graves of your beloved ones. Such, as a church, has been our calamity. May God stir up your hearts to help us!

M. M.

COLUMBIA, S. C., February 1866.

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Macon, Ga., April 20, 1866]

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
SOUTH, CONVENED AT NEW ORLEANS, APRIL 4, 1866

Ninth day, Friday, April 13, 1866

Rev. Dr. W. Smith, of the South Carolina conference, presented a memorial from the Washington Street Church in Columbia, S. C., it being an address to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South appealing for aid. Doctor Smith says: "I should not do justice to my own feelings if I were not to add a few remarks upon presenting this memorial to this conference. I have been at a loss to know what direction to give it. I do not see that it requires to be referred to any special committee. I am aware that this conference has not funds at its disposal, or I am persuaded that the same generous spirit which has always animated you would make you contribute liberally to that church. There is, however, one thing that may be done very appropriately; that is, for this general conference to give utterance to their sympathy for those who have been most deplorably afflicted in this late cruel war; and as the Columbia quarterly conference has appointed an agent to receive donations it may be well for this general conference to indorse that agent and recommend the object of his mission to the generous consideration of the people throughout the country. When I look upon the past history of that church, when I look around me here and see so many esteemed and venerable men who have been connected with that church, and when I call up the flood of recollections associated with that church, my feelings are almost too big for utterance. I remember it as the spot where I first gave my heart to God. That building now lying in ashes is where some of the most venerable and oldest members of the general conference labored perhaps before I was born. I remember that it was a spot where Christian liberality and Christian feeling were called out and exhibited on the noblest scale. But, sir, it is now gone. Our friends at a distance have heard of the ruin of Columbia; they have heard of the sad havoc which war has made in that beautiful town, but the imagination can not conceive of the scene of the ruin that has been left. Throughout the long street where business was conducted block after block, on every hand the widespread conflagration has swept down and all now lies in ashes and ruin, save where some one desirous to recover from the shock has commenced to build again, and here and there perhaps some single-story building rises out of the ruin. The men of that church are men that have been wont in the days of prosperity to dispense with a bounteous hand and to respond liberally to all appeals, but now many of them are dependent upon charity for their daily bread. It is a sight

to make any man weep, and I believe there is scarcely anyone who knew Columbia in its days of beauty and prosperity who could visit it now and behold its ruin without weeping tears of bitterness and sorrow for its sad, sad fate. That congregation made up of noble and generous men and women, with a large membership and flourishing Sunday school, are now scattered and dispersed and know not where to call home."

Rev. Dr. E. W. Sehon, of the Louisville conference, then offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

*"Resolved*, That this conference has heard with deep emotions of the sad fortune of our brethren in Columbia, S. C., and earnestly commend the agent, Colin Murchison, who is soliciting aid for the rebuilding of their church, to the kind and liberal consideration of the members and friends of our communion."

[Copied from the Southern Christian Advocate, Macon, Ga., August 24, 1866]

CHAPEL DEDICATED AT COLUMBIA, S. C.

Mr. EDITOR: The inclosed editorial from the Patriot, of our city, will give what we know will be to you the pleasant information that the scattered flock of the old Washington Street Methodist Church, of Columbia, S. C., are again gathered into their own fold. Though grateful and thankful for this neat chapel, that congregation, however, look upon it as only a temporary tabernacle for their worship till such a time as a church adequate in size and in all else to their wants shall be built on the site of the large church burned on the 17th of February, 1865. To attain as speedily as possible this desirable object, the Methodist people of Columbia beg the prayers and pecuniary assistance of God's people everywhere. No place in all the land has the past war visited so sorely as the doomed city of Columbia, and no churches have been reduced to such dire extremity as hers, but especially that of Washington Street, where the gospel was given to so large a number of God's poor. Without aid from abroad, the people here for many years can not even entertain the hope of rebuilding their burned church. In the meanwhile, the loss to the cause of Christ and to southern Methodism will be incalculable. Columbia still remains our seat of government, that of our university, F. College, and many schools. By having no house of worship commensurate with the wants of an increasing population, we shall lose the influence at this most important of the State, this center and source of highest religious civilization. We have had few or no responses to our calls for help from abroad. We trust our friends will remember the afflicted church of Columbia—old Washington Street. We believe God will abundantly bless them for every dollar they contribute to raise His holy temple from the ashes of its desolation.

M. M.

DEDICATION OF WASHINGTON STREET METHODIST CHURCH

It has seldom been our happiness to participate in more impressive religious services than those which took place at the dedication of the new chapel at Washington Street Church on yesterday morning. The building, which is a simple, square, brick structure, occupies the position of the former elegant chapel which was destroyed by Sherman, together with the church and two parsonages, on the memorable 17th of February, 1865. It is capable of holding about 400 persons and is designed to serve the purposes of worship until such time as the congregation may be able to rebuild their church.

WASHINGTON STREET METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SOUTH,  
*Columbia, S. C., February 18, 1929.*

Senator COLE L. BLEASE,  
*Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR BLEASE: The Congressional Record was received and read with interest. Then your letter came on Saturday. I notice what you have to say and am not at all surprised that the Court of Claims should refer you to their former decision. Any fair-minded person or set of persons, it seems, would be forced to admit that Sherman's army deliberately burned Columbia, and I think you have given them proof of the fact.

I am glad you expect to continue the fight for us. Would it be worth while to attempt to prove that Sherman's troops burned Washington Street Church without trying to establish the fact that they burned the balance of the city? In the files of the Southern Christian Advocate there is a letter from the pastor then serving Washington Street Church to the effect that he chased Yankee soldiers with fireballs out of the parsonage, and the further statement that they burned the church. I am not quoting his words, but this is the substance. The Advocate was then published in Georgia, and this article, along with many others, was written shortly after the destruction of Columbia.

Edward Hodges and I will see Mr. Salley this week and will do all we can to aid you in this matter. This money, which is nothing more than a just debt, would certainly be a godsend to us at this time.

Thanking you for your continued efforts and assuring you of my cooperation in the matter, I am,

Very cordially yours,

A. L. GUNTER.

WASHINGTON STREET METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SOUTH,  
Columbia, S. C., March 23, 1928.

Hon. COLE L. BLEASE,

*United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR BLEASE: Your letter of the 21st is in hand. I am appreciative of the interest you are manifesting in the effort to secure reimbursement for the church Sherman burned, and I regret that our folk here are moving so slowly. Upon receipt of your letter I immediately got in touch with Hodges and with others who are assisting in securing this evidence and they promise to see some of these parties to-day. While it is true that Edward Hodges is in a city campaign and therefore quite busy these days, he promises me that he will try to get everything in shape to forward to you early next week.

He told me that he had sent an affidavit from Dr. D. D. Wallace, curator of the Conference Historical Society, setting forth the value as published in the conference minutes. Rev. J. C. Abney, a local preacher of our church, still lives and told me the other day he remembers the church well, has been in many times, and that he was a soldier on duty in Columbia when Sherman's army approached the city. He says he considers the \$25,000 named in the bill as a fair amount. If you think his testimony worth anything, I'll get that.

You may expect to hear from us early next week, and I trust this will give you time to push things through during this session.

Please inform me whenever and however you think I might assist in any way.  
Most cordially,

ARTHUR L. GUNTER.

URSULINE CONVENT,  
Columbia, S. C., April 4, 1928.

Hon. COLE L. BLEASE,

*United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SENATOR BLEASE: I deeply appreciate your very active interest, indicated by your letter of the 3d, just received.

I certainly do hope that you will be able to get the papers that were filed in the former claim. We were very nonplussed at the view taken by the House of Representatives at that time. I have always thought that it was due to the misrepresentations of a South Carolinian who had turned Republican, had an office in Washington, and was working altogether for the Republican Government. He passed away several years ago. He accepted evidence from a party who was not in Columbia at the time of the burning and who was very pro-Federal, and from another who was weak-minded.

I am writing to the Senators you named, and thank you for the suggestion.

With regard to the value of the property: I heard often from the mother superior—who was my aunt—and the nuns associated with her that the estimate was at least \$100,000, and at that time prices were very moderate. The convent was well furnished and well stocked, and in that few hours' burning everything was consumed in the flames except what could be carried in the hands. They had fine pianos, harps, and guitars; fine paintings, among them one valued at \$5,000, the gift of a Roman lady; the chapel, dormitories, classrooms, parlors, and kitchen were all well furnished.

I will quote from a letter written by the mother superior at that time: "Our convent, situated in the center of the city, was destroyed with all it contained. We were scarcely able to save our lives, each one carrying only some clothing and little else. We had been deceived by the promises made by the most powerful authorities, even General Sherman himself. That is why we did not keep in reserve some funds we had then and which could have been easily removed, but used the money in buying great quantities of provisions. These, with everything we had acquired since the first foundation of the convent, were consumed by the fire."

As soon as I possibly can I will send on some affidavits regarding the burning by the Federal troops and the value of the property.

We wish to assure you, dear Senator, that we have perfect confidence in your ability and in your friendship. We know that you will do everything in your power for us, knowing that it is a just cause. As a lawyer you stood among the first in South Carolina—very powerful in your arguments. I have not considered an attorney at all, and we are not in a position to go to any expense whatever, as our finances are at a very low ebb. We have no acquaintances in Washington, and I had not thought of asking anyone else; however, we are willing to follow your advice in anything you suggest.

We are happy to know that Mrs. Blease is improving so nicely in health. We are remembering her daily in our prayers that she may soon regain her full health and strength.

Assuring you of our gratitude for your efforts in our behalf, and with kindest regards to Mrs. Blease and yourself, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

MOTHER MICHEL SPANN, *Superior.*

[From The State, February 17, 1929]

**KNOWS OF BUT SIX OTHER THAN HIMSELF RESIDING HERE WHO SAW COLUMBIA BURN—FRANK F. WHILDEN WRITES OF SHERMAN'S DESTRUCTION OF SOUTH CAROLINA CAPITAL 64 YEARS AGO TO-DAY—A NIGHT OF TERROR**

"Lest we forget!" Another year and I am still here to think of the anniversary of that eventful night, February 17, 1865, just 64 years ago. May I again intrude on your generosity for the use of the columns of The State just to recite a few facts by way of remembrance and also for information?

At about 10 o'clock on the night of February 17, 1865, with fires raging around us on all sides and rapidly approaching our house, under the advice and escort of Capt. James G. Crosier, Twenty-first Illinois Regiment, we made our way from our home on Laurel Street, next to Sumter, into the middle of the street, between Marion and Bull.

We brought with us, by the aid of our faithful negro servants, some few things, such as a mattress, a couple of chairs, a couple of blankets, a bucket, and so on; all these were brought by hand. When the family arrived there were four generations present, the oldest had seen the snows of fourscore years and the youngest was an infant in arms.

Among our "valuable" possessions was a rocking chair. This was assigned for the comfort of the "old lady," who sat the ordeal out till daylight, through a biting, howling northwestern gale, never uttering a word of complaint.

Mother and the servants were continually sprinkling with water the blankets, under which the children were hid to keep them from catching fire from the falling sparks and flying embers. (This rocking-chair is now in the possession of my sister.)

About midnight a soldier riding a horse, reined up, and surveyed our party, and then in a most sarcastic manner addressed the old patriarch, saying, "Grandmother, don't you want to get up on my horse and take a ride with me?" You can better imagine than I can describe the indignant look of that dear old lady. Suffice it to say, she did not accept the "kind offer" for a ride. All through the night we were subjected to all kinds of taunts and indignities from men in the uniform of the United States Army in all stages of intoxication. We would probably have been robbed of all of our possessions had it not been for the guardian care of Captain Crosier.

Some time toward morning we noticed a party of men on horseback, and our guardian and friend told us, "Here comes General Sherman with some of his staff." He was reviewing the grand spectacle, and no doubt congratu-

lating himself on how well the work of destruction was being carried out. I often look back and wonder how we ever escaped death that fearful night, for truly the powers of hell were turned loose on our beautiful city in the personnel of the United States Army under Gen. W. T. Sherman, through whom the destruction was well done. May I add that there was many a man who entered the city that morning that never left it alive, for there were the "boys in gray," who still lingered in our suburbs, and saw to it that our womanhood was defended.

Enough for this part of my story and may I be permitted to add a few words to tell of some facts that have come under my personal observation quite recently?

Some time ago I was dining at a home when there were about 14 at the table. Two were young ladies about 18 to 20; several young men whose ages were from 18 to 23 and a boy of 14.

The conversation turned in some way to the great fire in Columbia. One of the ladies asked, "When did it happen?" For she had "never heard a word about it." Yet that young lady had been educated in schools in this State. Of course, I was only too willing to tell my experience as far as the limited time would allow. Such ignorance in our capital city is inexcusable, and our schools and teachers are largely responsible for it. But, bad as that is, here is a case in point that is far worse:

I have in my possession the name of a teacher in a school in our State who on one occasion told her class in history her version of the burning of Columbia, and she declared that the city had been set on fire by Gen. Wade Hampton and his soldiers, and her pupils believed it.

I have offered time and time again to give my story, The Burning of Columbia, but only three schools in this State have availed themselves of the offer; that offer still holds good at any time and any place I may be called.

Let me say in closing that one of the best articles I have ever read on the facts of the burning of Columbia, *Ilium in Flames*, is from the able pen of Dr. C. J. Milling, now a practicing physician of this city. This article has been published in full in the Confederate Veteran in the issues of April, May, and June, 1928. It would be very entertaining and profitable reading for our young people, and school teachers also. What story will be told when we older ones have passed away? I think now there are only seven living in this city who were present on that eventful night.

Somehow history seems to be rather silent on this subject. We should in some way preserve the truth and the honor of our cause for coming generations.

Yours for the facts and truth of history,

FRANK T. WHILDEN.

COLUMBIA.

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 18, 1929.

Hon. FRANK T. WHILDEN,  
509 Duke Avenue, Columbia, S. C.

DEAR SIR: I notice in the State of February 17, an article by you as to the burning of Columbia.

In 1912 while I was Governor of South Carolina I had a hard fight to keep a history from being adopted for our schools which contained the sentence that "Hampton or his soldiers burned Columbia." You will find my reply on page 1070, Journal of the House of Representatives, February 17, 1912.

I received very little assistance in the matter from any source, even the legislature declining to take action, notwithstanding the fact that I requested them "in the defense of the Confederate soldiers of South Carolina to take action and show to the northern press that the attempt to slander Hampton had their disapproval."

Now, I have pending before Congress two bills; one to reimburse the ladies of Ursuline Convent, and one to reimburse the Washington Street Methodist Church for the burning of their places by Sherman's soldiers, and I am met with a statement that Hampton burned Columbia and not Sherman.

I have recently had placed in the Congressional Record statements and affidavits to show that this is not true, and am inclosing you a copy of the last article I had placed therein. I have also written the authorities of the convent and church this morning, asking that they see you and get such proofs as you have.

I am going to prepare an article on Who Burned Columbia, and present it to Congress in order to prove that Sherman's men and not Hampton did burn Columbia, and prove it to the satisfaction of every honest man.

I would rather have the historical fact and truth known and not get a dollar for these institutions than to let it stand as history that Hampton and his soldiers burned the city.

I am glad to see your article, but was in no way surprised as to your saying that children are being taught that Hampton burned Columbia, when the press of the State and the legislature of the State, because of political prejudice against me, refused to help me while governor in my effort to which I referred you.

Thanking you for any information that you may furnish in the matter, I am,  
Very respectfully,

COLE L. BLEASE.

509 DUKE AVENUE,  
Columbia, S. C., February 27, 1928.

Senator COLE L. BLEASE,  
Washington, D. C.

HONORABLE SIR: Thank you for your kind letter of February 18, 1929. It has been my pleasure to receive pleasant comments from many sources in recognition of my article you refer to in the Columbia State of February 17, 1929.

I have delayed answering your letter for the reason that I have been conferring with Mr. McNulty and Mr. Hodgers in perfecting an affidavit which I have signed, and I hope by this time is in your possession.

I hope you may be assisted by this paper to be successful in obtaining the payment for the wanton destruction of the property belonging to these religious organizations.

I am not a young man now, but for the sake of establishing the truth of history I am willing, if I could help in any way, to appear before any committee in Washington and give my personal testimony to the many facts of that eventful night.

I have had my experience substantiated by a number that I have talked with in recent years, some of whom have now passed beyond. My dear mother, who in all of her life was an outstanding Christian and benevolent worker, talked with her children, and these facts are as familiar to me as anything that has ever occurred in my life.

I have no financial or even denominational interest in this particular effort which you are now so kindly lending your valuable aid, but I am doing all I can, and will continue to do so as long as I live to leave my testimony for the truth of history and the honor of the southern soldiers and our southland.

I would call your attention particularly to the article written by Dr. C. J. Milling, M. D., now practicing his profession in this city, that is published in the Confederate Veteran, as referred to in my article of the 17th of February, 1929, as he makes citations from northern historians and military men, and even quotes General Sherman himself to prove his guilt in the burning of Columbia.

I had the privilege of telling my story before a history class of one of our schools in Richland County on the 19th instant, and so surprised and pleased were the superintendent and a few teachers and the pupils of the class that heard me that at the close of my talk they requested me to have the whole school assembled and repeat my story. I consented and had again the privilege of addressing about 300, including superintendent, faculty, and student body; when I closed my address the applause was so loud and continuous that I had to appear and bow my appreciation, and the superintendent had to rap for order several times before he could get quiet restored.

I was immediately surrounded and most urgent requests came from all sides, "Please, sir, come again soon."

I have even been honored with phone calls and a visit from the parents of some of the children, stating how enthusiastic their children were on what they heard; the only difficulty seemed to be it was hard for the young minds to understand how a man 74 years old could be as young as I appeared to be.

Pardon me for taking so much of your valuable time.

For your interest in this matter I personally thank you and hope you may be rewarded with great success in your efforts.

Sincerely yours,

FRANK F. WHILDEN.

[From The State, Columbia, S. C., August 19, 1929]

MR. WHILDEN REPLIES TO HITCHCOCK'S STORY—COLUMBIAN WHO REMEMBERS BURNING OF COLUMBIA AND OCCUPATION OF CITY BY SHERMAN'S ARMY ANSWERS CHARGES MADE BY NORTHERN SOLDIER

To the EDITOR OF THE STATE:

In compliance with a number of requests, knowing that I am conversant with the actual facts, the writer has consented to reply to the review of Marching with Sherman, by Maj. Henry Hitchcock, which was published in the issue of The State of April 14, 1929.

An error is the more dangerous in proportion to the degree of truth it contains, and there is a sort of half truth in some of Major Hitchcock's statements which give the evidence that he was here at that eventful time, but he is lacking in the accuracy of his statements. There is a display of egotism and personal pride in the young man, who only entered the Army in October, 1864, just a few months before the close of the conflict and who in reality saw nothing of the real warfare but enjoyed the march to the sea with the overwhelming numbers of the northern army, when they had little or no opposition in their pathway.

He writes: "We have now marched a great army diagonally across and through the very heart of the first and most bitter and obstinate of all rebel States, without a single check, defeat, or disaster, \* \* \* sweeping everything before us, consuming their substance, burning their cotton, etc."

However, he makes a valuable statement in "his diary" when he writes: "The really important things we have done are in the capture and destruction of Columbia and the railroads near it, the destruction of immense quantities of machinery, ammunition, ordnance, and military stores of all kinds." Does anyone want a stronger testimony of the fact that Sherman's army destroyed Columbia than this statement by one of its own officers? Another half truth is: "We have heard and seen more whining, more cowardly talk, more blaming the leaders who forced us into the war, more mean-spirited and abject submission to mere power, and less manliness and devotion to even what might be erroneously believed to be principle in that same State of South Carolina than in any other State in the South." No doubt he met with some of that same class that cursed our State from 1866 to 1876, commonly known as "scalawags."

Here is a stranger passing through our State with a victorious army, who hears and knows more in this short stay of a few days or weeks, when all our men were at the front, than those who were to the manner born. I have never heard such charges as he quotes made by any true southerner, man or woman. I quote again:

"One word about Columbia. It was not burned by orders but expressly against orders and in spite of the utmost efforts on our part to save it. \* \* \*

I do not propose to cite all or even a small part of the vast documentary evidence which fixes the guilt on General Sherman and his army, but I wish to record a personal reminiscence.

That evening two officers stepped upon the piazza and requested my mother to give them supper. This request mother complied with. Those two men were Capt. James G. Crosler, Twenty-first Illinois Regiment, and his lieutenant. (We have corresponded with Captain Crosler since the war; he retired as major.) After supper we all gathered about the fire and talked. About 8 o'clock they got up to go; they thanked mother for her hospitality, and as they were leaving Captain Crosler handed mother a bottle of glycerin, some licorice, and some medicine, with the remark: "You will have need of these before morning, as we have orders to destroy the city."

Our house on Laurel Street was set fire by soldiers in the rear, when we were forced to leave. Remember, Major Hitchcock says in his diary: "The important things we have done are the capture and destruction of Columbia, S. C., etc."

I give you these evidences of facts. You may be the judge by the outcome of the truth of the statement.

At 8 p. m. three rockets were sent up from the statehouse; within an hour after the signal, which our whole family saw from our south piazza, fires were flaming up in all quarters of the city. This could not have been an accident or set by cotton flying about, nor by General Hampton or his faithful 400, because they had been out of the city at least 10 hours.

Again I quote:

"The streets were full of loose cotton brought out and set fire to by the rebels before they left. I saw it when we rode into town."

Now, what are the facts? Here again we have a half truth. In the lower part of the city cotton was brought from the warehouses into the streets to be destroyed to prevent it falling into the hands of the enemy, but up to the time of the entering in of the army not a fire had been set nor a bale of cotton burned. It is now known that Hampton at the last minute gave orders for it not to be burned, and General Butler testified "that his command was the last Confederate force to leave the city, his rear guard leaving as Sherman entered, and that up to the time he left not one bale of cotton had been fired or was burning."

The cotton bales were strapped by ropes; these bands were cut by the swords and bayonets of the Federal soldiers and scattered broadcast on the wings of the northwest gale that was blowing at the time, and soon the trees, streets, and parks were filled with loose cotton.

Sherman's army began to enter the city between 9 and 10 a. m. and marched down Main Street from what is now known as the Broad River Road, and they were marching in nearly all day. I was on Main Street and saw them come in. Major Hitchcock may have been among the number that came in late in the day, and the soldiers may have fired some cotton down by the railroad, but I did not see it, nor did I know of it.

A detachment of Sherman's army crossed the Congaree River at the foot of Bridge (now Gervais) Street on their own pontoon bridge and did not enter the city until late in the afternoon. Major Hitchcock may have been with this division, and his statement may have been correct, for the cotton on Bridge Street may have been fired before dark.

Gen. Wade Hampton made an orderly retreat from our city with his troops, about 400 in number, and passed our house on Laurel Street just before the head of Sherman's army marched into the city. I saw them go out. Our cousin, Capt. John F. Lanneau, chief of engineers of Hampton's staff, rode up on the pavement in front of our house—our family was assembled on the piazza to see them pass—and said, as he raised his cap, "God bless and protect you all."

Up to this time they left not a fire was burning in the city, to my knowledge, nor was there any loose cotton flying about.

The first fire was seen after the entrance of the United States Army. They opened the jail and released the prisoners and then set fire to the building. This was about noon.

When the negro firemen carried the engines to the fire the soldiers drove the firemen away and with axes broke up the engines and with swords and bayonets cut the hose, rendering the outfit useless.

Now, all this can certainly not be laid to the door of General Hampton or his troops.

Once again I quote:

"The citizens themselves, like idiots, madmen, brought out large quantities of liquor as soon as our troops entered and distributed freely among them."

This charge I claim is absolutely false. My mother, grandmother, two servants, and the writer were on Main Street when the army was coming in and saw the stores broken open and entered by the army and liquor flowed freely from buckets in the hands of the United States soldiers, and by midday the whole army was drunk—officers and men—with a few exceptions. (See Recollections of the War, 1861-1865, by Mrs. Mary S. Whilden, p. 9.) Our servants, two negro women, came home with washtubs full of plunder that the Yankees had given them, taken from the stores. "Some officers" may have been tendered hospitality of some private homes and drank, and this may have been the foundation for the idea expressed by Major Hitchcock "that the idiots, madmen, brought out large quantities of liquor, etc."

In the afternoon the city was crowded in every part with drunken soldiers, and they were very riotous.

A soldier, too drunk to protect himself, was burned to death on the steps of the back piazza of our home on Laurel Street.

It has been estimated (I understand) that hundreds of United States soldiers were burned to death entering homes uninvited and going to bed in the bed-rooms of homes in the city too drunk to arouse or protect themselves when the house was set on fire and burned to the ground with its contents. I am in a position to cite one instance.

It was "common talk" that when General Sherman became aware of this phase of the tragedy, about 2 a. m., he gave orders that the fires be stopped, and in an hour the flames were out. The fires did cease quite suddenly toward

morning. I think, after reading his article, "of all mean humbugs, South Carolina chivalry is the meanest," any southerner will form his own opinion of this Major Hitchcock as a man and as a soldier. He concludes his article with: "And Wade Hampton's letter to Sherman—it will be in the New York Herald if not already published North—charging him with sundry crimes at Columbia is a tissue of lies."

Fortunately the character and deeds of the man, the general, the governor, the United States Senator, is a matter of State and National history and will speak for itself, and can not be in any way hurt or injured by any young man, true to his profession, who tries to break down the truth in evidence that he may clear his client, who in some way got his commission as major when the war was about over and all was smooth sailing in an army with overwhelming numbers who marched "triumphantly, without opposition," over a conquered land, leaving behind wreck and ruin and destruction and death, and seeking courage at the heart of the South, "the cradle of secession."

I have only presented facts as I know them, for I was here and am thoroughly conversant with what I am writing about.

Somebody else has a record of facts besides Maj. Henry Hitchcock, and these are well-known citizens and to the manner born.

The more this matter is ventilated by the "northern side of the story," the more the evidence is produced that our beautiful capital city was destroyed deliberately and premeditately by General Sherman's army; and the truth may as well be admitted.

FRANK F. WHILDEN.

COLUMBIA.

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*County of Richland:*

Personally appeared J. F. Williams, who, being duly sworn, deposes and says that at the time of the burning of Columbia by Sherman on February 17, 1865, he was 15 years of age; that upon several occasions after that date he was told by a negro named Bell the following incident:

That on the night of the fire Douglas Clark was the sexton of the First Baptist Church and that he, Bell, was helping him from time to time and later succeeded Clark as janitor of the church; that on the night of February 17, 1865, he, Bell, and Clark were at the First Baptist Church; that a troop of northern soldiers came to the church and asked if it were the First Baptist Church; that Clark told the troops that it was not but that the First Baptist Church was just around the corner and pointed it out to them; that the troops left the First Baptist Church and went toward Washington Street Methodist Church, and a short while later Washington Street Methodist Church was in flames.

J. F. WILLIAMS.

Sworn to before me this 1st day of April, 1929.

[SEAL.]

HEYWARD BROCKINTON,  
*Notary Public for South Carolina.*

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STATE OF GEORGIA,  
*County of Chatham:*

Before me, J. R. Howard, a notary public in and for said county, personally appeared Jacob Pinkussohn, who, being duly sworn, says that the facts stated by me in my article published in Savannah Morning News, of March 12, 1927, a copy of which is hereto affixed, as to the occurrences and burning of the city of Columbia, S. C., are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

JACOB PINKUSSOHN,  
*Savannah, Ga.*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 19th day of April, 1929.

[SEAL.]

J. R. HOWARD.

Mr. Pinkussohn, then a small child, saw the first shot in the War between the States at Fort Sumter. He was in Columbia when Sherman encamped there on his march to the sea. When General Sherman first came to the capital of South Carolina it was understood that he would not burn the town. Mr.

Pinkussohn said. At dusk of the day of his arrival Mr. Pinkussohn, a boy of 10, noticed a light in the sky over the camp site. He asked a guard the reason for this light, and the response was given that it was made by the camp fires. However, it was a signal to apply to the torch to Columbia, and during the night practically every structure in the capital was burned to the ground. Mr. Pinkussohn's family had time only to save a trunk, a mattress, and a violin from their house.

After the War between the States the carpetbagger period of depression started. Mr. Pinkussohn recalls how, in 1876, the carpetbag régime in South Carolina was broken and a Carolinian elected governor. Election ballots then were thin strips of tissue paper, and the Carolinians, desperate because of the oppressive government they had been given, stuffed the ballot boxes with votes for their candidate. The tissue-paper ballots were so thin that it was possible to hold a number of them together and drop them into the ballot boxes without detection. Many other interesting events are recalled by Mr. Pinkussohn, who to-day has a clear memory and an active body.

EXCERPT FROM "JEFFERSON DAVIS," BY ALLEN TATE, PAGES 218-219

During the last years of the war, burning, looting, and pillaging by Federal soldiers were added to the sufferings that the people had already endured. In 1864 Grant said that the Union troops must "eat Virginia out so clear and clean that crows flying over it would have to carry their provender with them."

Sheridan in his reply wrote: "I have destroyed over 2,000 barns filled with wheat, hay, and farming implements; over 70 mills filled with flour and wheat; have driven in front of the Army over 4,000 head of stock, and have killed and issued to the troops not less than 3,000 sheep \* \* \*. Lieut. John Meigs, my engineer officer, was murdered beyond Harrisonburg, near Dayton. For this atrocious act all the houses within an area of 5 miles were burned."

"Sherman's policy in Georgia and the Carolinas was similar. I estimate the damage done to the State of Georgia and its military resources," he wrote to Major General Halleck, "at \$100,000,000, at least \$20,000,000 of which has inured to our advantage, and the remainder is simple waste and destruction," and in another letter to the same general: "We must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war."

Whitelaw Reid has described the burning of Columbia, S. C.: "The last morsel of food was taken from hundreds of destitute families that his soldiers might feast in needless and riotous abundance. Before his eyes rose, day after day, the mournful clouds of smoke on every hand, that told of old people and their grandchildren driven, in midwinter, from the only roofs there were to shelter them, by the flames which the wantonness of his soldiers had kindled. With his full knowledge and tacit approval, too great a portion of his advance resolved itself into jewelry thieves and plate-closet burglars."

A lieutenant in Sherman's army wrote to his wife in Boston: "We have had a glorious time in this State. Unrestricted license to burn and plunder was the order of the day \* \* \*. I have at least a quart of jewelry for you and all the girls, and some No. 1 diamond rings and pins among them \* \* \*. Tell Sallie I am saving a pearl bracelet and earrings for her. But Lambert got the necklace and breastpin of the same set. I am trying to trade him out of them. These were taken from the Misses Jamisons, daughters of the President of the South Carolina Secession Convention."

The women of the South, however, continued invincible. "We mean to destroy all your food," Federal soldiers told young girls who had treated them scornfully after the burning and looting of Columbia. "Very well," was the reply, "we will live on acorns."

THE BURNING OF COLUMBIA

(By Anna Tillman Swindell)

"The moving finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit \* \* \*  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

—Rubiayat of Omar Khayyam.

The facts of history are incontrovertible—they remain the same, forever and always. Truth turns its beacon light upon the slightest actions of men in high places and illuminates them with its merciless glare. However much we may wish to erase a hasty word or cruel deed from the minds of men, we find it impossible in later years to subtract one iota from the impression and the testimony of witnesses. Such, I think, was the situation of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman when he reviewed the circumstances of his fateful burning of Columbia. What would he not have given to have been able to say and to have believed, "My hands and my conscience are free from stain in that incident!" He said it—yes; but the evidence is too overwhelming against him. There never has been and never will be any doubt in the minds of southerners as to the identity of the archincendiary who cast from him all pity and humanity, who disregarded the usage of civilized warfare, and who enthroned instead as his household gods hatred and vengeance.

On Wednesday, February 10, 1865, the fate of Columbia hung in the balance. It had been thought that Columbia, being the capital of the State and the repository of many of the government stores, would be defended vigorously by the Confederate Army under General Hampton. It was even doubtful whether Sherman would direct his march thither, many thinking that Charleston, being on the coast, would be the logical prey of the Federal forces. Consequently the city was crowded with refugees from the low country. The banks of Charleston and other towns of the surrounding country had moved their deposits to Columbia, increasing the number located in the city from 3 to 14 or 15. The wealth of the State, family plate, valuable boxes, deeds, bonds, etc., were concentrated at the capital. News came on the 10th that Sherman had reached Branchville, on the Charleston & Savannah Railroad, a point about 65 miles from Charleston, Columbia, and Augusta. Which route would Sherman take? And if he advanced to Columbia, would the Confederate troops protect it? The first issue was soon settled—Sherman moved toward Columbia. His entire force was estimated at about 60,000, but one division of 20,000 marched farther west, not far from Augusta. Another division of 20,000 passed up Broad River and crossed 30 or 40 miles above Columbia. The remaining division of 20,000 entered Columbia. Gen. Wade Hampton's force was so very small (only 800 men) that with wise generalship he retreated northward.

Until the morning of Friday, the 17th, the city was almost in a panic. The railroad trains were crowded with frightened people fleeing northward and carrying with them as much of their valuable property as possible. Every form of vehicles was pressed into service. The various banks succeeded in removing most of the money and papers in their possession, but were forced to abandon the heavy plate of all the distinguished and cultured families in the State since its bulk prohibited its removal. The Confederate treasury department, large amounts of military stores, ammunition, and commissary stores were removed.

About daylight Friday morning a loud explosion was heard, which turned out to be at the South Carolina Railroad depot. This had been broken into by a band of plunderers, who desired the rich stores of merchants, trunks of plate and jewels that were stored there waiting for shipment. Among them also were several kegs of powder. The marauders, in their greed, were careless of the lighted torches they carried and the powder was fired, killing about 35 of the rascals.

Soon after this Sherman opened fire on the city from a battery erected during the night on a hill near the Congaree Bridge. This was entirely uncalled for and unnecessary, as no defense of the city was intended or possible. The burning of the Congaree Bridge without orders may have misled him, however. Fortunately, none of the shells caused the destruction of life. Five of the shells struck the southwest corner of the new statehouse and many entered residences in several parts of the city.

About 9 o'clock Doctor Goodwyn, the mayor of the city, and several aldermen, John McKenzie, John Stork, and O. Z. Bates, proceeded in a carriage bearing a white flag 3 miles from Columbia up Broad River, where Sherman was crossing on a pontoon bridge, to surrender formally the city. They met an advance column, the Fifteenth Corps, under Colonel Stone, and presented to him the following note:

MAYOR'S OFFICE,  
Columbia, S. C., February 17, 1865.

To Major General SHERMAN:

The Confederate forces have evacuated Columbia. I deem it my duty as mayor and representative of the city to ask for its citizens the treatment ac-

corded by the usage of civilized warfare. I, therefore, respectfully request that you will send a sufficient guard in advance of the army to maintain order in the city and protect the persons and property of the citizens.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. J. GOODWIN, *Mayor.*

Colonel Stone was asked in particular how private property and the lives of the citizens would be protected and he exclaimed heatedly, "Fully! We are not savages!"

When Sherman himself entered the city he confirmed the statement made by Colonel Stone, "It will become my duty to destroy some of the public government buildings, but I will leave this performance to another day. It shall be done to-morrow, provided the day be calm."

The soldiers entered the city in orderly fashion and with perfect discipline, showing that the officers had them well under control. However, as soon as they were dismissed they began to break into stores and private homes and even to rob people on the streets. The frightened negroes brought them whisky, or showed them where it could be found, so in a few hours the whole army was drunk. General Sherman rode through the city streets with his officers, but no one seemed to see anything amiss taking place.

About 1 o'clock the fire alarm sounded and a number of citizens pulled the engine to Richardson, or Main Street, where several bales of cotton were burning. The men began throwing water on the cotton until a drunken soldier stuck his bayonet into the hose. His example was followed by many of his comrades and in spite of the men's remonstrances the hose was completely cut to pieces. Fortunately all traces of the fire had been extinguished before this occurred.

About 3 p. m. several columns of smoke were seen east of the city, which came from the homes of General Hampton, Doctor Wallace, G. A. Trenholm, and others. From that time until about 7 p. m. further signs of fire were seen.

The warning of many of the officers and soldiers during the day to citizens to secure their valuables before nightfall shows beyond doubt that the burning of the city was assured in the minds of the men, if not in that of their commander.

A Major FitzGibbons visited the convent during the afternoon, and after introducing himself to the mother superior as a Catholic, urged her to secure a guard for the convent from General Sherman. The mother superior protested that this was unnecessary, since Sherman had given his word that all property and lives in the city would be protected. He replied, "I can not say that your convent is going to be burned, but we can't answer for what may happen. For I tell you, my sister, Columbia is a doomed city!"

Mrs. Langdon Cheves was in Savannah just before the burning and quartered two of Sherman's officers, Colonel Poe and Major Dayton. She wanted to come to Columbia, but was warned by them not to do so, as Sherman intended burning Columbia. They said, "We shall pass through South Carolina with the torch as well as the sword."

Col. James G. Gibbes recounts the following:

"Early in the evening of Friday a Mrs. Boozer, who was living in a house belonging to me adjoining the Baptist Church, came to me in great excitement and told me the city was to be burned. I told her no, that she need not be alarmed, and mentioned what General Sherman had told Doctor Goodwin. She said no, that she knew it would be burned. Her husband was a physician and at one time had charge of the hospital where some of the Federal officers (prisoners) had been located. Mrs. Boozer had shown kindness to some of them by furnishing them delicacies, etc., and as soon as the army entered Columbia two officers who had formerly been there as prisoners and had been recipients of her kindness hunted her up and privately informed her of the intention to fire the city. Even with this assurance I did not believe it, relying on the word of General Sherman."

Mrs. L. S. McCord says that her mail brought her a note left by a Federal lieutenant. It was ill spelled, but had a kindly warning for the horrors to come. The writer said he had relatives and friends in the South. "Ladies," he wrote, "I pity you. Leave this town—go anywhere to be safer than here."

Mr. William H. Orchard says that about 7 p. m. he was visited by six or seven men, to whose pillaging he submitted with such composure that their

leader was impressed and called Mr. Orchard aside. He said, "If you have anything you want to save, take care of it at once, for before morning this town will be in ashes—every house in it. If you do not believe me, you will be the sufferer. Watch and you will see three rockets go up soon."

Rev. William Yates states that he was in his yard when one of the fatal rockets went up, and heard one of the soldiers exclaim, "Now you will see hell!" On asking him what he meant, he replied, "That is the signal for a general setting fire to the city." Immediately afterwards numbers of fires were seen in every direction.

The exact time that the rockets appeared is variously estimated. Col. James G. Gibbes sets the time at 7 p. m., and Mrs. Crittenden, of Greenville, who was in Columbia at the time, at 10 p. m. The committee appointed to collect data on the burning, with Mr. J. P. Carroll as chairman, says that the rockets were seen at 8 p. m., which is, from comparison with all accounts, as near correct as possible. The fact that the rockets did go up can not be disputed, because they were seen by hundreds of citizens; nor is there any doubt that immediately afterwards fires sprang up from all parts of the city. Perhaps the rockets were not signals, despite the evidence of the soldiers to the contrary, but this much is known—the rockets and the first fires were coincident. Mayor Goodwin says that three rockets were red, white, and blue, which is certainly suggestive of the Union. He states further that a Federal soldier, who was sitting quietly on his piazza, sprang up when he saw the rockets and exclaimed, "My God! is it coming to this!" He refused to explain himself, however.

Oh, how can a mortal pen describe the horrors of that night, the untold suffering of hundreds of people, the incalculable and wanton destruction, not only of property but of works of art and science, collections of historical research, which should be equally reverenced by all men as contributory to civilization's store of knowledge. A moment of hate, of loosened discipline over the hordes of ignorant and unappreciative, and a century's work of love and intelligence is destroyed.

It will suffice to illustrate the numerous losses of this kind in Columbia to report the fate of the fine collections of Dr. Robert W. Gibbes, who was known to the whole country as a man of letters and science, a savant who had devoted his life to the accumulation of works of art, science, and literature. Two soldiers entered his gallery of paintings by the best known American and European masters, some copies but most of them original, and with their swords slashed the canvas across—not out of their frames to carry away, but zigzag across—with the sole object of destruction. His portfolios of engravings, his cabinet of southern fossils and memorials, his collection of shark's teeth, which had been pronounced by Agassiz the finest in the world; his collection of historical documents, original correspondence of the Revolution, autographs of eminent men, records of the surgeon general's department of the State, all—all were burned. Nor can any plea of drunkenness excuse this wanton destruction. Doctor Gibbes says the men were perfectly sober, and when he expostulated with them he was laughed to scorn.

The material destruction of this kind can in some measure be calculated, but the suffering of hundreds of homeless people, including women delicately reared, young children, the aged, and the sick, who were turned out into the cold night, without shelter from the cold and piercing blast, without sufficient clothing and food, innocent women and children, whose only crime was that they were southerners, the suffering of these can never be estimated or comprehended.

As before stated, the rockets went up about 8 p. m. and immediately the city was fired at several points. A strong wind from the west had sprung up which carried the flames before it with irresistible violence.

The stores on Richardson (or Main) Street were soon consumed, since they were built close together and the fire leaped from one to the other. Frequently in the residential portions of the city the houses were far apart, separated by large, beautiful gardens; but alas, that mattered not, thousands of wanton hands were ready to destroy what the elements were about to spare. Soldiers were seen on every side with every appliance for aiding the conflagration. They carried with them, from house to house pots and vessels containing combustible material, composed, probably, of phosphorus and other similar agents, turpentine, etc., and with balls of cotton saturated in this liquid, they overspread the floors and walls and conveyed with wonderful rapidity the flames from dwelling to dwelling. Each had his ready box of Lucifer matches, and,

with a scrape on the walls, the flames began to rage. With the exception of one small cottage, occupied by Mr. Hatchett, of Charleston, at the head of Main Street, not a building was left on that street; everything on it was burned for one and a half miles and in a belt from a quarter to a half mile wide. Eighty-four squares, containing 360 acres and 13,000 homes were destroyed.

The streets were crowded with drunken soldiers—all of them privates. Not an officer was seen the whole night, although there is a strong belief, not unbased on fact, that the officers wore citizen's or private's dress, in order to rob and burn without compromising their shoulder straps. This belief is corroborated by a letter which fell into the hands of Miss F. Cantey, of Camden. It was addressed to Mrs. Thomas G. Meyers, Boston, Mass., and portions of it are as follows:

SOUTH CAROLINA, February 26, 1865.

MY DEAR WIFE: I have no time for particulars. We have had a glorious time in this State. Universal license to burn and plunder was the order of the day. The chivalry have been strip of most of their valuables. Gold watches, silver pitchers, cups, spoons, forks, etc., are as common in camp as blackberries.

Officers are not allowed to join these expeditions without disguising themselves as privates. One of our corps commanders borrowed a suit of rough clothes from one of my men and was successful in this place; he got a large quantity of silver (among other things, an old time silver milk pitcher) and a very fine gold watch from a Mr. DeSaussure at this place. DeSaussure is a F. F. V., of South Carolina, and was made to fork over liberally. Rings, earrings, breastpins, etc., of which, if ever I live to get home, I have about a quart—I am not joking—I have at least a quart of jewelry for you and all the girls, and some No. 1 diamond rings and pins among them.

General Sherman has enough silver and gold to start a bank. His share in gold watches and chains alone at Columbia was 275; but I said I could not go into particulars. We took gold and silver enough from the d—d rebels to have redeemed their infernal currency twice over. This (the currency) whenever we come across it we burn as we consider it utterly worthless. Sometimes we take off whole families and plantations of negroes by way of repaying the secessionists; but the useless part of these we soon manage to lose—sometimes in crossing rivers—sometimes in other ways.

I shall write to you again from Wilmington, Goldsboro, or some other place in North Carolina. The order to march has arrived and I must close hurriedly.

Love to grandmother and Aunt Charlotte. Take care of yourself and children. Do not show this letter out of the family.

Your affectionate husband,

THOS. G. MYERS, *Lieut., etc.*

P. S.—I will send this by flag of truce to be mailed unless I have a chance of sending it to Hilton Head. Tell Sallie I am saving a pearl bracelet and earrings for her; but Lambert got the necklace and breastpin of the same set. I am trying to trade him out of them. These were taken from the Misses Jamieson, daughters of the president of the South Carolina secession convention. We found them on our trip through Georgia.

The night had its humorous incidents as well as its tragic ones. Two of the funniest are recounted by Col. James G. Gibbes:

At the corner opposite my house lived a widow lady, Mrs. Herbamont; she had considerable silver plate and a lot of choice old wine that was quite valuable. She gave me her silver to try and save for her, which I did by throwing it down my well; but her wine she had buried in her garden and felt quite sure of it. As soon as a guard was sent to her house she said to him: "Now, my good man, keep a good lookout and do not let any soldiers rob me. I have over a hundred bottles of fine old sherry wine buried under that fig tree in the garden, and you keep a good lookout for me and I will give you a bottle of it before you go." The consequence was just what might have been expected. The guard immediately hailed a squad from the street and piloting them to the fig tree, unearthed the bottles, drank a few to the health and prosperity of Mrs. Herbamont, took off what they could carry, and broke up the remainder.

Doctor Templeton, a prominent physician of the city, was walking in the street just after the destruction of his house, when he was accosted politely by a soldier and asked what time of night it was. Pulling out his watch to look, the soldier jerked it from him and walked off. Doctor Templeton coolly said, "Hold on, my good fellow, here is the key; it is not a bit of use to me without the watch." The soldier said, "All right; pass it along." The doctor

had not gone 50 yards before he was asked the time by another soldier. "Ah, my friend," said he, "you are just a little late; one of your comrades was ahead of you."

Incidents of this light tone, however, were very rare. In most cases the tragedy was too stark to admit even the faintest witticisms. Mrs. Mary S. Whilden tells of some of her experiences on that fearful night:

"An old gentleman living near by, who had an invalid daughter, came in to consult me as to what could be done. We had no time for planning. What was to be done must be done quickly. A stretcher was procured, upon which the sufferer was placed and borne by two men into the streets. Never shall I forget the lovely face of the pale maiden as she lay in the firelight, homeless, on that inclement night, with no shelter save the clouds. As I was leaving the house I saw standing in my room a gold-headed palmetto walking cane which had been presented by my husband and myself to my brother on his twenty-first birthday. This brother was killed in the battle of Secessionville, and the cane had been returned to us to keep until our oldest son, who had his name, should become of age and presented to him. I stuck this cane in my belt like a sword, the gold showing just above the belt. After leaving the house a soldier came up to me and with an insulting remark jerked the cane out of my belt. I snatched the end of the cane and jerked it from him, at the same time saying, 'That cane belonged to a dead Confederate soldier who would never have harmed or insulted a woman, and if you will have this cane I will break it over your head and you can take it in two pieces,' and suiting the action to the words I lifted the cane; the man dodged and said, 'Woman, you can keep your stick' (and that stick to-day is in the possession of my eldest son).

The fate of the Catholic convent and the nuns was very sad. The mother superior becoming alarmed during the day for her charges, the nuns and about 40 children of the first families of the State by birth and by education, thought best to apply to General Sherman for a guard. Sherman sent the following note to the convent:

"Commanding officers near: Protect the convent. Colonel Palmer, Twenty-fifth Iowa, furnished 96 men for this duty. J. W. Jenkins, P. M. Sergt., J. C. Motte, Companies 25, 26." This was written by Sherman's own hand, but the nuns never saw but 7 of the 96 men, and these 7 were the first to plunder the house after the signal was given.

Mrs. Sara Aldrich Richardson, who was a pupil at the convent at the time, says: "While we were on our knees we were brought standing by the most unearthly battering in one of the chapel doors behind us, and reached by a stairway on the Main Street side. It was like the crash of doom. Drunken soldiers piled over each other, rushing for the sacred vessels of the altar, not knowing they were safe in the keeping of one blessed of God.

"The summons just then came for Madame Ursula to march her girls into the long main hall; we gladly obeyed, not knowing when the door between us and the soldiers would give way to their demoniacal battering. Curses and threats filled the convent when they found the gold chalice had escaped their polluted hands.

"When it became dangerous to remain longer in the convent the mother superior and Doctor O'Connell formed a line by twos of the nuns and children and led them while trembling with fear through the streets, made almost impassable by the burning houses and drunken and disorderly soldiers. They took refuge in the only place remaining, the graveyard to the church, where they remained shivering from cold and fear until daylight.

"We had not enjoyed the sweet oblivion of slumber very long when we were aroused by the fearful cry of a thieving party of 'bluecoats,' that the church was going to be blown up. 'Get out all who don't want to be killed.' This diabolical cry was raised to cause the panic that ensued in order to get our little parcels of valuables. The nuns themselves knew not what to do. Over the graves, against tombstones, and into hedges the frantic children flew. Officers passing the church stopped and inquired the cause of this wild rush. On being told, they quickly came to our aid, cursed the soldiers, and threatened them with punishment. A guard was then stationed around the church. But none of the promises made by these better-disposed officers could induce us to return within.

"It was nearly daybreak, so we clung around the nuns in the yard, under the trees, and in the vestibule of the church. That morning the interview referred to took place between General Sherman and the mother superior midway of the walk leading to the steps of the church. She was leaning against the door of

the church, tired and faint, when informed that General Sherman was coming in answer to her last request that he should do so. She stood erect, like an injured empress dethroned. With graceful, dignified bearing she proceeded to the spot designated, and stood there in the majesty of her sacred order and her own grand womanhood awaiting the approach of the commander of the United States Army, who had betrayed her confidence in his truth and honor. How plainly I see that splendid, intellectual face, the intelligent gray eyes of hers full of fire and self-reliance. Surrounded by her nuns and some of her pupils she received General Sherman. He was not so calm. A guilty conscience evidently rendered him nervous and he greeted her confusedly.

"As he approached the mother superior he removed the cigar he was smoking; in his embarrassment he restored it to his lips, nervously chewing it. Our great respect and deference for our superioress caused me to remark to the man beside me, 'Smoking in the mother superior's presence.' General Sherman removed the cigar for the second time, with an apology, holding it throughout the interview slightly behind him. The mother superior's hands were folded in the flowing sleeves of her habit until General Sherman began explaining how the fire got beyond his control from buildings he had to burn, and blamed our men for leaving liquor in the city, etc.

"This irritated rather than pacified the mother superior. With a sweep of the strong, aristocratic hand in the direction of her convent and the still burning city, she said: 'General, this is how you kept your promise to me, a cloistered nun.' The sweet, low voice, filled with injured pathos, touched even his heart, for he left off excusing himself and began immediately to speak, offering her any of the houses 'left standing' as a gift. Slightly bowing her head, and with a sad sarcastic curve of her lips, she answered: 'General Sherman, I do not think the houses left are yours to give, but when I do make arrangements for my community and pupils I will thank you to move us and provide food for the large number, which will be hard to feed.'

"The mother superior did accept General Sherman's offer of a house and moved into the large mansion of General Preston. Sherman actually executed titles to the property and gave them to her. She afterwards surrendered them with the property to General Preston.

"A large number of the soldiers were engaged during the night in probing the ground all over the city hunting for valuables that were burned. Immense quantities of silver, jewelry, money, and other things were buried for safety, but the skill exhibited by the soldiers in finding it was truly wonderful. Bayonets and iron ramrods were used to probe the ground in all directions, and many a treasure was found and appropriated that its owner had thought safe and secure.

"The Federal soldier respected neither age nor nationality. Mr. August Conrad, the Hanoverian consul, after the burning of the consulate was attempting to make his way through the streets to a place of shelter when he met a company of soldiers in regular march, under the command of a captain, which he supposed were doing patrol duty. He sought their protection, stating who he was and that the baggage he carried was partly his private property and partly papers belonging to the consulate, saved with great difficulty from the fire. Imagine his surprise and consternation when the soldiers seized his satchel and box, rummaged through them, and carried away or destroyed everything except the consulate seal and several worthless papers, despite his protests and entreaties. His exclamation of despair at his great loss was silenced by a threat to shoot him if he did not keep quiet. 'Such,' he remarked with bitterness, 'was the function of a patrol of the famous army of Sherman. That was a specimen of the robber bands—the officers, who were led into the field against a spirited but noble enemy, and displayed their bravery in base, dastardly robbery, insult, and injury of defenseless human beings, especially women and children.'

Mr. Conrad describes the following scene at the McCully home: "All obstacles were broken down; what was useful was carried off; what was useless to them was destroyed; and with a few possessions only I was able, in company with the poor, unfortunate creatures, to get out of the house. Already the flames were pouring out of the windows. It was a matter of great difficulty to save the old grandmother, who escaped death by fire by a hair's breadth, and was carried out by two negroes who were kind enough to lend a helping hand. I caught one of the noble heroes by the throat at the moment when he was about to set fire to the bed on which the old lady lay, because I had run thither at her shriek of horror and stopped, just at the right time, this fearful murder."

Similar to this incident, and no less dastardly, is the experience of Mrs. Agnes Law:

"When General Sherman took possession I got four guards; they were well behaved and sober men; I gave them supper. One lay down on the sofa; the others walked about. When the city began to burn I wished to remove my furniture; they objected, and said my house was in no danger. Not long afterwards these guards themselves took lighted candles from the mantelpiece and went upstairs; at the same time other soldiers crowded into the house. My sister followed them upstairs, but came down very soon to say: 'They are setting the curtains on fire.' Soon the whole house was in a blaze. When those who set fire upstairs came down they said to me: 'Old woman, if you do not mean to burn up with your house, you had better get out of it.' My niece had been carried up to the Taylor house, on Arsenal Hill. I went to the door to see if I could get any person I knew to assist me up there. I had been very sick. I could see no friend, only crowds of Federal soldiers. I was afraid I should fall in the streets and be burned up in the flames of the houses blazing on both sides of the streets. I had to go alone. I spent the night at the Taylor house, which a Federal officer said should not be burned, out of pity for my niece. The next two nights I passed in my garden, without any shelter."

About 4 o'clock Saturday morning a lady said to a soldier: "In the name of God, sir, when is this work of hell to be ended?" He replied: "You will hear the bugles at sunrise, when a guard will enter the town and withdraw these troops. It will then cease, and not before."

According to this, even the time of checking the lusts of the men seems to have been determined. Some think, however, that Sherman was influenced to withdraw his soldiers by the fact that many of his men were so drunk that they staggered into the flames kindled by their own comrades and there perished ignominiously. The number of these is variously estimated from 30 to 150, but it will never be known definitely, although some of the officers are reported to have said that they lost more men in the sack and burning of Columbia than in all their fights approaching the city.

About daylight a number of Cavalry, in squads of three or four together, galloped through the streets, sounding their bugles and calling on the soldiers to fall into ranks. This was the first sign of any attempt at discipline or the issuing of any orders to the rank and file since the dismissal the preceding day at 11 o'clock. The tap of the drum, the sound of the signal cannon, could not have been more decisive in its effect, more prompt and complete. Nowhere was the discipline of Sherman's army more conspicuous than the immediate recognition of the soldiers of their orders to stop from further destruction of the city. With surprising rapidity they formed themselves in line and marched away leaving a mass of smoking ruins, blackened walls, towers of grim, ghastly chimneys, and between, in desolate groups, wretched women and children, gazing vacantly on the site of a once-blessed abode of home and innocence.

They marched away in the pale, wan light of the cloudy morning, and the memorable night of February 17 was at a close, and the day of the 18th was ushered in to gaze with horror at the desolation and to witness the fortitude of people crushed to earth, with all save honor gone.

Early Sunday morning Mayor Goodwyn with several prominent citizens called on General Sherman to request some provisions for the 20,000 old men, women, and children in the city, and a supply of arms and ammunition for protection from the stragglers and plunderers that always follow in the wake of an army. Sherman complied with both requests, promising 500 head of cattle and 100 muskets with ammunition. The cattle were delivered, but they turned out to be the broken-down portion. They were placed in the inclosure of the college grounds, that being the only available place. As no food or water could be procured for them, it was decided to butcher them as fast as possible. Colonel Gibbes says: "What at first seemed a great misfortune, the character of the meat turned out to be a great blessing. Had it been good, fat meat, it would have been a drop in the bucket, comparatively, toward supplying the needs, but the tough blue sinews that were like India rubber went a long way for this reason—the more you chewed it the larger it got." But even this beef with its enduring qualities did not last 20,000 people very long and a strict ration allotment had to be observed. Added to this was the corn picked up from where the Yankee horses were fed. For two weeks this comprised the menu of the people in Columbia until they could manage to reach other more fortunate parts of the country.

The 100 muskets turned out to be a lot of worthless guns which hardly any of the ammunition would fit. However, they did faithful, if somewhat inefficient, service in guarding the city.

On Monday, the 20th, in the words of Sherman (*Memoirs*, p. 288): "Having utterly ruined Columbia, the right wing began its march northward."

In a letter from Dr. Robert W. Gibbes to his son, dated March 14, is found an interesting account of conditions after the burning:

"The city is in a deplorable state, and our people seem to be demoralized, and have no spirit left—they seem all desirous of stealing anything they can get hold of. The negroes were robbed by the Yankees, but they still have quantities of plunder. Committees have been around and collected much stolen property. Yesterday it was exposed to be claimed, and crowds claimed everything—some things had a dozen claimants. Ladies were ready to swear to buttons and tape and spools of cotton. Some of them who had lost nothing actually claimed lots of things. I have succeeded in getting General Hampton's buggy and his fine china; most of it to save for him. The burning was like clockwork. Toward morning Sherman seemed to get ashamed of his villainy, and ordered out a division to stop the fire, and in an hour it was stopped. If he chose it could have been done at 7 p. m.—but he meant to burn the city."

War, it seems, brings out the best and the worst in men. We, as Americans, are ashamed of General Sherman, as his own Government and family show that they are ashamed of him also. In the Southern Magazine for May, 1873, is commentary on the Report of the Joint Committee of Congress on the Conduct of the War. Special notice is to be taken of two facts, one, a letter written by General Halleck to General Sherman. General Halleck writes:

"Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed; and should a little salt be sown upon its site, it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession."

To this General Sherman replies: "This war differs from European wars in this particular—we are not only fighting hostile armies but a hostile people; and must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war, as well as their organized armies.

"I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and don't think salt will be necessary. When I move the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them naturally into Charleston first; and if you have studied the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work up pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble for her fate, but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her.

"I look upon Columbia as quite as bad at Charleston, and I doubt if we shall spare the public buildings here as we did at Milledgeville."

It was the despicable Fifteenth Corps, mentioned here by General Sherman, that entered Columbia. The second fact is that a paternal Government, not thinking it good that the truth should be known, has suppressed all the dispatches between the 16th and 21st of February, 1865, and every other allusion to the transaction, in this report of the Conduct of the War.

In the collected letters of General Sherman to his wife and family a similar hiatus occurs, although on a larger scale, there being no letters given between the time Sherman was in Savannah until he reached Greensboro, N. C. The reason given for this is that it was impossible for letters to get through the lines. But newspaper men daily sent accounts of the events to the northern papers, and yet a general could not get his mail through. Strange circumstances, indeed!

But I find myself dwelling too long on a matter long since settled beyond question in the minds of all honest men. How much worthier a subject is the praise and admiration of the fortitude of the brave people who bore the brunt of all this injustice and cruelty. We who live in ease and comfort with shelter and ample food can never realize fully just what was endured in those stormy days. Imagine, if you can, how you would feel if you had sent forth your loved ones—father, sons, uncles, sweethearts—to wage an honorable warfare in the defense of their homes, in the name of truth and liberty, if you were forced, by a hostile army, to stand helplessly by and watch your home rifled of its dearest treasures and all your world goods consigned wantonly to the greedy flames, if you were left in the dead of winter on the empty streets, without shelter, without clothing, without food for your dear little ones and your helpless aged folk—all at the hands of dastard thieves, who dare to attempt to dignify their acts by calling them the necessity of war! And when you have, in some degree, come

to the realization of what this would mean to you, bow your head in admiration and in reverence to those dauntless souls and say in your heart with Aristotle, "Suffering becomes beautiful when one bears great calamities with cheerfulness not through insensibility but through greatness of mind."

ANNA TILLMAN SWINDELL.

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SOUTH CAROLINA IN 1861

Of flaming, brilliant colors were the days  
 Of that first year of long and fateful four—  
 The red of battle and of cannon's roar;  
 The steely glint of purpose; golden rays  
 Of loyalty, inspiring poet's lays;  
 The royal purple of a State that bore  
 Its sovereignty and only bowed before  
 The shrine of honor and of truth always.

But in the bright mosaic here and there  
 Is seen a trace of black—a loved one gone,  
 A life made desolate, a brimming well  
 Of tears from hearts that seek to bravely bear  
 Their loss. This growing blot of souls forlorn  
 Foretells the future's sorrow, heartache, hell.

—Anna Tillman Swindell.

THE DESTRUCTION OF COLUMBIA, S. C.

[A translation from the German by William H. Pleasants of the nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second chapters of *Lights and Shadows in American Life During the War of Secession*, by August Conrad]

PREFACE

The destruction of the city of Columbia, S. C., in February, 1865, by the United States troops under command of General Sherman was an act of barbarity which surpasses all similar acts which are to be found in the long annals of the world's warfare. Its infamy is even greater than that of the

sack of Magdeburg in the Thirty Years' War by the imperialists under Tilley; for Magdeburg was taken by storm by the imperial troops after a most desperate defense, while Columbia, entirely unfortified and undefended, its population consisting entirely of old men, women, and children, was surrendered without a blow under the promise given by the commanding general of protection to persons and property.

The following description of the destruction of Columbia was written by an eyewitness of that deplorable event—a German gentleman of intelligence and culture. This gentleman had been residing for some years in Charleston in the capacity of a cotton buyer, and after the outbreak of the Civil War and closing of the ports by blockade was employed as the secretary and treasurer of the largest company engaged in the business of blockade running. If the question is asked, "Why, by publishing a detailed description of these horrors, do you revive memories of scenes which we would all gladly forget?" the first answer is that it is due to the truth of history. The southern writers who have undertaken to write the history of our civil conflict have not the ear of the world; the northern writers of history not only for general reading but especially of schoolbooks are notoriously unfair in regard to our internal strife. They write with a strong partisan and political bias—they misrepresent the motives and principles of action of the South, and they err not simply by the *suppressio veri* but also often by the *suggestio falsi*. Many books of this class had, by the carelessness or want of knowledge of the teachers, crept into our public schools. When the battle-scarred veterans of the South found out that their children and grandchildren were being taught some things that they knew to be false every grand camp from Virginia to Texas demanded that the offending books be banished from our schools and they were banished.

A second reason why this description of the obliteration of Columbia is published is that very few, except the inhabitants of that ill-fated city, have any just conception of the horrors of that night of incendiaryism and robbery, of unchecked license, of insult and every crime mentionable and unmentionable. In the histories above alluded to I doubt whether the destruction of Columbia is mentioned at all, but if noticed, it is lauded as one of the heroic actions of their most admired general. But if heroic and splendid deeds deserve to be painted in glowing words for the admiration and improvement of mankind, surely shameful deeds should not be covered up, but displayed in their naked deformity to the candid judgment of an enlightened world. It is a deplorable sign of the political degeneracy which has invaded the Governments of the two Nations that claim to be the most enlightened on the earth, when we see the atrocities of our Civil War pleaded as justification of what is now going on in the Philippines and South Africa. The cruelties practiced in the Philippine Islands have been defended upon the floor of the American Congress by citing similar examples in American warfare, and in the English Parliament a member of the Government has justified the treatment of the hapless and helpless Boer women and children by the example of the illustrious American, General Sherman. Who is responsible for the sack and destruction of Columbia is a mooted point in the history of our Civil War. General Sherman himself might have pleaded the orders of his superior officer, as we will presently show, or he might more magnanimously have assumed the responsibility; but he did neither. He charged that Columbia was fired by Gen. Wade Hampton! This charge is one which no one who has any acquaintance with the characters of the men and the circumstances of the case could for a moment credit. Notwithstanding the indignant denial of the charge by General Hampton and the further fact that his sphere of duty at that time was 500 miles away at the head of the cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia, this absurd charge finds some believers.

The truth is that Columbia was destroyed in obedience to orders from Washington, and the proof is found in the following letters from General Halleck to General Sherman and the latter's reply. I will quote only the concluding sentences of General Halleck's letter, as that portion alone has any bearing upon the subject before us:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
Washington, December 18, 1864.

\* \* \* \* \*

Should you capture Charleston I hope by some *accident* the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be sown on its site it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession.

H. W. HALLECK, *Chief of Staff.*

And the answer to the above is in the following words:

"I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and I do not think 'salt' will be necessary. When I move, the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will naturally bring them into Charleston first; and if you have watched the history of that corps you will have remarked that they generally do their work pretty well. The truth is the whole army is burning with insatiable desire to wreak vengeance on South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her. We must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war, as well as their organized armies.

"W. T. SHERMAN, *Major General.*"

Here we have under their own hands the proposition of General Halleck to utterly destroy Charleston accepted with savage alacrity by General Sherman. Why it was when Charleston was as defenseless on the land side as Columbia the route was changed from Charleston to Columbia we will never know until the final day. But as Charleston was at this time nearly deserted by its inhabitants and Columbia was crowded to overflowing with refugees from Charleston and the seacoast counties, it is possible that General Sherman considered Columbia to be the best place for carrying out his long-cherished hope of "wreaking vengeance upon South Carolina." In this change of movement the redoubtable Fifteenth Corps, noted for its fine work, must have been in the rear and entered Columbia last; but the work of destruction, whether performed by the Fifteenth or some other corps of his great army, was done, even in the estimation of General Sherman, a good judge in such matters, "pretty well."

W.M. H. PLEASANTS.

HOLLINS, June, 1902.

#### DANGER THREATENING

The condition of Charleston became more and more perilous by the bombardment, in which the enemy made progress by the use of guns larger and of longer range, by renewed attacks with these from the points on the seacoast already won, but particularly by the rapid approach of Sherman's famous army, since it was believed to be their principal object to capture and punish the hated city—the "Cradle of Rebellion"—which had made so stubborn a resistance and prolonged the war by blockade running.

With the dreaded capture of the seaports, which was now considered only a question of time, the business (blockade running) must of itself come to an end, and it was now to be considered how to secure to the stockholders in the company their property.

When the catastrophe finally came all the ships were lucky enough to be found in foreign ports, and after the ensuing peace, which was caused by the subjugation of the South, were then sold for the account of those interested. The ready money on deposit at the banks and the considerable amount earned by the sale of cotton, which was deposited safe in Liverpool, must, so far as they had not yet been distributed, be paid to the stockholders, and now the duty lay before me, in consideration of that determination, to pay out the dividends by means of checks upon the aforesaid banks and by drafts on our correspondents in England.

For this purpose I took my position in Columbia. Mr. Bee (the president of the company) wished to hold his in Charleston as long as possible and to leave Charleston only in the extremist necessity, when his person was in danger, after he had carried his family to a place of safety on one of his plantations in the country and sent all the movable and indispensable objects of value belonging to his private estate, to his firm, and to the company to Columbia and various other places.

On the 23d of January, 1865, I left Charleston for the last time, filled, it is true, with anxiety and doubt for the future, but not imagining that I would never see the place again—that I had probably taken leave forever of the people and the place that had become endeared to me.

In Columbia my two colleagues and I had plenty to do in bringing up the arrears of business resulting from my long absence and in gratifying our stockholders with their dividends in Confederate money and sterling exchange. My business fully occupied my time, so that it was scarcely possible for me to visit the families that had shown me kindness.

People had actually no fear at all about Columbia; on the contrary, it was supposed that the property which had been sent there was safer than at any other place in the wide Confederacy.

But misfortune travels fast, and as a thunderbolt from the clear sky, at first incredible, but becoming every day more certain, came first the rumor and then the certainty that Sherman had suddenly changed his course and that the Army was marching in the direction of Columbia.

A feeling of horror seized upon the population on account of this news, which had been, until the attainment of certainty, always doubted. If this news was really well founded, the arrival of dreaded northern troops could be delayed only a few days. Many private individuals, but particularly the banks and public officials, took flight with the property which had been placed under their protection, which was removed, so far as the railroads could accomplish it, farther into the interior. Madam Rutjes (his landlady) had also run away, and I had to seek another lodging. I rented a room and took my meals at one of the restaurants still left. However, by far the largest portion of the inhabitants could not and would not go away—people did not know where, if not here, they could be safe—where they could find a place of refuge. Besides, it was very questionable whether any great annoyances would be caused to individuals by the impending capture of the place, if indeed that should take place.

I also wrapped myself in a feeling of security too great and one which, as events proved, was misplaced. I thought to myself that the enemy was not my enemy, and that they would respect my office, as well as the property found under the flag of Hanover. That would certainly have happened if the commanding officers had been able to hold the rabble of troops in subordination and discipline. But I was now convinced that they would bring no trouble upon me, and decided to remain calmly here to await the course of events. My colleagues left me and betook themselves farther into the interior to places of refuge of their families. They took a great part of the books and papers with them, because their presence would probably reveal my participation in a forbidden business and bring me annoyance.

The enemy advanced in force, and his immediate arrival in Columbia removed all doubt. On the part of the Confederates, there had been hastily assembled several thousand militiamen for the protection of the city, and with the bales of cotton, at hand and admirably adapted to the purpose, they erected barricades. However useless and injurious the proceeding might be, it was determined to defend a city, open and approachable from every side.

On the 15th of February, 1865, the stroke of fate descended. The launching of the thunderbolt caused no greater horror than the terrifying sultriness of the atmosphere which preceded it, while, fortunately, we did not know what results would follow. Not even now was there any foreboding of the utter destruction that was to follow, and in addition to the anxiety of all, the sight, new and entirely strange to everybody, awakened a certain interest. For myself, particularly, who had no fear for myself and the peaceful population, the warlike scene had a singular charm. I expected an easy, quick capture of the place, the establishment of a garrison of United States troops, and a departure of the army, and accordingly a peaceful, well-ordered carrying out of these movements.

On the day above named the enemy appeared on the heights on the other side of the river, and the busy activity of an army of about 60,000 men with their artillery, wagon train, tents, etc., clearly visible with the naked eye from the city, presented a highly interesting sight. It seemed as if the troops had chosen this delightful spot and wished to rest from their exhausting marches. The trees, which partly covered this plateau in every direction, were cut down, the ground leveled, tents were set up, and a bivouac established, in which there seemed to be as much activity as in an anthill—out of which the flames and smoke of the camp fires ascended—and out of which the drum and trumpet signals resounded. It seemed to be a holiday and rest day for the troops, or, perhaps, a strengthening and preparation for hard work, for they could not know what defensive works were opposed to them after the surrender of the city, which had been demanded through a flag of truce, was declined.

It was said that General Sherman, when he arrived at this point, in his humorous style, addressed his soldiers in about the following words: "Boys, down there lies a pretty town; we have, for a long time had no good lodging; there can we find it; and it would be really a good thing if we took a close look at this place, and, if it pleases us, take possession of it. What say you to that?"

The "boys" must have agreed to this, and expressed their approbation by a unanimous "Hip! hip! hurrah!"

The day passed entirely undisturbed; the enemy was able to grant that boon in his certainty of victory. On our side the barricades were vigorously pushed forward, and time gained for removing a great deal of property.

#### CAPTURE OF COLUMBIA

In the early morning of the following day the scene changed. In consequence of the refusal to surrender, the enemy began to bombard the city, without causing any considerable damage, it is true, but yet putting the population into new alarm. I just escaped death, or a severe injury, from a fragment of bomb-shell about the size of a walnut, which exploded immediately before my feet and buried itself several inches in the ground, and which, in spite of my terror, I dug up and still have as a trophy of remembrance of that memorable day and the danger which I happily escaped.

The prearranged resistance, the defense of the city by the small force, was an absurd, nay frightful resolution on the part of the commander of the Confederate forces, and, under the existing circumstances, met with no approval from the people of Columbia. Whether he had seen the entire futility of such defense, or had assented to the desire of the worthy old mayor, the handful of confederates withdrew, the railroads carried away their last wagons and implements and the mayor himself went to the enemy's camp and announced the unconditional surrender of the city, requesting at the same time for it and its inhabitants respectful treatment and protection.

I had in the meanwhile arranged my affairs as well as was possible; had secured the property belonging to the company, which was left behind in a fire-proof safe in the office, had packed my private property in a trunk, and committed it to the care of my landlord. The most important papers and objects of value belonging to myself, my brother, the company, and the consulate I had placed, partly in a large tin box and partly in my different satchels and also filled a traveling bag with clothing and other indispensable articles, in order to keep it by me under all circumstances. I carried in a broad leather belt around my body under my clothing the sum of about \$600 in gold which I had reserved for possible needs, besides the jewels that I had bought, representing a considerable value, and different interest coupons.

Provided with these treasures and with the royal flag of Hanover, I betook myself to the residence of a German lady whom I had known in Charleston, who had established herself here in her profession of teacher of music and singing, and who, in anticipation of coming events, in her anxiety about herself and several little children, had begged me, by virtue of my office or in person, to protect her.

Accordingly I brought my baggage temporarily here, displayed the banner of Hanover from the window, and after I believed the office and the residence well protected I awaited here the course of events.

Toward midday, then, the entrance of the enemy's troops began. First there was a detachment of pioneers which removed the obstructions that blocked the broad principal street, after the object of the barricades, a bloody street fight was happily avoided. All the obstructions in sight were thrown aside, and the carriage of the mayor with him and several higher officers drove through the now unobstructed streets to the city hall. The great army followed in seemingly endless columns, and at its head General Sherman, energetic and calmly gazing around, with his staff and all the blue-coated regiments from the northwestern States of the Union—infantry, cavalry, and artillery. The entire army marched into the city and distributed themselves in the different streets; however, some of them marched through, and because the city did not furnish room enough for all, established themselves in the environs.

I must declare I was delighted at the spectacle—the endless, heaving multitude, which had before and behind them so long and so difficult marches—the famous and dreaded leader with his brilliant staff—the streaming banners of the mighty, victorious Union. All this was to me new and highly interesting, and I do not regret to have experienced it, even though I would like to refuse to recall scenes of like nature.

The troops were in the highest spirits, sang and were noisy by ranks and companies, cast longing and scornful looks at the houses, and, doubtless, thought of the treasures therein hidden, which might fall to them as good booty.

The inhabitants of Columbia were submissive in their calamity and hardly looked out of the windows at the entrance of the enemy. The capture of this city so peaceable—of this point so important for the Confederates, filled me with sorrow; the thought of what might result therefrom to it filled me with anxiety; but everybody must patiently submit to the inevitable. The streets were entirely deserted by civilians and the new masters bore themselves insolently in their brute force.

I will, for the honor of General Sherman and the whole United States, assume that the troops were, in accordance with what is customary in all civilized nations and armies, ordered not to seize private property, nor destroy it—not to molest peaceful citizens, especially ladies, and that the commanding officers really intended to extend to the city officials the promised defense—even protection of every person and of every private possession, and that, accordingly, the events which turned out to the contrary were to be ascribed only to the rough rabble as committed against all orders and against all decency. But, after all, the responsibility for the outrages committed by their underlings belongs to the leaders, and must sully their fame, either because Sherman's army was destitute of subordination and discipline, or, if these existed, that the officers who permitted these shameful deeds perhaps, in secret, took pleasure therein.

After the formal entry into the city had come to an end and the higher officers, i. e., only the generals and the colonels were quartered in some of the better class of houses which had been abandoned by their inhabitants, or which had been voluntarily vacated by them for this purpose, the rest of the crowd of soldiers seemed to be left entirely to themselves. The soldiers bivouaced in the streets or took possession of the houses left unoccupied, where they established themselves comfortably; but the inhabited houses, too, were not spared; and, next in order, they took lodging on the floors of the houses, in the front yards, and galleries. So far this was all very well and was rather respectful treatment, inasmuch as inhabited rooms were not invaded.

In the house, too, in which I had taken up my abode soldiers swarmed, among them several officers, and these were somewhat polite and respected the flag; and the captain in command gave the assurance that nothing should be taken from us and that we must remain quietly in our rooms. But the billeting of men in the house was by no means agreeable; the jeering and coarse language of the soldiers, their entire behavior, their insolent demands for food and drink to which they were not entitled, but in which they were satisfied as far as was possible, troubled us very much. Everywhere there were unruly, shabby fellows that could not fail to produce disgust and terror in everybody, collected from the lowest orders of humanity, from every nation in the world, among whom, with the exception of the Americans from the interior, the Irish and Germans were most numerous. To the shame of the German Nation must I, with sorrow, declare that its sons that belonged to this Army were the foremost and most active in the shameful deeds which were afterwards done; and of this fact I had on many occasions the opportunity to convince myself.

We could, from our windows that opened on the principal street, see the low, savage, and disgusting conduct of the troops, and I became immediately convinced that there was no good to be expected from them, and that the Confederate soldiers, nearly all sons of the Southland, were far superior in manners, discipline, and courage to this assemblage of hirelings. I speak with entire impartiality, and I admit exceptions the more willingly since such exceptions afterwards became known to me from the statements of others and my own experience; but in the main it was a band of thieves and robbers, the inferior officers included.

The gangs of thieves, soon no longer contented with the occupation of streets and houses and with the gifts voluntarily offered or obtained by begging, began as a preliminary to break open and plunder the stores and warehouses which were all closed. Only the money which, perhaps, they found and the articles of value in gold and silver were taken; everything else was rummaged, torn to pieces, ruined, and scattered around. It presented a sad appearance when all conceivable objects which the soldiers could not use or carry off with them disappeared from the different stores, lay scattered in the streets, and were here trodden under foot and destroyed. What could and should unlucky owners do against this rude violence? Scorn and vile words were the least that the owners, when they arrived at the scene of their ruin, gained by protest, by entreaty, especially as an appeal to officers there present and cooperating had not the slightest effect.

Seeing this open plundering, I naturally feared a similar fate for the property belonging to myself and the company at the places where I had left them. Anxiety and curiosity drove me out among the mad throng to inform myself in regard to their fate. The somewhat out-of-the-way office I found undisturbed, and, besides, the breaking open of a good safe was not to be considered an easy matter, which safe moreover contained nothing of special value after the books and papers were removed, and my own valuable papers were placed under my own protection. Satisfied on this point, I betook myself to my lodgings, and afterwards emptied a closely packed traveling bag, in order to fill it, if it were yet possible, with a portion of the contents of my trunk, because it seemed to me that the things were safer in my immediate vicinity than in the unprotected room. I had moved only a few steps with the empty bag, when I was halted by a mounted soldier, or robber, with the order to hand it over to him. My remonstrance that it did not belong to him, but to me, that I would like myself to keep possession of my property, was not noticed by the hero, but he drew and brandished his saber, with the remark that I must not take up his valuable time, but rather save my arm. I saw the justice of this good advice and followed it by giving up the bag, now fortunately empty. That was the first highway robbery that I experienced. Worse things were to happen to me.

In my lodgings a new horror awaited me. On entering the yard I found the contents of my trunk, so far, at least, they still existed, were scattered around and mixed up with strange objects; little negro children were amusing themselves with the broken pictures of my relations, were playing with the objects which the thieves had thrown aside as useless to them. Letters of my friends, which I had preserved so carefully, which contained such cheering words of love and consolation, were here in publicity thrown about, soiled and torn. Many valuable and irreplaceable objects were entirely lost, and a feeling of sadness at this sudden loss of my property, mixed with rage and contempt toward the vile destroyers, took possession of me. I gathered the most valuable of the remnants, so much as I could take care of, and gave up all that was left to utter destruction. My landlady had fared as badly as I; her personal intervention had not availed to protect her own property and mine, and the loss of her silverware, which she previously had prudently buried in her garden and which she believed to be safe, affected her far more seriously than myself.

I now hurried back to my temporary quarters and found here in the house of Mrs. Volger as yet no trouble, while the store situated on the ground floor was already completely gutted. I do not know whether we had to attribute the protection up to this time to the flag or to good luck or to the somewhat respectable garrison of the house; however that may be, we conceived the hope that we would not be exposed to any further danger.

Madder and madder became the tumult in the streets—partly from exultation over the booty they had gotten, partly curses and abusive language on the part of those who had been deceived in their expectations. The commanding officers remained entirely passive amid these open robberies, although to some families who had courage enough to make complaint at headquarters of the indignities, which were becoming more and more outrageous, a guard was given for the protection of their houses. But only pro forma, and in every case without effect, because either sufficient authority was not given to these guards or because they did not obey; the most of the houses so guarded suffered the common fate.

I had not been able to interest myself in behalf of the families with whom I was on friendly terms on account of the remoteness of their residences; everybody had enough to do for himself, and I did not venture to go so far from my lodgings.

Thus the day ended for the noble warriors in pleasant, profitable work; but there was no holiday evening for them—the time was too valuable for that; the night was far better suited to black souls—it only afforded further assistance to their dark doings.

#### A NIGHT OF TERROR

Night fell upon the once peaceful city, in which to-day wild disorder and uproar reigned; upon the wicked enemy, who with so many thousand agents was employed in its utter extinction; upon the unfortunate human creatures who in distress and anxiety were looking forward to the future. To whom could such a night as this yield rest and refreshment?

As darkness set in, the soldiers bivouacing in the streets kindled fires to cook their suppers. I made to the captain at our house a plea in this regard, whether

this lighting of fires should not be forbidden, since cotton lying around in the immediate vicinity and various other inflammable materials scattered around might easily be set on fire, and a great disaster ensue. O sancta simplicitas! How could I expect any consideration from these men? The answer of the captain, "What had I to do with the handling of the troops? Would I place a kitchen at their disposal for the preparation of their food?" threw me back into proper submissiveness. I dared not stir up to personal enmity the man who alone possessed one spark of dignity and authority. I invited him and his two lieutenants to partake of our frugal supper; but before it was ready a new event arrested our attention; a mighty column of fire and smoke was rising at some distance from us; a railroad depot on the other side of the city was on fire, and the cotton stored there gave abundant nutriment to the flames. This calamity, too! And just on this day! But in the excitement this occurrence made little impression, till in the opposite direction, too, fire broke out, and when a few minutes later a house took fire and that, too, immediately behind the one inhabited by us, then the conviction dawned upon us that it was a pre-arranged firing of the city of incalculable consequences, and this thought filled us with horror.

The fact that the enemy lounging around the burning houses made not the smallest effort to extinguish the fire, but amused themselves with insulting remarks at the sight, confirmed us in the belief that the city was intentionally fired, and from that time until the present day I do not know whether the firing done by the rabble was ordered by the higher powers or only permitted.

Under such circumstances the further spread of the fire was inevitable, and we were obliged to leave our dwelling. The poor widow to whom no possibility offered itself of saving her possessions was in despair. On her knees she besought the commander of the men quartered in the house to conduct herself and her little children to a place of safety, and through his men cause to be transported to a family of her acquaintance, with whom she wished to take refuge, at least a part of her property. In a certain way this man complied with this entreaty, which might have softened a stone. He escorted the unfortunate lady and her children with a few articles of value, principally silverware, which they themselves could carry, but any further assistance he could not and would not render. What we could hastily gather up and pack in bundles, trunks, and boxes, we then carried downstairs, in order to remove it either by ourselves, if possible, or relying upon the assistance of the captain and his men. But as soon as a piece was brought down the hungry pack seized upon it and carried it off, or divided its contents before our eyes, and every further attempt ended with the same result.

The captain declared that he could do nothing with this state of things, and so we were compelled to resign ourselves to the inevitable. All that we asked was that he would extend his personal protection to the lady now almost frightened to death. I loaded myself with my tin box and different bundles and packets, made up from the contents of my traveling bag and from the articles previously brought here, and left the house already on fire, with the poor family, whom I had now to leave to their fate, and must think about my own security if that were in any way possible.

Loaded in this way, holding in my hands, under my arms, my own property and that intrusted to me, I was determined to seek shelter in the house of the family of McCully, friends of mine, though a long distance off, yet the nearest place at which I could find refuge. I avoided the direct course over the principal streets, in which a great throng of noisy, exulting soldiers was moving, who were amusing themselves with setting bales of cotton on fire. I hoped to reach my destination without danger on the streets that were more quiet. The city presented an inexpressibly horrible aspect. A large majority of the houses in every direction were now burning and the wind contributed to the rapid spread of the destroying element. In the houses, on the streets, the infamous rabble plundered, destroyed, and raged as the wild hunt, just as if hell had broken loose. In the midst of all this was heard the heart-rending cry of distress of human beings, stripped by the robbers, at times of those personally assaulted or endangered by the fire. Here and there these hapless creatures, with little children in their arms or with their small possessions, were seen running from the devils and the fire, seeking protection anywhere, but only to run in their supposed place of refuge upon new destruction. It was horrible! And the conviction of the poor, perplexed creatures that they they could not save themselves made the situation only more frightful.

But nobody could give them help; everybody must be thinking of his own fate, of securing his own safety if possible; and so I could not trouble myself about what was going on around me, but must seek to escape from this scene of horror—to follow up the slight beam of hope of perhaps accidental betterment. In my course which I took by a wide circuit through back streets, I was at first fortunate enough to lose only the smaller packets carried under my arm and which I could not hold on to fast enough, inasmuch as they were snatched by some soldiers that I met. My hands grasped tightly their burden and several attempts to take it from me were unsuccessful, and by rapid flight I escaped the different robbers who, strange to say, desisted from an energetic pursuit and waited for a more convenient opportunity of robbery. Such opportunities presented themselves in rich abundance.

I had almost reached my destination and found the neighborhood in which my place of refuge lay as yet entirely spared by the fire. A gleam of hope of relief from anxiety and distress grew to a joyful anticipation that I would at last find rest, and in my excited brain arose all the possible plans as to where and how I should conceal my property, perhaps bury it, in order to escape the search of the sleuth hounds.

Then a company of soldiers in regular march under the command of a captain, and which, as I supposed, was performing patrol duty, suddenly crossed my path, and I was childishly simple enough to look upon them, not as a band of thieves but as protectors of the persecuted. Therefore, I slackened my running, which had already exhausted me, and met this detachment at a street corner, hoping to finish the rest of my journey under their protection, as they turned into my street.

But I was halted and asked by the captain what I was carrying there with me. I told that I was the Hanoverian consul and declared that my baggage consisted partly of my private property and partly of papers belonging to the consulate, saved with great difficulty from the fire. By that I believed I had sufficiently established my character and might venture to proceed on my way. But the captain was inquisitive and wished to convince himself of the truth of my statement. Then my baggage was taken away from me; I was made to open the box—the whole company rummaged the satchels—threw the contents out, one took this, another that—and left only the empty box and satchels, the consulate seal, and several letters and worthless papers. All protests, all entreaties, were in vain, and my exclamation of despair on account of the great loss, which at the moment of excitement I could not repress, was silenced by the threat to shoot me dead if I did not keep quiet.

Not content with the result of this robbery the captain demanded also my portemonnaie and watch, and, submissive as I was, in view of the violence threatening me, and in order thereby to escape a thorough search of my person, I gave him what he demanded.

That, kind reader, was the function of a patrol of the famous army of Sherman, which army was attended with the general sympathy of the Germans (not of the English and French) in their war of devastation against the noble-minded, fair-dealing Southerners. That was a specimen of the robber bands—the officers, who were led into the field against a spirited but noble enemy and displayed their bravery in base, dastardly robbery, insult, and injury of defenseless human beings, especially women and children. I refrain from all exaggeration in my description, and I leave it to everybody to form his own opinion; at the same time I am willing to declare that not all, perhaps only the smaller part of the Northern troops, was made up of such offscourings of humanity, because I later had the opportunity to become acquainted with brave, well-disciplined soldiers of the United States.

I gathered up the box and the few remaining papers, and then gradually the full knowledge of my loss dawned upon me. The loss of the valuables intrusted to me by my brother, from whom nearly all that he had earned by long years of hard work was taken, and who in a foreign land was resting in full confidence in the safety of his possessions, affected me most. This would certainly be a severe blow to him.

Furthermore, this loss consisted of a large part of the exchange on England, which I had made out for the stockholders of the company, and which had not been called for by them, representing a very large sum. There was for a long time no possibility of stopping the payment of the drafts, and making them worthless for their unlawful possessors; in the meantime these drafts might already have been paid in good faith to the thief and his accomplices.

The loss of the papers belonging to the consulate and the company troubled me less; that of my own, in comparison with these above mentioned, not at all. But I was prostrated by the far-reaching loss, and by the impossibility of doing anything for the recovery of anything. I experienced this night, and once later, how much a man can endure, but also how much less frightful is the presence—the certainty—of so hard a stroke of fate, than the apprehension of it, if one has reached the conclusion that he is not able to remedy it, and that he must be resigned.

When I became clearly convinced of the fact, my despair changed to quiet resignation. A slight consolation lay in the thought that in this hour so many people were visited with far harder misfortune than I. In all that I had passed through I could yet consider myself at least fortunate in having saved my life, the valuables secreted about my person, and the papers still left in the satchels, for whose further security I, of course, had reason to fear.

With the little that was left me, I arrived safe at the house of the McCullys, but in an exhausted and depressed state. The poor family were, in view of the important events, of the danger in which they were involved, but wh'ch they had so far escaped, in great alarm, and they greeted my appearance with joy. The husband, disabled in body and mind, sat buried in silent brooding; an aged grandmother lay sick in bed, and the recent frightful occurrences were very carefully concealed from her; and with great difficulty I made them take measures for collecting and temporarily securing their most valuable objects, in order that in the event of a sudden attack, or of the fire getting there, they might be ready for flight, and for taking with them the most valuable of their possessions.

These good people had had the good luck to find among the soldiers who had quartered themselves in the house a brave, educated young man, who was not only entirely respectful and amiable toward the inmates but defended them, as well as their property, against the vile thieves who forced themselves in. As a matter of course, the man stood quite alone among his comrades in the strength of his character and virtue; he defied them, as well as his superior officers, in their repeated attempts to rob and set fire to the house, until his strength no longer held out against the rude violence. He denounced the conduct of his comrades as vile, shameful; he deplored that so many good-for-nothing scoundrels, consisting mostly of Europeans (Irish and Dutch), were among them; he protested, however, that the horrible deeds were committed against the orders of the highest authorities.

The flames were now raging in this part of the city, at first more protected, after the houses which promised to yield booty were robbed and destroyed. The rush of the valiant men became stronger and stronger, and in a short time our brave defender was unable to drive back the highway robbers storming the doors and windows. All obstacles were broken down; what was useful was carried off; what was useless to them destroyed; and with a few possessions only was I able, in company with the poor unfortunate creatures, to get out of the house. Already the flames were pouring out of the windows. It was a matter of great difficulty to save the old grandmother, who escaped death by fire by a hairbreadth, and was carried out by two negroes who were kind enough to lend a helping hand. I caught one of the noble heroes by the throat at the moment when he was about to set fire to the bed on which the old lady lay, because I had run thither at her shriek of horror and stopped, just at the right time, this fearful murder. In the struggle, which, in view of this incredible crime, I did not fear, in the exchange of words which was inevitable I found out, to my horror, that the beast was a German who could not even speak English. Such a son, then, has our good fatherland sent for the extirpation of slavery, but in reality for robbery and murder. And alas, he was not the only one of his race among them who practiced such shameful deeds.

It was the favorite plan of the scoundrels, when they had thoroughly plundered the house, to set fire to the beds. By that means their object was best accomplished; the fire spread surely and quickly, and the rogues had no reason to fear that a single thing would be spared.

And so again burnt out, again without shelter, I left with the family of the McCullys, whose house was now on fire, too, in several places, lighting for its inhabitants of many years their sorrowful, homeless way. But whither should we betake ourselves? There was no longer any great room for choice; only comparatively few houses were left uninjured, and these, too, in all proba-

bility, would be visited with the same horrible fate. I determined yet once more to seek safety and go to my friends, the Gronings, for shelter. The Arsenal Hill was as yet wrapped in deep darkness, and thither the band of incendiaries had not yet forced their way or had found the houses there, which were mostly small and unpretentious, unworthy of their attention. And so my friends had still a home. A part of my fugitive companions—the old grandmother—the invalid father (both of whom a short time after this horrible night died from the effects of it, perhaps, too, of hunger), and besides two daughters found shelter with relations, in the close vicinity to my destination; the mother with two other daughters accompanied me to Groning's house, which we fortunately reached but not without having lost on the way the greatest part of the property taken with us.

I was finally stunned in the presence of repeated calamities, in the presence of the strokes of fate, which in the last hours, which seemed to me an eternity, had broken in upon me, and in the presence of the splendidly horrible sight of the sea of fire, which seen from the hill spread out under me, out of which a wild confusion of voices arose. I thought now only of myself and the unfortunates committed to my protection to whom, alas, I had been able to afford so little help.

And so one part of the family was temporarily sheltered, and I, with the others, was received at the house of our friends. They, in some unaccountable way, with the exception of anxiety and terror, had received no injury—had been able to ward off the numerous visits of the intruders. In particular, the energetic Mrs. Groning, a most amiable lady, knew how to repulse the cowardly rabble by her fearless deportment, by her severe reproof, and by word pictures of their damnable doings. She, herself a northern woman, in the presence of the sleuth hounds, renounced all connection with a people who employed such a rabble in their service, and her rapid, energetic way of talking produced a powerful effect upon those men, who had not expected such a reception, where in other cases they had met with only terror, trembling, and entreaty. These negotiations, carried on through closed doors and windows, always ended with the departure of the robbers, who sought an easier field for their industry.

It was in the early hours of the morning, when I reached my new asylum completely exhausted, and with my unfortunate companions was bidden welcome. My overstrained nerves refused any further service, and I could no longer stand upright. Stretched out on the carpet of my chamber, I found a little rest that I needed so much, and forgot, for a while, the trials I had passed through, and those now surrounding me, but continually being roused by new disturbers of my peace and expecting to be driven away again.

The uninvited visits were all the time slackening, and at daybreak they ceased altogether. The contemptible creatures seemed at last to be content with the result of their devilish work—or they were tired out with the exertions of the night—or they themselves shuddered at the sight of the devastation they had made, which the daylight brought to their view, or perhaps they were called to other service. Suffice it to say, we were no longer disturbed, the streets were cleared, and we breathed again! It seemed really as if the kindly cottage had enjoyed singular good fortune to be preserved from the general destruction, and after all that had happened we were thankful for this favor of Heaven, which had left to our good hosts their home and their property, and afforded to us a comfortable shelter at least, while so many unfortunates were obliged to do without this shelter, and that, too, in the most inclement season of the year.

After I had recovered from the first shock, I realized my whole loss, and notwithstanding the considerable amount of it, recognized how well I had fared in comparison with many others—e. g., the McCully family, robbed of everything (I had saved my money, jewels, etc.) I went out to look after the other portion of that family and Mrs. Volger, who had been separated from me in the early part of the night, and find out what fate had befallen them. I found her fortunately concealed in one of the places of refuge she had sought, and though she was hardly alive from terror, from the loss she had suffered, still a great blessing was vouchsafed to her, too, by an accident.

These facts were, under the circumstances, almost tranquilizing to myself and to the relations, and when I had brought them this news, I made an examination of the devastation of the last night.

## RESULTS OF THE DEVASTATION

The beautiful, peaceful city of Columbia was no more! In one single night, yea, in a few hours, it had disappeared and been converted into ruins! Only a few houses on Arsenal Hill and in the farthest outskirts of the city remained standing; the whole of the interior portion was entirely destroyed. The spaces where yesterday streets intersected the city were no longer passable and only in some places to be recognized by the walls still standing. Everything else was a great heap of ruins, out of which rose a smoke, poisoning the air. With renewed horror, with disgust and hate for the perpetrators and the permitters of these outrages, I gazed at the ruins of the place which had become so dear to me, which now in its new and horrifying aspect was no longer recognizable. My office, too, with its contents, my dwelling place, and so many homes, at which I had spent many pleasant hours, lay buried under the ruins!

And the men who yesterday were without foreboding, and the inmates of these former houses! A great many of them had been lost in the tempest of fire and were now laying accusations against their murderers before the throne of the Most High. The bodies of those who had perished in the flames were some time afterwards found, removed from the mountains of rubbish, and buried.

And the survivors? Whither had terror and distress driven them? Those who had not been so fortunate, as I had been, to find shelter among friends (and comparatively few could be taken in by those whose houses were spared), had been driven by despair into the woods; and now imagine such a situation—how many thousands of human beings, of all ages and conditions, white and black, wandering the forest in the dark night, seeing no possibility of protecting themselves against the cold wind, of feeding and clothing themselves, since they have saved nothing but their bare lives! How families were separated, mothers and children calling for each other, neither knowing whether their loved ones were in safety or had fallen a sacrifice to the dreadful fire!

Yes, dear reader; that is an awful picture—it sounds *incredible*, seems an exaggeration; but so it was in reality, in our age of the world, in a civilized land; and caused by those, who out of pure philanthropy (?) wished to procure for the slaves glorious freedom, and to that end employed such means as placed their wards themselves, along with their masters, who were hated by the so-called liberators, but loved by the slaves, in boundless misery.

The fall of Columbia stands quite unique in the history of the American war, but it was sufficient to sully the principle, the conduct, and the results of it, and must for many generations entail the hate of the South Carolinians toward their northern brethren, who brought upon their forefathers such atrocious treatment.

I give my opinion with entire impartiality, in accordance with my own experiences and from personal observation of the frightful scenes, and I doubt not that anyone who will calmly consider the matter will agree with me in my judgment of the shameful conduct of the Army of the United States, even though the foregoing description may have imperfectly pictured the horrifying experiences and boundless wretchedness resulting therefrom.

And the slaves for whose sakes this bloody war was waged, whom they wished to free from the intolerable yoke of their oppressors. Now the victors troubled themselves not a single moment about them; they had endured the same fate as the whites, suffered like losses and privations. They remained faithful to their masters, who shared with them their last piece of bread without being under the least obligation to do so. How much assistance will, I am sure, at this time (1879) be granted to the negroes by their former masters, without which they must perish, and which was not extended to them at that time by their liberators, by the champions of a principle which was at least commendable. Accordingly these champions deliberately abandoned their protégés to the misery to which they had condemned them, left them to pine, as before, in the slavery from which they had come to save them. Their oppressors, on the contrary, from feelings of humanity, cared for them, that in their condition of freedom they might not starve to death.

And the noble warriors for freedom and the rights of man—the robbers, thieves, and incendiaries? They had to-day left the scene of their shameful conduct and spread themselves for the most part over the surrounding country, there to seek booty in cattle and provisions, to lay waste the land, and above all, to destroy the railroads for a distance of many miles. Only a comparatively few were left behind as a garrison for the place and guard of headquarters. The robbing and burning of the few remaining houses had ceased, as I suppose, by the strict orders of the commanding officers, in whom, in

view of the existing devastation, a little compassion might have been awakened, and who now were in a position to maintain discipline.

There was, however, all the time a considerable number of disgusting figures who still lingered in the place once called Columbia, who were busily engaged in rummaging the piles of débris and seeking for the melted gold and silver; likewise in digging up the ground in the gardens and yards of the few remaining houses to find the treasures which were possibly there hidden. They were in this work amply rewarded, and the booty, which was afterwards carried away by them, consisting principally of gold and silver and objects of value requiring little room, must have been enormous, as an entire train of transport wagons was filled with them.

I have thus attempted to describe how these men became possessed of the stolen property, how the city was destroyed contrary to the custom of all civilized nations, how the peaceful inhabitants were robbed of their property, reduced to poverty and suffering, nay, even murdered, just as I was forced to live through these deeds and observe the consequences. But even more horrifying accounts of individual cases, which I did not see, afterwards came into publicity. It was not alone that the band of robbers demanded the surrender of money, watches, and valuables; no—they did not take time for that; in many instances they possessed themselves of such articles by force; the breastpins were snatched from the breasts of ladies, the rings from their fingers, and the earrings from their ears; they did not restrain themselves till the opening of the jewel cases but lacerated the ears and tore off the clothing from the bodies of the trembling women. I have myself seen a lady with the lobes of both ears torn asunder. What outrages in word and deed the female sex in many cases had to suffer I will here only hint.

I draw a veil over the horrible post, which would seem to me a bad dream if it had not wrought its lasting effect upon my future; and if I am in the fortunate condition to be obliged only once, and for a short time, to lift the veil, in order to impress those moments on my remembrance in my description, the greatest part of my fellow sufferers were not, and perhaps not even now are, in the condition to cover up with other thoughts that night of horror or to escape its consequences.

After the first excitement had somewhat subsided, and there was calmness enough to reflect upon the state of affairs, anxiety for the future began to press upon me and to put me in embarrassment in regard to taking the necessary steps. It seemed, in the first place, incumbent upon me to give my chief information of the disaster and get from him new instructions; then also to inform our correspondent in Liverpool of the robbery of the drafts drawn upon him and stop the payment of them; furthermore, I wished to gain certain knowledge of the place of retreat of our bookkeeper with the books of the company; and, finally, to leave a place in which I was now only a burden.

I had no idea how an escape from the place or intercourse with the outside world might be effected, or whether the Unionists would establish a post here; and on that point I desired first to inform myself of their intentions. I went to the headquarters, which were established in one of the remaining houses, partly to get information about the future of the ruined city, partly to lay complaint about the treatment to which I had been subjected, and perhaps be indemnified for my losses. I did not dare, of course, to let the Union officers know of my participation in the business of blockade running, because I would have been regarded and treated as an open enemy of the United States; I could appear only as the consul of Hanover if I wished to accomplish anything.

I was politely received by General Howard, the next in command under Sherman, who had formerly been a clergyman, had in the Mexican War lost an arm, and who subsequently further distinguished himself in the Indian war; and my complaint as to the treatment which I had received, as the consul of a neutral nation, as to the losses and the robbery of the papers belonging to the consulate, and all of my private property, was patiently listened to. The general expressed his regret at the occurrences of the night before and at my passive participation therein, and declared to me that if I would point out the regiment to which the captain who had robbed me belonged he would find him out and have him shot before my eyes. Unfortunately, I could not comply with his request, and perhaps the scoundrel enjoys even at this moment his miserable existence. What, indeed, was the guilt of one single individual in comparison with the innumerable and far greater crimes of many thousands?

I do not know whether the expressed sympathy of the general was only pretended or really sincere; it made, however, an agreeable impression upon me, and though I could secure no indemnification for or replacement of my losses—a result which from the very beginning I had not ventured to hope for—yet one proposition of the general seemed to me acceptable. He informed me frankly that the army would leave its present position in a few days, and that no garrison would be left behind; that it would march forward in a north-easterly direction and would probably in from 8 to 14 days arrive at a seaport; that if I wished to avail myself of the opportunity of reaching that point in safety, in order from there to embark for the north or Europe, I might partake of all the comforts and privations of himself and his staff, which I was invited to join; in return for which I would, perhaps, be expected to do some clerical work.

This invitation was by no means to be rejected, and while I cherished an unextinguishable hate toward the band of robbers, yet I would not be disturbed by, had nothing to fear from them, on account of my belonging to the staff, which was, doubtless, composed of respectable men. I therefore accepted the proposal provisionally, and had me a pass made out to that effect.

Upon closer consideration, however, I renounced this alluring opportunity. If by this means I should reach northern territory, I would be able, undoubtedly, to send to England by the quickest, most convenient, and safest way the information which seemed to me very necessary to be sent or even to reach my home, for I had also formed this plan because the business was broken up and no longer needed me. But, on the other hand, by this course the Confederate territory would be closed to me, and if Charleston still belonged to it, it would be impossible for me to get to that city or to my chief, who I supposed was there, to give him information of my misfortunes. I felt it to be needful for me, before everything else, to speak with him, to lay before him a full account of my last experiences and of the loss sustained.

I would not have liked, for any consideration, to have been brought before him in suspicion that I had only pretended a robbery—that I, perhaps, had embezzled something, or, generally speaking, that I had neglected my duty in any respect. This explanation would not be at all difficult in a personal description of the events; afterwards I could, with his consent, with a clear conscience pursue my design of seeking my dear home, to which I was now drawn with redoubled longing. Therefore, I determined to remain here and wait for a suitable opportunity by which the accomplishment of my desire might be effected.

On the 20th of February Sherman's army left Columbia, if one will apply that term to the heap of ruins, after having the day before, by order of the commanding general, blown up the arsenal, which had been up to this time spared. In that act there was no cruelty, inasmuch as that building was public property, for the destruction of which the right belonged to the victorious enemy. The soldiers continued to be well-behaved and made no further attacks upon persons and upon the property that was still left, but confined themselves to the before-mentioned digging in the ground.

The departure of the troops attracted little attention, and made little impression upon those who were left behind them. After the entire deliverance from them, the people could for the first time clearly think about their real needs and devise possibly new measures for their removal. I saw the heroes march away, who had in this campaign gathered withered, malodorous laurels—the victorious army which had certainly contributed very much to the subjugation of the South, to the finishing of the war, and to the accomplishment of an object noble in principle. But without considering the great bloodshed, the utter misery in which the land was placed, from which it can not even to-day revive, the means employed were in the highest degree objectionable. *Hail! Columbia, Happy Land, the national hymn of the United States,* sounded like mockery from the departing troops to the city of Columbia, totally destroyed by them, and it was a relief to every spirit, however depressed, when the blue forms and their endless train of wagons disappeared in the distance, although they had now nothing more to fear from them.

As for me, let them go on farther in their victorious march, in which I came near taking a passive part, and would have been by that means probably saved much trouble. After some time the news reached us that the army, without having met with any resistance, had subdued the whole region through which they passed, Wilmington, and the seacoast of North Carolina, and thereby, with similar success on the part of the other Northern armies, subjugated the South and again incorporated the Confederate States in the Union.

[From the Baltimore Enquirer, June 24, 1873]

BURNING COLUMBIA—"THE MOST MONSTROUS BARBARITY OF A BARBAROUS MARCH"—WADE HAMPTON'S PRESENTATION OF THE CASE—THE TESTIMONY OF SHERMAN AND HIS OFFICERS—GUILT FIXED BEYOND EVASION OR RECALL—THE WHOLE INFAMOUS STORY COMPLETELY TOLD—SHERMAN'S ARMY CONVICTED OF THE CRIME

A "mixed commission on American and British claims" is now holding its sessions in Washington, and before this tribunal will soon be brought cases involving the question of the destruction of the city of Columbia, S. C., in February, 1865. With these cases I am in nowise connected, nor am I otherwise interested, save in showing the truth of this matter, and thus relieving myself from the false charge which has associated my name with this great outrage. With this object in view, may I ask the use of your columns while I prove the falsity of the charge against myself and fix the guilt where it properly belongs?

In order to establish these points beyond all question it will be necessary to discuss this matter at some length and to submit a large mass of documentary evidence. Let me, therefore, crave in advance the indulgence of your readers, hoping that their interest in seeing the truth of history vindicated will give them patience to consider and weigh the evidence adduced. This controversy has been forced upon me for the second time by Gen. W. T. Sherman's reckless disregard of truth in his assaults upon me before the "mixed commission"; and if the testimony which will be produced shall prove how utterly unworthy of credit his assertions are, he will have no one to blame except himself. He shall be dealt with in the manner that all defamers deserve, and my language shall be so plain and the proofs so overwhelming that even he himself can understand, obtuse though he may be to the obligations due to or from a gentleman.

On the night of February 17, 1865, Columbia was burned to the ground after it had been in full possession of the Federal troops for 10 hours. How was it so burned? No one of the citizens who was present during that disastrous night would be at a moment's loss to answer that question, and many of them have answered it most conclusively, as will be shown in the course of this narrative. No one there doubted or doubts to whom the guilt attaches, and it was with surprise and indignation that my fellow citizens saw the charge in Sherman's official report, published in April, 1865, that the destruction had been caused by myself. In this report the following language is used:

#### SHERMAN'S WANTON STATEMENTS

"Gen. Wade Hampton, who commanded the Confederate rear guard of cavalry, had, in anticipation of our capture of Columbia, ordered that all cotton, public and private, should be moved into the streets and fired to prevent our making use of it. \* \* \* Some of these piles of cotton were burning" (when the Federal troops entered the city), "especially one in the very heart of the city, near the courthouse, but the fire was partially subdued by the labor of our soldiers. \* \* \* Before one single public building had been fired by order, the smoldering fires, set by Hampton's order, were rekindled by the wind and communicated to the buildings around. I disclaim on the part of my army any agency in this fire, but on the contrary claim that we saved what of Columbia remains unconsumed. And without hesitation I charge Gen. Wade Hampton with having burned his own city of Columbia, not with malicious intent or as the manifestation of a silly 'Roman stoicism,' but from folly and want of sense in filling it with lint cotton and tinder." This was the insulting charge first made by Sherman, and made in the most offensive terms, at a time when I was a prisoner of war, under parole, and thus unable to meet it in the only manner it deserved. But one mode of answering was open to me, and the one least agreeable to my wishes, that of denouncing it as false in the public prints, and this was done on the 19th of June, 1865, in the following terms:

"It would be difficult, if not impossible, to express in an equal number of paragraphs a greater number of falsehoods than are contained in the above extracts. There is not one word of truth in all that has been quoted, except the statement that 'General Hampton commanded the Confederate rear guard of the cavalry.' He did not order any cotton 'moved into the streets and fired.' On the contrary, my first act on taking command of the cavalry, to

which I was assigned only the night before the evacuation of Columbia, was to represent to General Beauregard the dangers to the town of firing the cotton in the street. Upon this representation he authorized me to give orders that no cotton in the town should be fired, which orders were strictly carried out. I left the city after the head of Sherman's column entered it, and I assert what can be proved by thousands, that not one bale of cotton was on fire when he took possession of the city. His assertion to the contrary is false, and he knows it to be so."

These extracts from my letter will be sufficient to show how the charge made by Sherman was met. The denial was as explicit and the denunciation as strong as language could well make them. This was all that I could do, for I was debarred by my position from seeking the proper redress for this wanton insult of General Sherman, which never would have been given had I been free to resent it as it deserved. No such restriction, however, withheld him, and there was a time when an officer of the United States would have felt himself compelled to repel an imputation on his veracity or to resign his commission. But no answer to my denial was made by Sherman, and he has rested quietly under the denunciation until the present moment, when an examination before the mixed commission has afforded him the opportunity to reiterate his falsehood on oath, officially, and, as he supposes, safely. Fortunately for the people of the South, reunion and reconstruction, if they have brought in their train no other privileges, have at least restored to every man the right to resent an insult and to brand a falsehood from whatever quarter they may come; and in the exercise of this only right that is restored, I now feel at liberty to discuss the questions at issue on terms of equality with General Sherman. In doing this I shall submit unimpeachable evidence to show that the charge made against me by Sherman is utterly false, and also that his own men burned Columbia after he had promised protection to property and citizens.

#### HAMPTON'S MISSION IN SOUTH CAROLINA

In order to arrive at a clear understanding of the events which will be related, and of my connection with them, it will be necessary to state how and why I was in South Carolina at the fall of Columbia, and as I desire to establish all assertions made by proof extracts from my orders and report are given to explain my presence there:

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS,  
ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,

*January 19, 1865.*

Special Order No. 8: In accordance with instructions from the commanding general Maj. Gen. M. C. Butler will proceed to South Carolina. The troops will be conveyed by railroad via Wilmington to Columbia unless travel is interrupted on that route, in which case they will be conveyed by the upper route. General Butler will report his arrival at Columbia to Lieutenant General Hardee.

By command of Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton:

H. B. McCLELLAN,  
*Acting Adjutant General.*

I now quote from my official report: "At the same time I was directed by the general commanding to proceed to South Carolina to assist in mounting and putting Butler's division in the field, with permission, if a suitable command was given me, to operate it until recalled to Virginia. The troops were immediately put in motion for their new destination, \* \* \* and I followed in a few days."

It will be seen by the above extracts that my only duty in South Carolina was to assist in putting Butler's division in the field, and that I had no active command in South Carolina on my arrival there. Finding that General Beauregard had been assigned to the command of that department, I tendered my services to him, and was requested by him to aid in making dispositions for defense and in seeing to the proper discharge of the provost duties in the city. In other words, I was serving temporarily as a volunteer on his staff until the night of the 16th of February—and the reader is requested to bear this date in mind—when the following telegraphic dispatch from President Davis was received:

RICHMOND, February 16, 1865.

To Gen. WADE HAMPTON:

It gives me pleasure to inform you that the senate yesterday confirmed my nomination of you to be lieutenant general. As you were not advised of the nomination, you may not have anticipated such action, but will understand it as expressive of my appreciation of your past services and confidence in your ability for future usefulness. You have my best wishes for you personally and highest hopes of you officially.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

This dispatch, which assigned me to the first and only command held by me in South Carolina, was received on the night of February 16.

While serving on the staff of General Beauregard he directed me to issue an order that all cotton stored in Columbia should be placed where it could be burned, "in case of necessity, without danger of destroying buildings." This order was published in one of the city papers on the 15th of February, I think, and is doubtless the same to which Sherman alludes in one of his numerous communications relative to the destruction of Columbia—an allusion which will be noticed in the proper place. The post commander of Columbia at that time was Maj. Allen J. Green, a gallant officer and a gentleman of the highest character. He has been kind enough to send me the following paper, which speaks for itself:

## NO ORDER TO BURN THE COTTON

HUNTSVILLE, ALA., December 31, 1872.

Having been requested to give my recollections of the events connected with the evacuation of Columbia, S. C., on the 17th of February, 1865, I would state that at the time of said evacuation by the Confederate forces I was post commander of that city. That a day or two before the evacuation I received an order from Lieut. Gen. Wade Hampton directing me to ascertain what amount of cotton there might be in the city, either in public or private hands, and to remove the same to the vacant fields or lots adjacent in order not to endanger the town should the necessity arise for burning the same; that not having sufficient transportation at my command to thoroughly execute General Hampton's order, I directed such cotton as had not already been removed to be placed in a narrow line along the center of Main or Richardson Street that the citizens themselves might be able to watch it and thus prevent a general conflagration should a subsequent order be given to burn it; that no such order (to burn it) was ever received by me, but that either during the night previous to or on the day of the evacuation a second order was received by me from General Hampton directing me to take no further steps with regard to the cotton, as it was not deemed necessary to destroy it. And I would further state that being in charge of the post, with my immediate command on duty up to the last moment of the evacuation (which was between 10 and 11 o'clock a. m., to the best of my recollection) no fires had occurred in the city up to that time, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no cotton or other material had been set on fire by any orders from General Hampton nor by any troops under his command.

ALLEN J. GREEN.

The UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Northern District of Alabama:

On this 31st day of December, A. D. 1872, before me, Lionel W. Day, clerk of the United States court at Huntsville, Ala., in said district, personally cometh Dr. Allen J. Green, who, being sworn on oath, says that the above statements made by him subscribed are true, according to his best knowledge and belief.

Witness my hand and the seal of said court the day above written.

[SEAL OF COURT.]

LIONEL W. DAY,  
Clerk United States District Court.

This affidavit of Major Green shows how and why the cotton was placed in the streets, and it proves how utterly unfounded is the assertion of Sherman, that I "had ordered that all cotton should be moved into the streets and fired." As mention has been made by Major Green of a second order in relation to the cotton, the facts connected with this order may be stated here. As soon as I was assigned to command and saw the cotton in the streets, I urged General Beauregard not to burn it, representing to him that doing so would endanger the city, and that as the enemy had destroyed the railroad they could not remove this cotton. Upon this representation he directed me to issue an order that no cotton was to be burned. That this order was issued the subjoined papers will prove:

## THE ORDERS NOT TO BURN

CHARLESTON, August 13, 1866.

Chancellor J. P. CARROLL,

*Chairman of the Committee for the  
Investigation of the Burning of Columbia.*

SIR: Seeing that you have called for testimony in reference to the destruction of Columbia by fire, on the night of the 17th February, 1865, I beg to make the following statement: Soon after General Hampton assumed command of the cavalry, which he did on the morning of 17th February, he told me that General Beauregard had determined not to burn the cotton, as the Yankees had destroyed the railroad, and he directed me to issue an order that no cotton should be fired. This I did at once, and when I left Columbia, which I did after the entrance of the Federal troops, not one bale of cotton was burning, nor had one been fired by our troops. At the time referred to I was acting as assistant adjutant general to General Hampton.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

RAWLINS LOWNDES,

*Captain and Assistant Adjutant General.*

## STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA:

Personally appeared before me Capt. Rawlins Lowndes, and on oath says that the facts contained in the within letter are true.

RAWLINS LOWNDES.

Sworn to this 13th August, 1866.

CHARLES H. SIMONTON, *Notary Public.*

In addition to this affidavit of Captain Lowndes I gave that of Gen. M. C. Butler, who commanded the division of cavalry composing the last Confederate troops that were in Columbia before its occupation by the Federals.

SOUTH CAROLINA,  
*Edgefield District:*

Before me, S. B. Griffin, a notary public, personally came M. C. Butler, a major general in the late Confederate Army, who, being duly sworn, says that he commanded a division of cavalry at the evacuation of Columbia by the Confederate forces on the morning of the 17th February, A. D. 1865, just before its occupation by the Federal forces under General Sherman. That his division was the rear guard of the cavalry of General Beauregard's army upon that occasion and occupied the town for several hours after all the other troops had left, and that about 10 o'clock a. m. he withdrew when the skirmish line of the advance of the Federal troops had reached the suburbs; that he was personally present with the rear squadron of his division, which was the rear guard, and that no cotton was burning as far as he could observe, and none would likely have been set on fire without his knowledge or orders. And this deponent further says that Lieut. Gen. Wade Hampton withdrew simultaneously with him with a part of this deponents' command, retiring by the Winnsboro Road, while this deponent retired on the Camden Road; and that when this deponent reached the eastern suburbs of the city he halted his column and remained there in full view of the Federal column as it marched down Main Street—square removed from it—and remained there for at least two hours after the city had been occupied; and that when he left the suburbs he could see no evidence of cotton burning. And this deponent further says that Lieutenant General Hampton on the morning of the evacuation and the day previous directed him that the cotton must not be set on fire, and inasmuch as the mayor, Doctor Goodwyn, had gone out to meet General Sherman to surrender the city and ask his protection, he (this deponent) should retire quietly without firing or do any other act which would provoke or justify violence on the part of the troops coming in; that these orders were communicated to the entire division and strictly observed, one gun only having been fired without authority; that all cotton which this deponent saw in passing through the streets were piled in packed bales in the middle of the street and was not fired or disturbed or scattered by the Confederate troops.

M. C. BUTLER.

Sworn to before me this 20th day of August, A. D. 1866.

S. B. GRIFFIN, *Notary Public.*

## SOME INTERESTING EVIDENCE

Though the proofs adduced are sufficient to convince every impartial mind that orders were issued not to burn the cotton, I shall add one more. On the 22d April, 1866, I wrote to General Beauregard in reference to this matter, recalling the facts connected with the evacuation of Columbia to his mind, stating that I had advised him not to burn the cotton, and that he had directed me to issue an order to this effect. The following indorsement by General Beauregard was made on my letter, which was returned to me and which has been sent with other papers in my testimony for the mixed commission.

NEW ORLEANS, May 2, 1866.

The above statement of General Hampton relative to the order issued by me at Columbia, S. C., not to burn the cotton in that city, is perfectly true and correct. The only thing on fire at the time of the evacuation was the depot building of the South Carolina Railroad, which caught fire accidentally from the explosion of some ammunition ordered to be sent toward Charlotte, N. C.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

It may be mentioned here that this depot was an isolated building near the river and distant from the business portion of the city about 1 mile. Reference will be made to its destruction in another place.

It will scarcely be necessary to present any further evidence to show that no cotton was fired by my order. So we may turn to the next sentence of the official report of Sherman, which has been quoted: "Some of these piles of cotton were burning" (when the Federal troops entered the city), "especially one in the very heart of the city, near the courthouse, but the fire was partially subdued by the labors of our soldiers." To meet this assertion the following papers are given. The extracts which are now given are taken from the depositions of various citizens, and the statements were all made under oath. The evidence is so voluminous that all of it can not be given, and the only difficulty is that of selection. The first extract is from the testimony of M. H. Berry, a northern man, whose sympathies were on the side of the Union, and who accompanied the Federal Army to the North when it left Columbia.

## FEDERAL SOLDIERS KINDLE THE FLAMES AND CUT THE ENGINE HOSE

Mich H. Berry, being sworn, deposed: "I was in Columbia in February, 1865, when the city was burned. \* \* \* The first fire I saw, which was close to me, was set on fire by soldiers. \* \* \* The place I saw set on fire was set on fire by soldiers wearing the uniform of United States soldiers. \* \* \* After the army came in, about 12 o'clock, I came down the street to the old market on Main Street. There was cotton out in the street near the courthouse; the wind commenced blowing a lively breeze, and the cotton took fire. \* \* \* The citizens and soldiers ran out the hose carriage and put the fire out. \* \* \* General Hampton's troops left in the morning previous to the burning. They left fully four hours before I saw the cotton burning as before stated."

Now, here is a witness who swears that our troops had left four hours before he saw the cotton burning, and that it was not burning when he first saw it.

We turn now to the testimony of W. B. Williams: "There was a good deal of cotton piled in the streets of the city prior to its occupation by the Federal forces, \* \* \* but none was burned before the coming in of the Federal troops."

The next deposition quoted is that of Orlando Z. Bates, an alderman of the city: "In company with the mayor, Hon. T. J. Goodwyn, and Aldermen McKenzie and Stork, I proceeded to the outskirts of the city and met the advance guard of the Federal army, under command of Colonel Stone. \* \* \* Deponent returned to the city about 12 or 1 o'clock. \* \* \* There was no alarm of fire and no burning of any description previous to the occupation already stated. The conflagration commenced after the entry of the United States forces. I saw the burning of several houses. \* \* \* I was present with the fire company aiding to extinguish it and saw Federal soldiers sticking bayonets into the engine hose and cutting the same with hatchets and knives. \* \* \* I will also state that a quantity of cotton had been brought out of the cellars of stores, \* \* \* piled in the middle of the street. As the

troops passed it *I saw the cotton fired by them, striking matches and applying.* \* \* \* I saw several instances of Federal soldiers actually applying fire to buildings and others carrying torches to various parts of the city for the same purpose." (The italics are mine.)

James G. Gibbes, who was subsequently mayor of the city, testifies: "An alarm of fire arose, caused by the burning of some cotton in Richardson Street. It was set on fire by the United States soldiers. \* \* \* The United States-soldiers began to riddle and to cut up the hose with their bayonets. \* \* \* About 7 o'clock in the evening three or four rockets were thrown up in the extreme northwestern portion of the town; immediately after that fire was seen in the northwestern part of the city. \* \* \* I saw various of the soldiers with bottles with some inflammable material—I supposed it to be turpentine—with which they made fire balls and started the fire in buildings in that way. My father's house was burned by them after having escaped the general conflagration. It was a fireproof building and had escaped the flames. I saw them fire furniture in the house, turn over the piano, tables, chairs, and starting the fire from lace curtains, etc."

#### WITH THE CONSENT OF THEIR OFFICERS

The whole testimony given by this witness, and by the last, is valuable, but it is too long to be inserted here. All, however, will go before the mixed commission.

Joseph Samson swears: "I saw colonels and captains with their soldiers while they were pillaging; and I saw no effort made by them to put a stop to these acts."

John A. Civil swears: "I saw United States soldiers, officers being present with them, put fire to houses."

I will not weary your readers by giving all the testimony in my hands, going to disprove the statements of Sherman; and I dismiss this portion of the subject, quoting only one more affidavit bearing upon the subject:

"South Carolina, Chester district: Personally appeared before me this 24th day of May, 1866, William Thompson, citizen of the State and district aforesaid, and swore that he was a resident of Columbia during February, 1865, witnessed the entry of United States forces under General Sherman, and that there was no fire in the city at or before that time. That the fire commenced at 8 o'clock p. m. on Bridge Street; that between 10 and 11 o'clock p. m. three rockets were thrown up, and immediately the flames broke out all over the city. Deponent was a fireman and, together with other firemen, endeavored to check and extinguish the flames, but the hose of their engine was cut and pierced by axes, bayonets, and other instruments in the hands of the Federal soldiers, so that the engines were rendered useless. Deponent further stated that his house was burned by two Federal soldiers, who repeatedly said, 'The d——d town ought to be burned,' and that it was always their intention to burn it.

"WM. THOMPSON.

"Sworn to before me this 24th day of May, 1866.

"GILES J. PATTERSON."

The documents which have been given prove how unreliable are Sherman's statements, for they show that no cotton was on fire when he took possession of the city; that his own men fired the cotton; that the firemen of the place extinguished the flames in the first instance; and that their engines were rendered useless by the Federals. He is singularly unfortunate in his assertion—that is, if he regards it as a misfortune to be unable to tell the truth about this matter. Proceeding to the next paragraph in his report, we have the ensuing: "Before one single public building had been fired by order the smoldering fires set by Hampton's order were rekindled by the wind and communicated to the buildings around." The affidavits already given show what truth is in this sentence: "I disclaim on the part of my army any agency in this fire, but on the contrary claim that we saved what of Columbia remains unconsumed and without hesitation charge Gen. Wade Hampton with having burned his own city of Columbia."

In addition to the proofs already given to refute this assertion, I add the following, feeling sure that no comment of mine is necessary. If human testimony can establish any fact, it will prove in this case that the city was destroyed by the Federal soldiers in direct violation of the promise, made by Sherman to the mayor, of protection. The first paper submitted is the affidavit of the mayor of Columbia, and this is given in full, as his official position not

only enabled him to speak authoritatively but entitles his statement to greater credit. The assertions of the chief officer of the city, given under the solemn sanction of an oath, should surely carry conviction to all unprejudiced minds. He speaks of what he saw and was cognizant of, and I ask special attention to his declarations:

MAYOR GOODWIN'S TESTIMONY

"Two or three days previous to the surrender of the city of Columbia it was under martial law, and General Law was commander of the post, with W. B. Stanley and myself assistants. On the 16th of February, 1865, the enemy appeared on the Lexington side of the river, and early in the day commenced shelling the city, and continued until night without ever demanding a surrender, all of our women and children and aged citizens exposed to their fire. That night about 9 o'clock General Beauregard informed me that he would evacuate the city early next morning, and that I must take charge. On the morning of the 17th at day dawn there was an explosion at the Charleston depot (from accident) that aroused everyone. I was summoned to the town hall in order to prepare for surrendering the city. In consulting with several aldermen, we determined to raise the white flag over the market steeple. Whilst preparing to do so, General Hampton sent me word not to do so until he gave me further orders. Between 8 and 9 o'clock he rode up and said that I now could proceed, told me where I would meet the enemy, and gave me some advice how to proceed. Whilst sitting on his horse he observed some cotton piled not far off in the middle of the street. He advised me to put a guard over it, saying some careless ones by smoking might set it afire, and in so doing would endanger the city. From that hour I saw nothing more of General Hampton until the war was over, and have every reason to believe that he left the city very soon afterwards. In company with three of the aldermen, viz, Messrs. McKenzie, Bates, and Stork, I went in a carriage with a white flag and met the enemy near Broad River. The first general officer we met was Colonel Stone (acting brigadier); he accepted the surrender and said he would proceed with us and take possession, guaranteeing protection until General Sherman arrived. I requested him to send a letter to the general, when he ordered a courier and sent immediately, saying the general was on the other side of the river. Between 11 and 12 o'clock they marched into the city and commenced, as soon as they arrived in Main Street (in conjunction with the negroes), to break open the stores. When they arrived opposite the town hall a regiment halted, and from that regiment guards were sent to all who desired them; but I think to little purpose, for many of the citizens would send word back to us, saying send others, for those that were sent were as bad as the other soldiers.

"I was compelled to be most of my time from home, and my house was completely stripped before the fire. The first time I saw General Sherman was between 2 and 3 o'clock in the evening, nearly opposite the town hall. I went out and spoke to him. He said he had received my letter and that it would be all right; asked me for a house, to which I sent a servant with him. He asked me to come around in the course of the evening to see him. I went around very soon afterwards; found him very polite and courteous, promising protection to our city. He got me to take a walk with him, and introduced to him a new and old acquaintance. On our return about sundown when parting he said, 'Go home and rest assured that your city will be as secure in my hands as if you had control!' He then stopped me and asked the condition of our fire engine and waterworks. I replied that they were all in good order; he said he was pleased to hear it, for he was compelled to burn some of the public buildings, and in doing so he did not wish to destroy one particle of private property. 'This evening,' he said, 'was too windy to do anything.' On my arrival home about dusk three rockets went up in front of my house—red, blue, and white. At that time there was a very quiet and good soldier sitting in my piazza; he jumped up and exclaimed, 'My God, is it coming to this!' My wife asked him what it meant; he made no reply and walked off. In 15 minutes afterwards there was a cry of fire on Main Street, near Janney's. I went there and worked some time until I was informed that the city was being set on fire in many places by soldiers with torches. Our engines were broken and our hose cut, and our city, by 3 o'clock, in ashes. I saw very few drunken soldiers that night. Many sober soldiers that appeared to sympathize with our people told me that the fate and doom of Columbia was common talk around their camp fires ever since they left Savannah. The next morning I was suffering very much from an inflamed eye caused by a spark of fire. That night General

Sherman sent for me. I went to see him about 1 o'clock. He met me very cordially, and said he regretted very much that our city was burnt, and that it was my fault. I asked him how. He said, 'In suffering ardent spirits to be left in the city after it was evacuated,' saying, 'Who could command drunken soldiers?' There was no allusion made to General Hampton, to accident, or to cotton. It is perfectly absurd in charging General Hampton with the buring of Columbia. Every man living in the city was his admirer and friend, and he knew it would impoverish them and their children and bring us all near to starvation and ruin. The soldiers of General Sherman's army burnt Columbia.

T. J. GOODWYN,

*"Late Mayor of the City of Columbia, S. C.*

"Sworn to before me, 3d November, 1866.

D. B. MILLER, C. C. P.,  
*"Ex officio Magistrate."*

#### PREMEDITATED DESTRUCTION

Though it is scarcely necessary to produce further testimony, it may be as well to place so much on the record, and of such a character, that this vexed question may be settled beyond any possibility of a doubt. With this view I shall quote various affidavits bearing not only on the particular point under discussion, but upon the general subject of the destruction of Columbia. I have proved that every assertion made by Sherman in his official report, so far as they have been quoted here, is false, and I shall now prove not only that his troops burned the city but that the destruction of it was premeditated. The first paper to which attention is asked is the affidavit of Edwin J. Scott, one of the most prominent and worthy citizens of Columbia. As his statement is too long to be inserted entire, extracts are taken from it. I regret that space can not be found for the whole of it:

"I asked Colonel Stone whether private property would be respected in the city. He replied in these words: 'Private property will be respected. We are not savages. If you let us alone, we will let you alone.' He looked and spoke like a gentleman, and I believed him. Others in my hearing received the same assurances. \* \* \* I neither saw any fire nor heard any alarm when at Main Street, though there were crowds of soldiers and citizens in every direction, and I passed within 200 feet of the cotton. \* \* \* I met Colonel Stone, whose word had been so solemnly pledged for the protection of property in the morning. To him I stated that a large number of boxes, trunks, and packages, belonging to private individuals, and containing property and papers of great value, were in the vaults of the bank, while the apartments overhead and in the rear were occupied by women and children, with their furniture, food, clothes, etc., for which I begged that a guard might be sent. But though standing idle in the crowd, he turned me off with the remark that he had no time to attend to me. The street was by this time so thronged with drunken and disorderly soldiers that it seemed impossible to get through them, and I proceeded around the square to reach Nicholson's Hotel, where Major Jenkins, the provost marshal, was said to be quartered. I found that officer surrounded by many of our citizens and some ladies, all anxiously seeking protection. As soon as his attention could be gained, I made a hasty statement of the condition of things at the bank, and appealed to him for a guard for the family and property. His answer was, 'I can not undertake to protect private property.' \* \* \* There certainly was no fire at sunset and for some time previous, when these scenes were enacting in that part of the street where the cotton was burning in the forenoon for it contained more men than I have ever seen in the same space, either before or since; yet there was no alarm or appearance of fire. \* \* \* But for a change of wind just before day, all that portion of the city where I reside would have been destroyed. \* \* \* At Colonel Duncan's house we were introduced to General Sherman. He referred to the burning of the city, admitting that it was done by his troops, but excusing them because, as he alleged, they had been made drunk by our citizens. \* \* \* He never mentioned or alluded in any way to General Hampton or the cotton, nor gave the slightest intimation that they were instrumental in the destruction of the city. \* \* \* At that time the universal testimony of our people was that Sherman's troops burnt the place, and although they left here loaded with plunder from the houses they had destroyed, not one of them, so far as I have ever heard, was punished, tried, arrested, or even questioned for his conduct

whilst in the city. Since then I have been in daily intercourse with all classes in and about Columbia, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, white and black, yet I have not met with a single person who attributed that calamity to any other cause. If a transaction that occurred in the presence of forty or fifty thousand people can be successfully falsified, then all human evidence is worthless and all history may be regarded as a collection of fables."

#### OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS APPLYING THEIR TORCHES

I present now the deposition of Rowland Keenan, another old and worthy citizen: "I am a resident of Columbia and was present at the burning of Columbia on the 17th of February, 1865. I saw, during that burning, soldiers in the uniform of the United States setting fire to buildings in Cotton Town. At that time there were United States officers mingling in the crowd, and they made no effort to prevent the burning."

Ptolemy Chambers, being duly sworn, depose and says: "I was a resident of Columbia on the 17th of February, 1865. On that night I saw, early in the evening, Federal soldiers, commanded by an officer, setting fire to houses in the upper part of the city of Columbia."

Charles F. Jackson swears: "I was on Main Street, in the city of Columbia, on the occasion of the entry of the main army of General Sherman on the 17th of February, 1865. On the night following I witnessed United States soldiers with balls of combustible material lighting them and flinging them about the streets and over and under the houses, Federal officers at the same time mingling in the crowd. I saw a United States officer, who stated to me that the burning of Columbia was premeditated. He further stated that any statement made by General Sherman to the contrary was a lie."

I ask now to give the affidavit of Mrs. Agnes Law, which from its directness, its simplicity, and its pathos, must command credence:

"STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

"Richland District:

"I am 72 years old. I have lived in this town 48 years. My dwelling house was at the corner of Main and Laurel Streets, a brick house, three stories, slate roof, with large gardens on two sides. When Columbia was burned, my sister, Mrs. James Scott, was with me; also a niece of mine, recently confined, who had not yet ventured out of the house. When General Sherman took possession I got four guards. They were well behaved and sober men. I gave them supper. One lay down on the sofa, the others walked about. When the city began to burn I wished to move my furniture out. They objected; said my house was in no danger; it was fireproof. I insisted on moving out, but one replied, 'If I were as safe till the end of the war as this house is from fire, I would be satisfied.' Not long afterwards these guards themselves took lighted candles from the mantelpiece and went upstairs. At the same time other soldiers crowded into the house. My sister followed them upstairs, but came down very soon to say, 'They are setting the curtains on fire.' Soon the whole house was in a blaze. Some of the soldiers put boxes of matches under the bookcase in the parlor. Some put these boxes into wheat straw which I had under my back store. When those who had set fire upstairs came down they said to me, 'Old woman, if you don't want to burn up with your house, you'd better get out of it!' My niece had been carried up to the Taylor House on Arsenal Hill. I went to the door to see if I could get any person I knew to assist me up there. I had been very sick, am liable to convulsions, and I could not walk alone. I could see no friend—only crowds of Federal soldiers. I was afraid I should fall on the street and be burned up in the flames of the houses blazing on both sides of the streets. I had to go alone. I spent that night at the Taylor House, which a Federal officer said should not be burned out of pity for my niece. The next two nights I passed in my garden without any shelter. Nothing was saved out of my house but one chair, two mattresses, and one large looking-glass. I have been over 50 years a member of the Presbyterian Church. I can not live long. I shall meet General Sherman and his soldiers at the bar of God. I give this testimony against them in full view of that dread tribunal.

"AGNES LAW.

"Sworn to before me this 6th day of June, 1886.

"D. B. MILLER, C. C. P.,  
*"Ex Officio Magistrate."*

It would be taxing the patience of your readers too severely to place before them any further evidence to show by whom Columbia was burned. There are many more affidavits, all going to show that this was done by the troops under command of General Sherman, but there surely has been given sufficient testimony to establish this fact. If the people who were rendered houseless by this act of barbarity are to be credited as to what they saw, no doubt can remain as to the authors of the great crime that laid the city in ashes. But as the statements of those unfortunate victims may not carry weight in loyal ears, let us see what is said relative to Sherman's conduct in South Carolina by Federal writers:

#### THE TESTIMONY OF "LOYAL" WITNESSES

The first author from whom I quote is Captain Conyngham, who accompanied the Federal Army in its march through the South. Speaking of Columbia, he says: "As soon as night set in there ensued a sad scene indeed. The suburbs were first set on fire, some assert by the burning cotton which the rebels had piled along the streets. Pillaging gangs soon fired the heart of the town, then entered the houses, in many instances carrying off articles of value. I trust I shall never witness such a scene again—drunken soldiers rushing from house to house, emptying them of their valuables, and then firing them. \* \* \* Officers and men revelling on wines and liquors until the burning houses buried them in their drunken orgies."

Describing the scenes along the line of march, the same writer says: "If a house was empty this was *prima facie* evidence that the owners were rebels, and all was sure to be consigned to the flames. If they remained at home, it was taken for granted that everyone in South Carolina was a rebel, and the chances were the place was consumed. \* \* \* The ruined homesteads of the Palmetto State will long be remembered. The Army might safely march the darkest night, the crackling pine woods shooting up their columns of flame, and the burning houses along the way would light it on. \* \* \* I hazard nothing in saying that three-fifths in value of the personal property of the counties we passed through were taken by Sherman's Army. The graves even were ransacked. The scenes I witnessed in Columbia were scenes that would have driven Alaric the Goth into frenzied ecstacies had he witnessed them. \* \* \* Besides compelling the enemy to evacuate Charleston, we destroyed Columbia, Orangeburg, and several other places."

This is pretty strong testimony to come from one who was a member of General Sherman's military family, as I believe Captain Conyngham to have been, and who thus had a full opportunity to witness the barbarous scenes he describes so graphically. Dismissing him, we will turn to Major Nichols, who was also on Sherman's staff, and hear what he has to say:

"The actual invasion of South Carolina has begun. The well-known sight of columns of black smoke meets our gaze again; this time houses are burning. Wherever our footsteps pass fire, ashes, and desolation fall in the path. \* \* \* In the record of great wars we read of vast armies marching through an enemy country, carrying death and destruction in their path; of villages burned, cities pillaged, a tribe or a nation swept out of existence. History, however, will be searched in vain for a parallel to the scattering and destructive efforts of this invasion of the Carolinas. Cotton gins, presses, factories, and mills were burned to the ground on every side; the head, center, and rear of our column might be traced by columns of smoke by day and the glare of fires by night."

Rebel writers could scarcely draw a darker picture or a truer one of the horrors perpetrated by the Federal soldiery than is given by these members of Sherman's staff.

#### THE MOST MONSTROUS BARBARITY OF A BARBAROUS MARCH

The following extract is taken from a work entitled "Ohio in the War," written by Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New York Tribune:

"When Sherman rode into Columbia piles of cotton which Wade Hampton had fired lay smoldering through the streets. \* \* \* The soldiers extinguished the fire, as they supposed, but at nightfall they broke out again, doubtless in one or two places, from the burning cotton; but, as if by concert, there suddenly came cries of alarm from a dozen different quarters. The city was on fire in as many places. \* \* \* Before morning a large portion of the

city was in ruins. Thus helpless women and children were suddenly made homeless in an hour, in the night, in the winter. It was the most monstrous barbarity of the barbarous march. There is no reason to think that General Sherman knew anything of the purpose to burn the city, which had been freely talked about among the soldiers through the afternoon; but there is reason to think that he knew well enough who did it, that he never rebuked it, and make no effort to punish it, except that he sought, indeed, to show that the enemy himself had burned his own city, not with malicious intent, but from folly and want of sense."

Yet in the same paragraph he admits everything, except the original starting of the first fire: "The officers and men not on duty, including the officers who had long been in prison there, may have assisted in spreading the fire after it once began and may have indulged in unconcealed joy at seeing the ruin of the capital of South Carolina."

Much more of such comments could be taken from this book, but this is sufficient, and with this I close the extracts from northern sources, though the field is ample. There is, however, one affidavit which should be placed on the record, as it may have peculiar weight with our northern brethren. It is that of William Beverly Nash, colored State senator, member of the convention which nominated General Grant for the Presidency, and a leader of the great Republican Party. The paper is as follows:

"STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

"Richland District:

"Personally appeared before me W. B. Nash, who, being duly sworn, says that he never made an affidavit in relation to the burning of Columbia; that he made a statement of the blowing up of the depot by accident and that a few bales of cotton were burned by private parties to an officer connected with the Freedmen's Bureau. Deponent further states that General Sherman, or men acting under his permission, burned the city of Columbia, and that General Hampton had nothing to do with the nefarious transaction.

"W. B. NASH.

"Sworn to before me this 21st day of May, A. D. 1866.

"W. B. JOHNSTON, *Magistrate.*"

Besides the evidence adduced to show by whom Columbia was burned much can be brought forward to prove that the destruction of the city was pre-meditated. Indeed, there is very strong reason to suppose that Sherman himself, in spite of his solemn declarations to the contrary, had not only determined to destroy the city but had expressed this determination. Certain it is that the fate of the place was discussed openly among his men long before its capture and its destruction predicted. The first paper bearing on this point to be submitted is the affidavit of R. Speer, which is subjoined:

SHERMAN'S INTENTIONS—"COLUMBIA SHALL BE BURNT"

"GEORGIA, Bartow County:

"Personally before me came Robert Speer, of said county and State, who being sworn deposes and says he is a citizen of said county and State, and resides near Eufaula, about 60 miles from Atlanta; that he was a citizen of said county and State at the time that Gen. W. T. Sherman made his raid through Georgia, and was taken a prisoner by Colonel Wilder, of General Sherman's command, and taken to his, the said Sherman's, headquarters at Kingston, Ga., and was severely catechised by the said Sherman. During the conversation had with him at his headquarters, General Sherman distinctly stated and avowed that the destruction with which he was then visiting the citizens of Georgia would be nothing to compare with what he had in store for the State of South Carolina; that looking upon her as an aggressor that he would 'grease that State over and burn it up'; that 'he would have her people howling after me (General Sherman) for bread. All he wanted was guns and men, and damned if he did not have them.' This statement can be abundantly corroborated by other witnesses.

"R. SPEER.

"Sworn to and subscribed before me this 12th day of October, A. D. 1868.

"J. A. A. BLACKBURN,  
"Attorney at Law."

This is rather an ugly record for General Sherman, and unfortunately for him there are others of the same kind. The following extracts are taken from depositions which are to go before the mixed commission:

Mr. John R. Nierne, the architect who designed the statehouse in Columbia, testifies as follows: "I was a resident of Columbia on the 17th of February, 1865, and on the evening of that day I met Captain Ritner, of the Seventy-seventh Illinois Regiment. I saw rockets going up and asked him the meaning of it. He drew me aside, so my wife could not hear it, and said: 'Major, this is the signal for the burning of your city.' The brigade that set fire to the town marched past my house with the implements in their possession for setting fire."

Mrs. Rachel Susan Cheves, widow of the late John R. Cheves, testifies as follows: "I resided in Savannah, Ga., at the time of the occupation of said city by the forces of the United States under General Sherman in the winter of 1864 and 1865. I was warned by two officers of General Sherman's staff, Colonel Poe and Major Dayton, not to go to Columbia, as they intended to burn it. I think his words were that they would pass through South Carolina with the torch as well as the sword. These officers were quartered with me. I had asked to be passed through the lines in a flag-of-truce boat. They warned me as an act of kindness not to go, as they intended to burn every town through which they passed in South Carolina. I told them I intended to go to Columbia, and they said I had better stay where I was, as Sherman intended to burn Columbia."

This testimony is corroborated by that of Mrs. Langdon Cheves, who was present when the conversation referred to took place.

Mrs. Anna W. Barclay, the wife of the late British consul at New York, testifies that she was at the house of Miss Telfair, in Savannah, in December, 1864, and heard General Sherman in a conversation refer to the city of Columbia. He remarked that his course through Georgia had been marked by fire, and that through South Carolina it should be marked by fire and blood, and in his own words: "As to that hotbed of secession, Columbia, I shall lay it in ashes." Upon the expression of horror and regret of some persons present, he repeated his assertion, "Columbia shall be burnt."

Mr. William H. Orchard, of Columbia, testified that on the night of the 17th of February a squad of Federal Cavalry came up to his house, broke open his smokehouse and took therefrom whatever they desired. "When they were leaving one of them turned back and said: 'You appear to have a large family here and you are a clever kind of man, let me give you a little advice; if you have anything to conceal, conceal it at once, for before morning this damned town will be all in ashes.' My reply was, 'Is that so?' He said, 'Yes; and if you look out a little after dark you will see three rockets going up from the other side of the town, and if you have not taken my advice before then it will be too late.' I reported it to my wife and we immediately set about saving a few things to escape with, and while engaged in so doing we observed the rockets, as was predicted, and within 20 minutes of that time I counted eight fires in different directions. I saw hundreds of Sherman's men setting fire to the town by means of camphire balls prepared for that purpose. There was a large box of them concealed in my yard early in the day. At night they took them out and made use of them. I saw them set fire to Phillipps's auction room and to my house. I attempted to put it out but was knocked down by a Federal soldier, who told me I was a damned fool for making any such effort; that my house was to be burned anyhow, and I had better save myself. There were a great many Federal officers of all grades on the streets mingling with the soldiers."

#### A HINT FROM HEADQUARTERS BORNE IN MIND

It appears to me that the charge of premeditated destruction of Columbia against Sherman and his men is as clearly sustained by the evidence as that of having burned the city, but as every link in the chain is important, one more may be added, which shall be taken from a high official source—the report of the committee of Congress upon the conduct of the war. From this report the following extracts are made. The first is from a letter of General Halleck, Chief of Staff in Washington, to General Sherman: Should you capture Charleston, I hope by some accident the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be thrown upon its site it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession."

Was a more monstrous, cold-blooded, and barbarous order ever given, or given in a meaner way? "I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed!" It fell upon willing and appreciative ears, for the reply is characterized by the same spirit that marks the order: "I will bear in mind," says Sherman, "your hint as to Charleston, and don't think salt will be necessary. When I move, the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them naturally, into Charleston first; and if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work up pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance on South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her. I look upon Columbia as quite as bad as Charleston.

If any reader is curious to follow up the history of the events which this correspondence foreshadows, I refer him to the Conduct of the War, where he will find some singular and suggestive coincidences. One of the most remarkable is that the very last order issued by Sherman before the surrender of the city was to Howard to throw the Fifteenth Corps into Columbia, and another is that the town was destroyed while in the possession of that corps. They did, indeed, "do their work up pretty well." "Salt was not necessary." These were, indeed, strange coincidences—almost enough so to make any impartial jury decide, if the question was left to them, that orders had been given from headquarters for the destruction of Columbia, and that the very instruments of its destruction had been designated. Any other incendiary would be convicted of arson on proof as strong as these letters and the events following them furnish.

#### SUPPRESSED REPORTS—A SIGNIFICANT SILENCE

Another significant fact in connection with those events deserving notice as having an important bearing in determining who is responsible for the burning of Columbia: In the Conduct of the War there will be found on almost every page of that portion relating to the march of Sherman through the Southern States letters, reports, and dispatches from him giving accounts of his movements and progress. The reader is requested to turn to this volume to verify this assertion for himself. The order to Howard, to which reference has already been made, is dated, if my memory serves me right, on the 16th of February, and the next communication from Sherman bears date, I think, on the 21st. Now, how does it happen that so long an interval passed without any reports to headquarters in Washington? And, stranger still, how is it that no reference at all is made to the capture and destruction of Columbia? Is this omission not passing strange? Can any sane man be persuaded that no mention was made by Sherman in his reports to Washington of the surrender and fate of the capital of South Carolina? To me it seems as though some letters have been suppressed because they told an ugly story of Columbia. If Sherman is as anxious as he appears to be to relieve himself from the odium attaching to the burning of that place, let him produce all his correspondence, or at least let him bring creditable witnesses to prove that no letters have been withheld. Until he does this a grave suspicion must rest on him as being guilty not only of the suggestio falsi but of the suppressio veri.

General Howard's name having been mentioned, reminds me of what had been nearly forgotten, that he is himself a most important witness in this case. It is unfortunate for him that he has been remembered, for I am afraid that even his eminent piety has not been able to keep him from falling into some of the strange inaccuracies and curious discrepancies which mark the statements of his chief. But he shall be dealt with as lightly as the circumstances allow, and I shall expose his slight flights into the realms of fancy only so far as his testimony bears on this case.

In December, 1866, or January, 1867, Gen. O. O. Howard came into the executive office of Governor Orr, in Columbia, accompanied by Gen. R. K. Scott, and there found Governor Orr, Gen. John S. Preston, Mr. De Fontaine, the secretary of the governor, and myself. In the course of the conversation that ensued the question of the burning of the city came up. General Howard expressed sorrow at its destruction, and said that he had nothing to do with it; that he had done all he could to prevent it, and that he regretted it greatly. He then used the following language, which I committed to writing, and left the paper with Dr. D. H. Trezevant, of Columbia, who had prepared for the press some articles relating to the destruction of the city. The memorandum is as follows:

## GEN. O. O. HOWARD ON THE STAND

COLUMBIA, January 9, 1867.

Gen. O. O. Howard stated in the presence of Governor Orr, General Preston, and myself that certainly no one was authorized to state that their (our) troops did not set fires in this town, for he himself saw them doing so.

WADE HAMPTON.

This acknowledgment was so explicit, and as he was in command of the troops in the city, so conclusive, that I looked to his evidence before the mixed commission with some interest, supposing that he might give under oath the same statement that he had voluntarily made. It did not surprise me, however, to find that his memory has proved exceedingly treacherous, and has led him into making assertions totally at variance with those stated by myself as coming from him in our interview. In his testimony given in Washington on the 10th of December, 1872, we find the ensuing:

"Q. Have you ever met Gen. Wade Hampton since the war?—A. Yes, sir.

"Q. Have you ever discussed with him the subject of the capture and destruction of Columbia?—A. I had a conversation with him on that subject.

"Q. Was anyone present at the period of this conversation?—A. Yes, sir; I think it was Gen. R. K. Scott; some one was there.

"Q. No one else?—A. I do not remember.

"Q. You were not aware that there was a newspaper reporter taking down the conversation at the time?—A. No, sir; I was not; if I had, I would not have opened my mouth.

"Q. Do you know Mr. De Fontaine?—A. No, sir; I never saw him, to my knowledge.

"Q. Do you remember what you said in the course of that conversation?—A. No, sir; I don't recall it; but I feel perfectly sure that I said almost what I have said in my official report. \* \* \*.

"Q. Did you admit or state in the course of that conversation who destroyed Columbia on the night of February 17, 1865?—A. Yes, sir; *I think I stated that the Confederate troops set it on fire.*"

The last answer is italicized to draw special attention to it. Upon reading it I called upon Governor Orr and General Preston for their recollection of this conversation and received the following answers:

WASHINGTON, December 21, 1872.

DEAR SIR: I have received your letter of the 21st instant, inquiring as to my recollection of what occurred in the executive office in Columbia in 1866 or 1867 between yourself and General Howard, of the United States Army, as to the burning of Columbia. I do not remember all that was said, but General Howard said in substance that the city was burned by United States troops; that he saw them fire many houses; and that he tried to arrest the conflagration; and that he regretted the destruction of the city. Without undertaking to give his words, the foregoing contains the substance of what he said relative to the destruction of Columbia.

Very respectfully yours,

JAMES L. ORR.

Gen. WADE HAMPTON, Baltimore, Md.

COLUMBIA, January 2, 1873.

MY DEAR SIR: I have your note asking me to state my recollection of the conversation between Gen. Wade Hampton and General Howard in presence of Governor Orr and myself and others. The substance of the conversation was that General Howard stated and reiterated that no one was authorized to say that the Federal troops did not burn Columbia, for he saw them doing so in numerous instances, in various localities of the town. The conversation was almost exclusively between General Hampton and General Howard, the other persons present saying but very little.

Very truly yours,

JNO S. PRESTON,

Doctor TREZEVANT.

Mr. Felix G. De Fontaine, in a late examination before this commission, deposes as follows:

"Q. Please state if you were ever present at an interview between Generals Hampton and Howard, and, if yea, when and where, as near as you can state.—A. I was present at such an interview. It occurred in the executive office of James L. Orr, governor of South Carolina, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in the year 1867.

"Q. At that interview, did you hear General Howard distinctly admit that the firing and destruction of Columbia were the work of the United States troops?—A. I did hear General Howard concede that the origin of the fire and the outrages perpetrated in the city were the results of the presence of the United States troops. Subsequent to this interview I suggested to General Hampton the propriety of making a record of the fact and its attendant circumstances. I made such a record myself. In explanation of the first part of my present answer I mean to convey the idea that the destruction was caused by the United States troops."

As confirmatory of the statements of these gentlemen, I give the language used by General Howard to the Reverend Mr. Shand, an Episcopal clergyman of Columbia, a man of the highest character and purest piety. The house of this venerable man was burned, and he himself was brutally treated as he was trying to save the communion service of his church, an effort in which he failed, as he was robbed of it. He states that General Howard said to him: "Though General Sherman did not order the burning of the town, yet somehow or other the men had taken up the idea that if they destroyed the capital of South Carolina it would be peculiarly gratifying to General Sherman."

If General Howard's evidence given under oath is true, it is strange how his statements to myself were so completely misunderstood by the gentlemen above referred to; and stranger still, that all three of these gentlemen, one in Columbia, another in Washington, and the third in New York, should have concurred so closely in their accounts of his first conversation. But strange things do happen when any United States officer who was present is questioned about the burning of Columbia. The smoke on that occasion must have blinded their eyes, and the fire must have confused their intellects. They surely do not wish to conceal the truth, for are they not "all honorable men"?

#### MISSTATEMENTS UNDER OATH

This is but a portion of the vast mass of evidence which can be brought to show not only that Columbia was destroyed by the Federal troops, but that this destruction was determined on and freely spoken of in advance of their capture of the city. The authorities given are from Northern as well as Southern sources, and the case might safely be left at this point, as fully made out. But in order to remove every possible doubt, it may be well to examine the testimony recently given by Sherman, under oath, before the mixed commission. From this source alone Sherman can be convicted by his own statements and by the evidence of his officers of the most palpable and glaring inaccuracies, not to use a harsher term. We will select a few specimens. On page 65, in his deposition, we find the following:

"Q. Please state where you were when the fire broke out?—A. The fire was burning a day and a half or two days before we got into Columbia, but was merely confined to the big bridge across the river, the depot known as the Charleston depot, close by the bridge, and the depot on the opposite side of the town known as the Charlotte depot, and cotton piled up along the various streets, which was burning at least 12 hours before any soldier belonging to my army had gotten within the limits of the city of Columbia."

Now, without discussing the question how he could know so positively as to be able to swear to the fact that cotton was burning at least 12 hours before any of his troops entered the city, we will turn to the proofs to show his misstatements. The bridge across the Congaree is 1 mile from the Capitol, and at a still greater distance from the business portion of the city. By some misapprehension of orders this bridge was burned during the night of the 15th. This can scarcely be called a fire in the city, as the bridge is outside of the corporate limits, the western terminus being in a different district—Lexington—from the one in which Columbia is situated, which is Richland. Now, as to the other points at which Sherman swears that "fires were burning a day and a

half or two days" before his entry. The question as to cotton having been then on fire has been already settled by the affidavits heretofore given. As to the two depots, one was blown up accidentally, as stated by General Beauregard, and was thus fired about 4 o'clock of the morning on which Sherman entered. The testimony already given proves this. The Charlotte depot was fired by orders from headquarters about half past 9 or 10 o'clock a. m. of the same day. These are grave errors to be sworn to before a high tribunal which has to decide grave questions of international importance. On page 67 Sherman uses the following language: "I always supposed that it (the fire) originated in that burning pile of cotton which I saw with my own eyes." If he only supposed this, why has he again and again solemnly declared that the city was destroyed by the fire spreading from that "burning pile" which he saw "with his own eyes"? Further on, he says under oath: "There is no supposition about it at all." On the same page he swears that he entered the city "about 11 o'clock" that morning; on page 80, "somewhere between 11 and 12 o'clock."

#### SHERMAN VERSUS SHERMAN

Now, to rebut that statement, let us call himself to the stand, as a witness of unblemished character and unimpeachable veracity, and we shall then have a new case before the public, if not before the courts—Sherman versus Sherman. In a letter from the defendant in this new case to Benjamin Rawls, of Columbia, which can be found in the published proceedings of Congress somewhere about April, 1866, the following language is used: *"The citizens of Columbia set fire to thousands of bales of cotton rolled out into the streets, and which were burning before we entered Columbia. I, myself, was in the city as early as 9 o'clock, and I saw these fires. I saw in your Columbia paper the printed order of Gen. Wade Hampton that on the approach of the Yankee army all the cotton should thus be burned."* (The italics are mine.)

Here is a new version of the story. *"The citizens set fire to thousands of bales."* It seems that I did not set the cotton on fire after all. *"I, myself, was in the city as early as 9 o'clock."* How, then, does he subsequently swear that he did not enter it until between 11 or 12? Let us refer to the affidavit of Sherman given in the city of Cairo, Egypt, on the 30th of March, 1872, and see what he swears to then. On page 5 he swears as follows: "Colonel Stone's brigade \* \* \* were crossed in the night of the 16th-17th of February, and were the first troops to enter Columbia. The rest of the right wing had to await the construction of the pontoon bridge over Broad River, some 3 or 4 miles northwest of Columbia. *About 11 a. m. I led my horse across (the first to cross the bridge).*"

He writes to Rawls that he himself was "in the city as early as 9 o'clock"; he swears in Egypt that he crossed the bridge 3 or 4 miles from Columbia "about 11 o'clock a. m.;" and he deposes under oath at Washington that he entered the city "somewhere between 11 and 12 o'clock." These are strange inaccuracies, and there are still others. After swearing that the cotton had been "burning at least 12 hours before any soldiers belonging to my army had gotten within the limits of the city," he makes the following answer to a question on page 86:

"1. How long had this cotton been burning before you reached Columbia?—A. I can not tell, of course."

Verily, there is profound wisdom in the homely proverb which says that a certain class of people should have good memories. On page 79 we find the ensuing:

"Q. You did not promise that private property should be protected?—A. Never."

The mayor of the city gives a different version in his affidavit, as do many of the citizens. On page 97, in speaking of the shelling his troops had met with, which he attributed to me, the following question and answer are found:

"Q. You had no knowledge that Wade Hampton did it; you only learned it from general report?—A. Wade Hampton was in supreme command. Beauregard was in town, but had left. Wade Hampton was in town then. I hold him responsible for everything that was done in defense of Columbia."

It has been shown that I never was in "supreme command"; that I had no command when this shelling occurred; and that General Beauregard remained in the city until the morning of the 17th of February, so there are three misstatements in one short sentence. As to the "bombarding," which seems to have

excited Sherman's feelings and shaken his nerves so greatly, it was clearly a legitimate act of warfare, and my only regret regarding it is that it did not kill him and all his men. On pages 97 and 98 he swears that "Broad and Saluda Rivers were left almost entirely undefended. \* \* \* We met with no resistance at Saluda, and comparatively none at Broad River."

## CONTRADICTED BY HIS OFFICERS

To refute this statement I quote the evidence given by Gen. O. O. Howard in his deposition. He is not brought on the stand as a witness whose evidence can be relied on implicitly, even when it is given as in this case on oath; but when he swears to one thing, and Sherman to the exact reverse, one at least, if not both, must have sworn falsely. In his examination at Washington, we find, on page 25, the following:

"Q. After you crossed the Broad did you meet any resistance?—A. Oh, yes; our troops did.

"Q. After getting the whole army across?—A. Yes; a very severe resistance, indeed, until they were dislodged.

"Q. Was this resistance in the night or morning?—A. It was all night, and from daylight until about 9 o'clock."

Generals Sherman and Howard can settle this question of veracity between themselves as they choose; we may safely conclude that it will lead to no bloodshed. Turning to page 105 we have another assertion of Sherman, which is contradicted by the deposition of another of his officers:

"Q. Did you authorize the burning of cotton on the 18th February in Columbia?—A. No, sir; it was already burned.

"Q. No; I beg to differ with you on that point.—A. It was either all burned or burning."

As an answer to this I beg to refer to the testimony of Gen. Charles R. Woods, who commanded the First Division, Fifteenth Corps. In his deposition, given on the 16th December, we have the following on page 197:

"Q. Do you know anything about Federal soldiers firing any property in Columbia?—A. I do.

"Q. State what you know on the subject.—A. After the city was burned I sent an aide to see what kind of cotton was piled up in the streets outside of the burned district; he reported to me some 1,200 bales. I sent my provost marshal. I think it was the second day after the fire, and had that cotton burned."

Rebel testimony may have but little weight in loyal ears, but when two of Sherman's general officers swear to statements at variance to his under oath, some one of the parties must have been giving a free rein to his imagination.

It may be unnecessary to follow Sherman further through the tortuous and crooked paths he has pursued. Unimpeachable testimony has been given to prove how false he has been throughout, and he has even borne witness against himself. The case against him has been fully made out and might safely be left here. But as I desire not only to make my vindication complete but to close forever this controversy, into which I have been reluctantly drawn to protect my reputation against the base and cowardly assaults made on it, some additional facts and documents shall be produced. These will show, first, that immediately after the destruction of Columbia Sherman did not pretend to deny that his men were the cause of it, and, secondly, why he uttered the calumny against myself. The first paper given is an affidavit of the mayor of the city:

## THE CHARGE AGAINST HAMPTON AN AFTERTHOUGHT

"SOUTH CAROLINA,  
"City of Columbia:

"Personally appeared before me the Hon. Thomas Jefferson Goodwyn, who, being duly sworn, deposeth and saith that he was mayor of the city of Columbia during the month of February, 1865; that the city was occupied and burned by General Sherman's army on the 17th of February, 1865; that on Sunday the 19th he called upon General Sherman, then in Columbia, and was accompanied by the following gentlemen: Rev. N. Talley, Reverend Mr. Connor, Rev. Thomas Rayner, Dr. C. H. Miot, W. M. Martin, Mr. J. J. McCarter, and Edward J. Scott \* \* \*. General Sherman was in good spirits and courteous. A conversation ensued in relation to the burning of the city, in the course of which

General Sherman distinctly admitted that his troops had burned the city, but excused them because, as he alleged, our citizens had given them liquor and made them drunk, whereas they ought to have destroyed the liquor in the city upon the entry of the army. He did not mention or allude to General Hampton or the cotton that had been fired in the streets, nor did he give the slightest intimation nor make any assertion that the firing of the city was caused by any order of General Hampton to burn the cotton. General Howard, General Blair, and other Federal officers were present at this interview, which lasted more than half an hour.

"T. J. GOODWYN,  
*"Late Mayor of Columbia, S. C.*

"Sworn to before me this 24th March, 1866.

"D. B. MILLER, *Ex officio Magistrate.*"

Extracts shall now be given from a letter of the Rev. A. Toomer Porter, an Episcopal clergyman, who was in Columbia when the city was destroyed, dated:

CHARLESTON, August 8, 1866.

Mr. WM. J. RIVERS,  
*Columbia.*

MY DEAR SIR: In reply to yours of the 3d, received on the 5th, I will cheerfully comply with the request of the committee appointed by the citizens of Columbia to collect testimony concerning the destruction of Columbia, though the necessity seems passing away, inasmuch as General Sherman appears to be discarding the absurd position he took relative to the author of that fearful catastrophe. In a late speech, as reported, he seems to admit that he did it and that it was all right \* \* \*. While looking at the fire and thinking how much that was valuable was then being consumed, an officer of the United States Army rode up and spoke to me. We had not exchanged many words when General Sherman walked up, still in citizens' clothes. He came from the direction of his headquarters. In the bright light of the burning city he recognized me and remarked: "Good evening, Mr. Porter, this is a horrible sight." "Yes": I replied, "when you reflect that women and children are the victims." He said, "Your governor is responsible for this." "How so?" I asked. "Who ever heard," he said, "of an evacuated city to be left a depot of liquor for an army to occupy? I found 120 casks of whisky in one cellar. Your governor being a lawyer, or a judge, or something, refused to have it destroyed, as it was private property, and now my men have gotten drunk; they have got beyond my control and this is the result." \* \* \*. Other cities have been burned, greater losses of property have been met with; to me the burning was the least of the horrors. The brutal conduct of that remorseless throng, drunk and sober, officers and men, with but few exceptions; the fearful, sickening agony of suspense and anticipation, the horrible dread of the fate of their helpless women—these things made up the anguish of that awful night; a disgrace to any country and any age, save of barbarism, the blackest page in the dark record of the war. It is due for me to say that I was in Main Street when the first bale of cotton took fire, and it occurred from the pipes or cigars of the soldiers who had taken their seats upon it, and the whole of the cotton was burned up early in the day, while the fire commenced at night. General Hampton had told me at daylight in answer to the question whether he was going to burn the cotton: "No; if I do so, the wind is high and it might catch something and give Sherman an excuse to burn this town."

Yours very respectfully and truly,

A. TOOMER PORTER.

#### ROBBERY AND MURDER AUTHORIZED

As General Sherman has remarked in his testimony that "the value of money is nothing compared with the elucidation of historic truth," it may be well to turn aside for a moment to contribute somewhat to this elucidation in a matter that does not strictly come within the scope of the present discussion. On page 70 of his deposition he says: "\* \* \* Private soldiers were forbidden to take any article of private property or to enter the houses of any of the people; even officers sent in command of foraging parties were only permitted to take what was needed by the army." To elucidate "historic truth," let me quote an extract from a speech delivered at Lancaster, Ohio, by General Sherman, which may be the one alluded to by Mr. Porter: "So, soldiers, when we marched through and conquered the country of the rebels, we became owners of all they

had; and I don't want you to be troubled in your consciences for taking, while on our great march, the property of the rebels. They forfeited their right to it; and I, being agent for the Government to which I belonged, gave you authority to keep all the quartermasters couldn't take possession of or didn't want." I fear General Sherman has a higher regard for "historic" than personal truth. It would be easy from the great mass of testimony in my hands to bring other evidence to show that Sherman did not at first deny that his men burned Columbia, but what has been given is sufficient, and I turn to the cause which prompted him to charge me with this atrocity. Soon after the city was burned a communication of an extraordinary character was addressed to me by Sherman, and was immediately replied to by myself. This correspondence is subjoined:

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,  
*In the Field, February 24, 1865.*

Lieut. Gen. WADE HAMPTON,  
*Commanding Cavalry Force, Confederate States Army.*

GENERAL: It is officially reported to me that our foraging parties are murdered after capture and labeled, "Death to all foragers." One instance of a lieutenant and 7 men near Chesterville, and another of 20 near a ravine, 80 rods from the main road, about 3 miles from Feasterville. I have ordered a similar number of prisoners in our hands to be disposed of in like manner.

I hold about 1,000 prisoners, captured in various ways, and can stand it as long as you; but I hardly think these murders are committed with your knowledge, and would suggest that you give notice to the people at large that every life taken by them simply results in the death of one of your Confederates.

Of course, you can not question my right to forage upon the country. It is a war right as old as history. The manner of exercising it varies with circumstances, and if the civil authorities will supply my requisitions I will forbid all foraging. But I find no civil authorities who can respond to calls for forage or provisions, and therefore must collect directly of the people. I have no doubt this is the occasion of much misbehavior on the part of our men, but I can not permit an enemy to judge or punish with wholesale murder.

Personally, I regret the bitter feelings engendered by this war, but they were to be expected, and I simply allege that those who struck the first blow, and made war inevitable, ought not, in fairness, to reproach us for the natural consequences. I merely assert our war right to forage, and my resolve to protect my foragers to the extent of life for life.

I am, with respect, your obedient servant,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Major General United States Army.*

▲ SCORCHING REJOINDER

HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD,  
*February 27, 1865.*

Maj. Gen. W. T. SHERMAN,  
*United States Army.*

GENERAL: Your communication of the 24th instant reached me to-day. In it you state that it has been officially reported that your foraging parties were murdered after capture, and you go on to say that you "had ordered a similar number of prisoners in our hands to be disposed of in like manner." That is to say, you have ordered a number of Confederate soldiers to be "murdered." You characterize your order in proper terms, for the public voice, even in your own country, where it seldom dares to express itself in vindication of truth, honor, or justice, will surely agree with you in pronouncing you guilty of murder, if your order is carried out.

Before dismissing this portion of your letter, I beg to assure you that for every soldier of mine "murdered" by you I shall have executed at once two of yours, giving in all cases, preference to any officers who may be in my hands.

In reference to the statement you made regarding the death of your foragers, I have only to say that I know nothing of it; that no orders given by me authorize the killing of prisoners after capture, and that I do not believe that my men killed any of yours except under circumstances in which it was perfectly legitimate and proper they should kill them.

It is a part of the system of the thieves whom you designate as your foragers to fire the dwellings of those citizens whom they have robbed.

To check this inhuman system, which is justly execrated by every civilized nation, I have directed my men to shoot down all of your men who are caught

burning houses. This order shall remain in force as long as you disgrace the profession of arms by allowing your men to destroy private dwellings.

You say that I can not, of course, question your right to forage upon the country. "It is a right as old as history." I do not, sir, question this right. But there is a right older even than this, and one more inalienable—the right that every man has to defend his home, and protect those who are dependent upon him. And from my heart I wish that every old man and boy in my country who can fire a gun would shoot down, as he would a wild beast, the men who are desolating their land, burning their houses, and insulting their women.

You are particular in defining and claiming "war rights." May I ask if you enumerate among them the right to fire upon a defenseless city without notice; to burn that city to the ground after it has been surrendered by the authorities, who claimed, though in vain, that protection which is always accorded in civilized warfare to noncombatants; to fire the dwelling houses of citizens, after robbing them, and to perpetrate even darker crimes than these—crimes too black to be mentioned?

You have permitted, if you have not ordered, the commission of these offenses against humanity and the rules of war. You fired into the city of Columbia without a word of warning, after its surrender by the mayor, who demanded protection to private property; you laid the whole city in ashes, leaving amid its ruins thousands of old men and helpless women and children, who are likely to perish of starvation and exposure. Your line of march can be traced by the lurid light of burning houses, and in more than one household there is an agony far more bitter than that of death.

The Indian scalped his victim, regardless of sex or age, but, with all his barbarity, he always respected the persons of his female captives. Your soldiers, more savage than the Indian, insult those whose natural protectors are absent.

In conclusion, I have only to request that whenever you have any of my men "disposed of" or "murdered," for the terms appear to be synonymous with you, you will let me hear of it in order that I may know what action to take in the matter. In the meantime I shall hold 56 of your men as hostages for those you have ordered to be executed. I am yours, etc.,

WADE HAMPTON. *Lieutenant General.*

#### CHARACTERISTIC RETALIATION

Not only did General Beauregard, my immediate superior, approve my action in this matter, but the Confederate Congress, after thanking me for my letter, declared their determination to sustain me should I be forced to resort to retaliation to protect our prisoners. Fortunately for the sake of humanity, Sherman did not carry out his inhuman threat, but he seems never to have forgiven me for preventing him from "disposing of" those 26 prisoners of war. His retaliation on me was the charge made in his official report that I had "burned my own city of Columbia." Though not perhaps an honorable mode of retaliating, nor one that a gentleman would be likely to resort to, it was an eminently characteristic one. Though not altogether pertinent to this discussion, it may not be uninteresting, as showing the conduct of Sherman's men in South Carolina, to give the origin of this report that "his foragers were murdered after capture." The facts only came to my knowledge after the war, and were related to me by a participant in the occurrence. By his statement it appears that a small reconnoitering party of our men surprised some of these innocent and virtuous foragers as they were pillaging a house and were in the very act of committing violence on the person of a young lady. She was rescued and the infamous wretches who were attempting this heinous crime were shot. Had I been aware of the facts at the time, I should have approved and justified the action of the men who so promptly and properly avenged the insult offered to one of their countrywomen.

After these articles were in the hands of the printer, a friend to whom I am greatly indebted sent from Chicago the subjoined letter, which, had it appeared earlier, might have saved me the trouble of exposing the gross misstatements of Sherman. All parties concur in the fact that General Stone was the first Federal officer to enter Columbia, and it struck me as a very significant and suspicious circumstance that the Government, in summoning witnesses for its defense in the cases pending before the commission, did not cite him to appear. This was the more strange, as Sherman in his deposition in Egypt swears on

page 8 that he "had seen a mass of cotton on fire, which I was told by the commanding officer, Colonel Stone, that he had found burning on his entry two hours before and said to have been set fire to by the express orders of the rebel general, Wade Hampton, on retreating before our troops." If Colonel Stone made this statement—and I have no idea that he ever did—he seems to have forgotten it, for his recent letter tells a different story. I honor him for the manliness which has prompted him to state the truth, when so many others have perverted it, or kept silent when they could have told it. His statements free me from the charge of having fired the cotton; and, though he is mistaken, as has been shown in the preceding pages, in his supposition that our troops fired "public buildings and quartermaster's stores," he has given in the main a correct and certainly an honest version of the occurrences of which he was cognizant. His letter tends greatly to "elucidate historic truth," and must, therefore, be peculiarly acceptable to General Sherman.

## COLONEL STONE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE TRUTH OF HISTORY

ATCHISON, KANS., January 2, 1873.

To the EDITOR OF THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

SIR: As it appears every wrong answer has been given to the conundrum, "Who fired Columbia?" (unless it be the one, "because it couldn't climb a tree"), I propose to give you the true one.

The answer is contained in a half dozen words, but as a quite lengthy explanation would have to follow, I'll make the explanation first and lead up to the answer, keeping, like novelists, the interest intensified till the last moment.

An intensely bitter feeling was manifested by our troops from the moment they stepped on South Carolina soil. In no other seceded State (and we had soldiers in all save Texas) was there any particular ill feeling shown toward the inhabitants. But from one end of the first-named State to the other it might be truly said that our march was marked by "a cloud of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night."

My recollection is that outside of the town not a house was left standing unless occupied by negroes; and from the dense clouds of smoke a few miles each to our right and left—plainly defining the march of the columns advancing in parallel lines—it seemed that the same destruction was following in the wake of these columns. One instance—I could give 20—will illustrate and show the animus of the troops.

One evening just at dusk I had halted within 3 miles of camp at a very fine mansion, where a strong guard had been posted by our advance. I had command of the rear guard and up to this place had picked up all the sick and all the stragglers. Fearing this house might meet the fate of all others, I sent everything ahead and relieved the house guard myself, and kept with it until we arrived inside our picket lines. About midnight my attention was called to a fire in the direction of that house, and upon an investigation next morning there was nothing left to mark the situation of that mansion save a heap of surrounding ashes. Although the men had marched 27 miles that day, some of them added 6 more in order to apply the torch to that house. Their dreams would have been troubled had that building remained as a monument of their oversight or neglect.

This remark would often be heard, "Here is where treason began, and, by G——d! here is where it shall end!"

This feeling of hatred was intensified as we approached Columbia.

My brigade (Third Brigade, First Division, Fifteenth Army Corps), composed of the Fourth, Ninth, Seventy-fifth, Thirtieth, and Thirty-first Iowa Regiments, had marched and skirmished almost incessantly for the two days preceding the capture of that city. The night we reached the Saluda and Broad Rivers we pushed over silently in canvas-bottom pontoon boats 2 miles above the city, lay on our arms until dawn, and then attacked, carrying everything before us.

The mayor met us near the city and made a formal "unconditional surrender"—I had refused any other—but upon his accepting, at once promised protection for all private property.

## A LOYAL WELCOME

As we entered one of the principal streets the sidewalks were lined with negroes of every age, sex, and condition holding in their arms vessels of every conceivable size and shape filled with almost every conceivable kind of liquor. Here was an old white-wooled man who with a "Lord bress you, Massa! Try

some dis," offered brandy from a gourd that had been filled from the bucket held in his hand. Others were offering wines, champagne, etc., from original packages, tin cups, crocks, etc. Officers were at once reminded that their men, considering their fatigue of the past few days, their sharp fight of the morning, their loss of sleep and food for the past 24 hours, were in no condition to drink much liquor.

The temptation offered was too great to withstand by all, and, in spite of strenuous efforts of officers, within 30 minutes a not inconsiderable number of my command were intoxicated. This had occurred during my absence to plant our national colors on the statehouse, and I had returned in great haste, as General Hampton's cavalry had attacked my advanced guard and threatened a charge on the brigade. Harsh measures had to be adopted at once and those drunk were put under guard, and so soon as the enemy had been compelled to retire I at once had the entire brigade distributed through the city.

Up to this time no fires had occurred in any part of the city save those of public buildings and quartermasters' stores, fired by the enemy the day before we entered, I think, but which fire had not extended and did not extend to any other part of the city. The streets in some places contained bales of cotton which had been cut open, and these caught fire twice or three times during the day; but these fires had been promptly put out by some of the firemen of the city, aided by a detail of soldiers under charge of an officer.

By this time I realized how much too small my command of 2,200 men was to properly guard a city of 40,000 inhabitants, rich, almost beyond conception, in such stores as we coveted. In addition to their own—more than ordinarily found anywhere—Richmond and Charleston had sent for safe-keeping all their surplus.

I represented to General Woods, commanding the division, how inadequately my command was to the task, particularly as this was the capital of South Carolina! And while he expressed himself as of my opinion, he could do nothing further than refer me to General Logan, commanding the corps.

#### BURNING THE CITY AND GUARDING ITS ASHES

Logan expressed himself even more strongly than Woods had done that my command was too small for the provost duty of Columbia, but said Howard's orders were that one brigade must guard the city, and he could not change them.

I now had intimation that the Union officers released by us from the city prisons had formed a society, to which had been added many members from our soldiers and the negroes, and the object of which society was to burn Columbia.

Col. D. J. Palmer, commanding my regiment, the Seventy-fifth Iowa, and to whom I had intrusted the charge of the most dangerous part of the city, viz, that on the river and in "Cotton Town," confirmed my opinion that there was a plot to burn the city by telling me several fires had started in his district; that he had succeeded in putting them out so far, but could not hold out much longer, and that in his opinion the next one would fire the city.

The wind after sunset had increased in violence, and about 9 o'clock was blowing almost a hurricane from Colonel Palmer's district right toward the heart of the city. All at once 15 or 20 flames, from as many different places along the river, shot up, and in 10 minutes the fate of Columbia was settled.

Most of the officers and many of the men worked like heroes all night in saving property and life.

General Sherman set the example, and often during the night I noticed him as hard at work as any private soldier or fireman.

By the next morning it was discovered the guard had been too small; and although a square mile of the heart of the city had been eaten out, and the men's appetite for revenge satiated, yet it was then considered that a division of troops was necessary for provost duty. My command was relieved to go into camp to rest and recruit, as the entire command was exhausted and worn out.

On our march from Columbia, one of the released Union officers noted above called on me, and stated, as he had heard rumored that I had fired the city, he wanted me to take his name and address, and if necessary use him, as his testimony would entirely exonerate me from such charges.

Prisoners were always treated well by their captors. "Johnny" and "Yank" vied in sharing, each with the other, his last piece of corn-dodger or ration of

coffee. It was only when our men got into the hands of home guards that they were maltreated. While it is true that a few noble southern women visited the prisons in Columbia, and clandestinely gave our sick soldiers such little delicacies as a cup of tea, toast, etc., yet it is no less true that some of the prisoners suffered more than one can write.

One soldier told me that, when in one of the prisons of that city, he had asked a woman for something to eat, as he was starving. For an answer, he said, she spat in his face.

And now, "to return to the American Indian," the true answer to the conundrum is Columbia was fired by an organization composed of Union officers released from the prisons the day of the capture of that city, Union soldiers and negroes.

As many of my old command will read this, I hope they may drop me a line to say whether I have given an impartial statement or not, and to point out any errors I have made.

GEO. A. STONE,  
*Ex-Brevet Brigadier General, United States Volunteers.*

AN ERRONEOUS STATEMENT AND A FAITHFUL PORTRAIT

One error occurs, however, in General Stone's letter, that in which he states that "General Hampton's cavalry had attacked my advance guard." The orders given by myself, already quoted, and the affidavits given show that he is in error here. As far as I could ascertain, but one shot was fired after the mayor went out to surrender the city, and this came from one of General Wheeler's men, who was severely reprimanded by General Butler, and, if I mistake not, was arrested as having disobeyed orders. There certainly was no "attack" made or contemplated. The "Union prisoners" released in the city must have constituted a very small number, as I think they had been all, or nearly all, sent off before the surrender of the city. Be that as it may, General Stone's letter is conclusive that our troops did not fire the cotton or the city and that the Federals did.

The task imposed on me is finished. It had for its object the vindication of myself from a base slander, made in the most cowardly manner possible, and to place that vindication upon record in an enduring form. If in my zeal for this object my language has sometimes been warm, let the provocation be considered. The calumny which I have refuted has been spread as wide as the exulting words which told of the downfall of my country have reached, and my indignant denial has traveled, as truth generally does, but slowly. That denial I now emphatically reiterate, and I submit that I have proved the charge against me false. Having done this, I dismiss this subject, leaving the questions involved to the great tribunal of history.

As an appropriate close to this article I present a portrait of General Sherman, given in the Old Guard, a northern magazine, volume 4, No. 2:

"\* \* \* lit with lurid flame,  
See, scrolled in blood, the ruthless Sherman's name!  
Immortal, too, by Odin's title won,  
Rival and peer of Atilla, the Hun!  
Rape, murder, rapine, wasting fire and sword,  
Marked the red path of Sherman and his horde,  
And desolation howls where'er he trod.  
Withered be Sherman's blood-stained wreath of fame,  
Each leaf of laurel hides a thorn of shame.  
O name accursed! Woman shall pale with fear,  
And good men hiss when Sherman strikes the ear. \* \* \*  
History shall shriek as on her fatal page  
She hurls the hateful thing from age to age,  
And Sherman finds, all pitiless as he,  
Inexorable, just posterity!  
For ye shall live, triad abhorred of man,  
Sherman and Atilla, and Genghis Khan,  
Tear from his brow the wreath of glorious deed!  
On bloodhound's collar stamp his name instead!  
The sacred laurel, meed of hero praise,  
Would wither, scorched upon a brow like his."

Respectfully yours,

WADE HAMPTON.

## HAZEN'S EVIDENCE AND SHERMAN'S CONFESSION

WASHINGTON, January 28, 1888.

P. S.—Since the above article was written there have appeared several publications which prove fully the main facts stated, and I give a few of these as significant. In a *Narrative of Military Service*, by Gen. W. B. Hazen, United States Army, will be found on page 349 the following words used in describing his entry into Columbia: "At about midday my command followed, headed by General Logan and myself. We advanced along Main Street, on which General Wood's division was standing at rest with arms stacked, with but few officers present. In this street cotton bales were piled in long lines, and it had been fired by the departing enemy. The engines were on the street and had evidently been at work putting out the fire in the cotton, which still smoked in a few places. The fire was completely under control and was nowhere blazing. A dozen men with tin cups could have managed it." On page 353 he says: "I have never doubted that Columbia was deliberately set on fire in more than a hundred places."

This is the testimony of a Federal officer who was an eyewitness of the scenes he describes, and though he is mistaken, as abundant evidence proves, in stating what was the origin of the fire among the cotton bales, he shows that the fire there could not have caused the general conflagration. In Sherman's *Memoirs*, on page 287, the following language is used:

"This whole subject—the burning of Columbia—has since been thoroughly and judicially investigated in some cotton cases by the mixed commission on American and British claims under the treaty of Washington, which commission failed to award a verdict in favor of the English claimants, and thereby settled the fact that the destruction of property in Columbia during that night did not result from the acts of the General Government of the United States—that is to say, from my army."

In the report of the agent in these claims there is an award of \$6,000 reported as allowed to William Ashton; his claim, among other items, being for "furniture, etc., burned by the United States Army." As to Sherman's statement that this commission "settled the fact that the destruction of property \* \* \* did not result \* \* \* from my army," I quote from the report of the agent, page 50, touching that question: "The commission did not pass on the question whether, in case the city had been burned by the order or permission of the commanding officer, any liability for resulting losses would have existed against the United States."

There seems to be here the usual discrepancy between the statements of Sherman and those of truthful persons. The last witness as to whom the responsibility for the destruction of Columbia attaches upon whom I shall call is Sherman himself, not a credible one in general, but entitled to belief in this case. On page 288 of his memoirs these words occur: "Having utterly ruined Columbia, the right wing began its march northward toward Winnsboro on the 20th." When he declares that his army "utterly ruined Columbia," it is scarcely necessary for me to cite further testimony to that fact.

WADE HAMPTON.

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"DESTROY THEIR CITIES"—A LEAF FROM THE HISTORY OF SHERMAN'S FIERY MARCH—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO COLLECT TESTIMONY IN RELATION TO THE DESTRUCTION OF COLUMBIA ON THE 17TH OF FEBRUARY, 1865

The committee who were charged with the duty of collecting the evidence in relation of the destruction of Columbia by fire on the 17th of February, 1865, submit the following report:

By the terms of the resolution appointing them, the committee do not feel authorized to deduce any conclusion, or pronounce any judgment, however warranted by the proof, as to the persons responsible for the crime. Their task will be accomplished by presenting the evidence that has been obtained with an abstract of the facts established by it.

More than 60 depositions and statements in writing, from as many individuals, have been placed in the hands of the committee. The array of witnesses is impressive, not merely because of their number but for the high-toned and elevated character of some of them, the unpretending and sterling probity of others, and the general intelligence and worth of all. The plain and unvarnished narrative subjoined is taken from the testimony referred to, solely and

exclusively, except so much as refers to certain declarations of General Sherman himself, widely circulated through the public press, and to the ravages of his army in this State after their departure from Columbia—matters of such notoriety as, in the judgment of the committee, to dispense with the necessity of formal proof.

The forces of General Sherman's command, while in Georgia, seems to have anticipated that their next march would be through South Carolina. Their temper and feeling toward our people, a witness, Mrs. L. Catherine Jaynor, thus describes:

"The soldiers were universal in their threats. They seemed to gloat over the distress that would accrue from their march through the State. I conversed with numbers of all grades belonging to the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps. Such expressions as the following were of hourly occurrence: 'Carolina may well dread us; she brought this war on and shall pay the penalty.' 'You think Georgia has suffered? Just wait until we get into Carolina—every man, woman, and child may dread us there.'"

General Sherman himself, the same witness informs us, in addressing himself to a lady of his acquaintance, said to her: "Go off the line of railroad, for I will not answer for the consequences where the army passes."

#### A TRAIL OF FIRE

The threats uttered in Georgia were sternly executed by the troops of General Sherman upon their entrance into this State. For 80 miles along the route of his Army through the most highly improved and cultivated region of the State, according to the testimony of intelligent and respectable witnesses, the habitations of but two white persons remain. As he advanced the villages of Hardeeville, Grahamville, Gillisonville, McPhersonville, Barnwell, Blackville, Midway, Orangeburg, and Lexington were successively devoted to the flames. Indignities and outrages were perpetrated upon the persons of the inhabitants; the implements of agriculture were broken; dwellings, barns, mills, ginhouses were consumed; provisions of every description appropriated or destroyed; horses and mules carried away; and sheep, cattle, and hogs were either taken for actual use or shot down and left behind. The like devastation marked the progress of the invading Army from Columbia through the State to its northern frontier, and the towns of Winnsboro, Camden, and Cheraw suffered from like visitations by fire. If a single town or village or hamlet within their line of march escaped altogether the torch of the invaders, the committee have not been informed of the exception. The line of General Sherman's march from his entering the territory of the State up to Columbia, and from Columbia to the North Carolina border, was one continuous track of fire.

The devastation and ruin thus inflicted were but the execution of the policy and plan of General Sherman for the subjugation of the Confederate States. Extracts from this address at Salem, Ill., in July last, have appeared in the public prints, and thus he announces and vindicates the policy and plan referred to:

"We were strung out from Nashville clear down to Atlanta. Had I gone on stringing out our forces what danger would there not have been of their attacking this little head of the column and crushing it? Therefore I resolved in a moment to stop the game of guarding their cities and to destroy their cities. We were determined to produce results, and now what were those results? To make every man, woman, and child in the South feel that if they dared to rebel against the flag of their country they must die or submit."

#### AN ARMY OF INCENDIARIES

The plan of subjugation adopted by General Sherman was fully comprehended and approved by his Army. His officers and men universally justified their acts by declaring that it was "the way to put down rebellion, by burning and destroying everything."

Before the surrender of our town the soldiers of General Sherman—officers and privates—declared that it was to be destroyed. "It was," deposes a witness, Mrs. Rosa I. Meetze, "the common talk among them at the village of Lexington that Columbia was to be burned by General Sherman."

At the same place, on the 16th of February, 1865, as deposed to by another witness, Mrs. Frances T. Caughman, the general officer in command of his

cavalry forces, General Kilpatrick, said in reference to Columbia: "Sherman will lay it in ashes for them."

"It was the general impression among all the prisoners we captured," says a Confederate officer, Col. J. P. Austin, of the Ninth Kentucky Regular Cavalry, "that Columbia was to be destroyed."

On the morning of the same day (February 16, 1865) some of the forces of General Sherman appeared on the western side of the river, and without a demand of surrender, or any previous notice of their purpose, began to shell the town, then filled with women, children, and aged persons, and continued to do so at intervals throughout the day.

The Confederate forces were withdrawn and the town restored to the control of the municipal authorities on the morning of the 17th of February. Accompanied by three of the aldermen, the mayor, between 8 and 9 o'clock a. m., proceeded in the direction of Broad River for the purpose of surrendering the city to General Sherman. Acting in concert with the mayor, the officer in command of the rear guard of the Confederate cavalry, Gen. M. C. Butler, forbore from further resistance to the advance of the opposing enemy, and took effectual precautions against anything being done which might provoke General Sherman or his troops to acts of violence or severity toward the town or its citizens.

The surrender of Columbia was made by the mayor and aldermen to the first general officer of the hostile army whom they met, and that officer promised protection to the town and its inhabitants until communication could be had with General Sherman and the terms of surrender arranged.

#### SACKING THE CITY

By 11 o'clock a. m. the town was in possession of the Federal forces, the first detachment entering being the command of the officer who had received the surrender. They had scarcely marched into the town, however, before they began to break into the stores of the merchants, appropriating the contents, or throwing them in the streets and destroying them.

As other bodies of troops came in the pillage grew more general, and soon the sack of the town was universal. Guards were in general sent to those of the citizens who applied for them, but in numerous instances they proved to be unable or unwilling to perform the duty assigned them. Scarcely a single household or family escaped altogether from being plundered. The streets of the town were densely filled with thousands of Federal soldiers drinking, shouting, carousing, and robbing the defenseless inhabitants without reprimand or check from their officers, and this state of things continued until night.

In some instances guards were refused. Papers and property of great value were in the vaults of one of the city banks, while the apartments above and in the rear were occupied by women and children, with their food and clothing. For a guard to protect them application was made by one of our worthiest and most respectable citizens, Mr. Edwin J. Scott, first to the general officer, who had received the surrender of the town, Colonel Stone, and then to the provost marshal, Major Jenkins. The response made to the applicant by the former officer, though standing idle in the crowd, was that he "had no time to attend to him," and the answer of the latter was, "I can not undertake to protect private property." Between 2 and 3 o'clock p. m. General Sherman, in person, rode into Columbia, informed the mayor that his letter had been received, and promised protection to the town. Extraordinary license was allowed to his soldiers by General Sherman.

#### IN THE HANDS OF HIS FRIENDS

In the afternoon of the 17th of February, 1865, and shortly after his arrival in Columbia, the mayor of the town, at the request of General Sherman, accompanied him on a visit to a lady of his acquaintance. While proceeding to her residence General Sherman began to express his opinion very freely upon the subject of our institution of slavery. In the midst of his remarks he was interrupted by the sudden and near report of a musket. Immediately before them, in the direction they were going, they observed a group of Federal soldiers seeming to be excited, and upon approaching they saw a negro lying dead directly in their path, being shot through the heart. "General Sherman," the mayor, Dr. T. J. Goodwin, narrates, "asked of the soldiers 'how came the negro shot?' and was answered that the negro had been guilty of great inso-

lence to them, and that thereupon General Sherman remarked: 'Stop this, boys; this is all wrong. Take away the body and bury it.' General Sherman," continues the mayor, "then stepped over the body of the negro and observed to this deponent that in quiet times such a thing ought to be noticed, but in times like these it could not be done. General Sherman resumed his conversation in relation to slavery, and that no arrest was ordered or any censure or reprimand uttered by him except as above stated. About sundown," as the mayor deposes, "General Sherman said to him: 'Go home and rest assured that your city will be as safe in my hands as if you had controlled it.' He added that he was compelled to burn some of the public buildings, and in so doing did not wish to destroy one particle of private property. This evening, he said, was too windy to do anything."

An esteemed clergyman, the Rev. A. Toomer Porter, testifies that the same afternoon between 6 and 7 o'clock General Sherman said to him: "You must know a great many ladies; go around and tell them to go to bed quietly; they will not be disturbed any more than if my army was 100 miles off." He seemed oblivious of the fact that we had been pillaged and insulted the whole day. In one hour's time the city was in flames.

Meanwhile the soldiers of General Sherman had burned that afternoon many houses in the environs of the town, including the dwelling of General Hampton, with that of his sisters, formerly the residence of their father and once the seat of genial and princely hospitality.

#### THREATS AND WARNINGS

Throughout the day, after they had marched into the town, the soldiers of General Sherman gave distinct and frequent notice to the citizens of the impending calamity, usually in the form of direct and fierce threats, but occasionally as if in kindly forewarning. A lady of rare worth and intelligence and of high social position, Mrs. L. S. McCord, relates the following incident: "One of my maids brought me a paper left, she told me, by a Yankee soldier; it was an ill-spelled but kindly warning of the horrors to come, written upon a torn sheet of my dead son's notebook, which, with private papers of every kind, now strewed my yard. It was signed by a lieutenant, of what company and regiment I did not take note. The writer said he had relatives and friends at the South, and that he felt for us; that his heart bled to think of what was threatened. 'Ladies,' he wrote, 'I pity you; leave this town—go anywhere to be safer than here.' This was written in the morning; the fires were in the evening and night."

One of our citizens, of great intelligence and respectability (William H. Orchard), was visited about 7 p. m. by a squad of some six or seven soldiers, to whose depredations he submitted with a composure which seemed to impress their leader. Of his conversation with this person the gentleman referred to testified as follows: "On leaving the yard he called to me, and said he wished to speak to me alone. He then said to me in an undertone: 'You seem to be a clever sort of a man and have a large family, so I will give you some advice. If you have anything you wish to save, take care of it at once, for before morning this \_\_\_\_\_ town will be in ashes, every house in it.' My only reply was, 'Can that be true?' He said, 'Yes; and if you do not believe me you will be the sufferer. If you watch, you will see three rockets go up soon, and if you do not take my advice you will see h—l.'"

#### SIGNAL ROCKETS AND DISABLED FIRE HOSE

Within an hour afterwards three rockets were seen to ascend from a point in front of the mayor's dwelling. But a few minutes elapsed before fires, in swift succession, broke out, and at intervals so distant that they could not have been communicated from the one to the other. At various parts of the town the soldiers of General Sherman, at the appearance of the rockets, declared that they were appointed signals for a general conflagration. The fire companies, with their engines, promptly repaired to the scene of the fires and endeavored to arrest them, but in vain. The soldiers of General Sherman, with bayonets and axes, pierced and cut the hose, disabled the engines, and prevented the citizens from extinguishing the flames. The wind was high and blew from the west. The fires spread and advanced with fearful rapidity, and soon enveloped the very heart of the town.

The pillage begun upon the entrance of the hostile forces, continued without cessation or abatement, and now the town was delivered up to the accumulated horrors of sack or conflagration. The inhabitants were subjected to personal indignities and outrages. A witness, Capt. W. B. Stanley, testifies that several times during the night he "saw the soldiers of Sherman take from females bundles of clothing and provisions, open them, appropriate what they wanted, and throw the remainder into the flames." Men were violently seized and threatened with the halter or the pistol to compel them to disclose where their gold or silver was concealed.

The revered and beloved pastor of one of our churches, the Rev. P. J. Shand, states that "in the midst and during the progress of the appalling calamity, above all other noises might be heard the demoniac and gladsome shouts of the soldiery." Driven from his home by the flames, with the aid of a servant he was bearing off a trunk containing the communion plate of his church, his wife walking by his side, when he was surrounded by five of the soldiers, who required him to put down the trunk and inform them of its contents, which was done. The sequel he thus narrates: "They then demanded the key, but I not having it, they proceeded in their efforts to break the lock. While four of them were thus engaged, the fifth seized me with his left hand by the collar and, presenting a pistol to my breast with his right, he demanded of me my watch. I had it not about me, but he searched my pockets thoroughly and then joined his comrades, who finding it impracticable to force open the lock, took up the trunk and carried it away. These men, he adds, were all perfectly sober."

By 3 o'clock a. m. on the night of the 17th of February, 1865, more than two-thirds of the town lay in ashes, composing the most highly improved and the entire business portion of it. Thousands of the inhabitants, including women delicately reared, young children, the aged, and the sick, passed that winter night in the open air without shelter from the bitter and piercing blasts. About the hour mentioned, 3 o'clock a. m., another highly esteemed clergyman, the Rev. A. Toomer Porter, personally known to General Sherman, was at the corner of a street conversing with one of his officers on horseback, when General Sherman, in citizen's attire, walked up and accosted him. The interview is thus described:

"ORDER THIS THING STOPPED

"In the bright light of the burning city General Sherman recognized me and remarked: 'This is a horrible sight.' 'Yes,' I replied, 'when you reflect that women and children are the victims.' He said: 'Your governor is responsible for this.' 'How so?' I replied. 'Who ever heard,' he said, 'of an evacuated city to be left a depot of liquor for an army to occupy? I found 120 casks of whisky in one cellar. Your governor, being a lawyer or a judge, refused to have it destroyed, as it was private property, and now my men have got drunk and have got beyond my control, and this is the result.' Perceiving the officer on horseback, he said: 'Captain Andrews, did I not order that this thing should be stopped?' 'Yes, General,' said the captain, 'but the first division that came in soon got as drunk as the first regiment that occupied the town.' 'Then, sir,' said General Sherman, 'go and bring in the second division. I hold you personally responsible for its immediate cessation.' The officer darted off and Sherman bid me good evening. I am sure it was no more than an hour and a half from the time that General Sherman gave his order before the city was cleared of the destroyers."

From that time until the departure of General Sherman from Columbia (with perhaps one or two exceptions) not another dwelling in it was burned by his soldiers, and during the succeeding days and nights of his occupancy perfect tranquillity prevailed throughout the town. The discipline of his troops was perfect, the soldiers standing in great awe of their officers. That Columbia was burned by the soldiers of General Sherman—that the vast majority of the incendiaries were sober—that for hours they were seen with combustibles firing house after house without any affectation of concealment and without the slightest check from their officers, is established by proof full to repletion and wearisome from its very superfluity.

After the destruction of the town his officers and men openly approved of its burning and exulted in it. "I saw," deposes the mayor, "very few drunken soldiers that night. Many who appeared to sympathize with our people told me that the fate and doom of Columbia had been common talk around their camp fires ever since they left Savannah."

It was said by numbers of the soldiers that the order had been given to burn down the city. There is strong evidence that such an order was actually issued in relation to the house of Gen. John S. Preston. The Ursuline Convent was destroyed by the fire, and the proof referred to comes from a revered and honored member of that holy sisterhood—the mother superior; and it is subjoined in her own words:

"Our convent was consumed in the general conflagration of Columbia. Ourselves and pupils were forced to fly, leaving provisions, clothing, and almost everything. We spent the night in the open air in the churchyard. On the following morning General Sherman made a visit, expressed his regret at the burning of our convent, disclaimed the act, attributing it to the intoxication of his soldiers, and told me to choose any house in town for a convent and it should be ours. He deputed his adjutant general—Colonel Ewing—to act in his stead. Colonel Ewing reminded us of General Sherman's offer to give us any house in Columbia we might choose for a convent. 'We have thought of it,' said we, 'and are asking for General Preston's house, which is large.' 'That is where General Logan holds his headquarters,' said he, 'and orders have already been given, I know, to burn it on to-morrow morning; but if you say you will take it for a convent, I will speak to the general, and the order will be countermanded.' On the following morning, after many inquiries, we learned from the officer in charge (General Perry, I think) that his orders were to fire it, unless the sisters were in actual possession of it; but if even a detachment of sisters were in it, should be spared on their account. Accordingly we took possession of it, although fires were already kindled near and the servants were carrying off the bedding and furniture in view of the house being consigned to the flames."

#### GRATIFYING THE GENERAL

Although orders for the actual burning of the town may not have been given, the soldiers of General Sherman certainly believed that its destruction would not be displeasing to him. That such was their impression we have the authority of a personage not less distinguished than the officer of highest rank in the army of invaders next after the commander in chief himself. The proof is beyond impeachment. It comes from the honored pastor of one of our city churches (the Rev. P. J. Shand), to whom reference has already been made, and it is thus expressed in his written statement in the possession of the committee:

"As well as I recollect, November, 1865, I went in company with a friend to see General Howard, at his headquarters in Charleston on matters of business. Before we left, the conversation turned on the destruction of Columbia. General Howard expressed his regret at the occurrence and added the following words: 'Though General Sherman did not order the burning of the town, yet, somehow or other, the men had taken up the idea that if they destroyed the capital of South Carolina it would be peculiarly gratifying to General Sherman.' These were his words, in the order in which I set them forth. I noted them down as having great significance, and they are as fresh in my remembrance as they were immediately after they were spoken. My friend—whose recollection accords fully with my own—and myself, on our way home, talked the matter over and could not but be struck by the two following facts: First, that although General Howard said that General Sherman did not order the burning, he did not state that General Sherman gave order that the city should not be burned. Second, that it was surprising, if General Sherman was opposed to the burning, that his opposition should have been so disguised as to lead to the conviction on the part of his soldiery that the act, so far from incurring his disapprobation or censure, would be a source to him of peculiar gratification."

The cotton bales in the town had been placed in the center of the wide streets in order to be burned to prevent their falling into the possession of the invaders. But upon General Hampton's suggesting that this might endanger the town and that as the South Carolina Railroad had been destroyed, the cotton could not be removed, General Beauregard upon this representation directed General Hampton to issue an order that the cotton should not be burned. The proof of this fact is to be found in the written statement of General Beauregard himself. Accordingly, and in due time, the order forbidding the burning of the cotton was issued by General Hampton and communicated to the Confederate troops. The officer then acting as General Hampton's adjutant (Capt. Rawlins Lowndes) speaks as follows:

## THE "BURNING COTTON" MYTH

"Soon after General Hampton assumed command of the cavalry, which he did on the morning of the 17th of February, he told me that General Beauregard had determined not to burn the cotton as the Yankees had destroyed the railroad, and directed me to issue an order that no cotton should be fired. This I did at once, and the same order was extended to the cavalry throughout their march through South and North Carolina."

The general officer commanding the division forming the rear guard of the Confederate cavalry, Gen. M. C. Butler, deposes: "That he was personally present with the rear squadron of this division; that Lieut. Gen. Wade Hampton withdrew simultaneously with him, with a part of this division's command, and that General Hampton, on the morning of the evacuation and the day previous, directed him that the cotton must not be set on fire; and this order, he adds, was communicated to the entire division and strictly observed."

A clergyman, highly esteemed at the North as well as at the South (Rev. A. Toomer Porter), thus testifies: "General Hampton had told me at daylight, in answer to the question whether he was going to burn the cotton, 'No; the wind is high; it might catch something and give Sherman an excuse to burn the town.'"

"Between 8 and 9 o'clock on the morning of the 17th of February," deposes the mayor, "General Hampton, whilst on his horse, observed some cotton piled not far off in the middle of the street. He advised me to put a guard over it, saying, 'Some careless ones, by smoking, might set it on fire, and in doing so endanger the city.' From that hour I saw nothing more of General Hampton until the war was over."

Not one bale of the cotton had been fired by the Confederate troops when they withdrew from Columbia. "The only thing on fire at the time of the evacuation was the depot building of the South Carolina Railroad, which caught fire accidentally from the explosion of some ammunition." This is the statement of General Beauregard himself. It is sustained by the testimony of the officer, high in rank but higher still in character, who commanded the rear guard of the Confederate cavalry (Gen. M. C. Butler), and is concurred in by other witnesses, comprising officers, clergymen, and citizens—witnesses of such repute and in such numbers as to render the proof overwhelming.

The fire at the South Carolina Railroad depot burnt out without extending to any other buildings. Shortly after the first detachment of General Sherman's troops had entered the town, and whilst the men were seated or reclining on the cotton bales in Main Street, and passing to and fro along them with lighted cigars and pipes, the row of cotton bales between Washington and Lady Streets caught fire, the bales being badly packed, with the cotton protruding from them. The flames extended swiftly over the cotton, and the fire companies with their engines were called out, and by 1 o'clock p. m. the fire was effectually extinguished. While the fire companies were engaged about the cotton an alarm was given of fire in the jail, and one of the engines being sent there the flames were soon subdued, with slight injury only to one of the cells.

About 5 o'clock in the afternoon, as deposed by a witness, Mrs. E. Squire, the cotton bales in Sumter Street, between Washington and Lady Streets, were set on fire by General Sherman's wagon train, then passing along the cotton. But that fire was soon extinguished by the efforts of the witness referred to and her family. "I saw," says a witness, Mr. John McKenzie, "fireballs thrown out of the wagons against the Hon. W. F. DeSaussure's house, but without doing any damage." No other fires in the town occurred until after night, when the general conflagration began. As already stated, the wind blew from the west, but the fires after night broke out first on the west of Main and Sumter Streets, where the cotton bales were placed. "The cotton," it is testified and proved by Mr. Ed. J. Scott, "instead of burning the houses was burnt by them."

## HIS "DRUNKEN SOLDIERS"

General Sherman, as has been shown, on the night of the 17th of February, and while the town was in flames, ascribed the burning of Columbia to the intoxication of his soldiers, and to no other cause. On the following day, the 18th of February, the lady to whom reference was first made, Mrs. L. S. McCord, at the request of a friend, having undertaken to present a paper to General Howard, sought an interview with that officer, second in command of

the invading army, and found General Sherman with him. Her narrative of a part of the interview is as follows:

"I handed him the paper, which he glanced at, and then in a somewhat subdued voice, but standing so near General Sherman that I think it impossible that the latter could have helped hearing him, he said, 'You may rest satisfied, Mrs. —, that there will be nothing of the kind happening to-night. The truth is, our men last night got beyond our control; many of them were shot, many of them were killed; there will be no repetition of these things to-night. I assure you there will be nothing of the kind; to-night will be perfectly quiet.' And it was quiet, peaceful as the grave, the ghost of its predecessor.

"The same day, 18th of February, General Sherman," deposes the mayor, "sent for me. I went to see him about 1 o'clock. He met me very cordially, and said he regretted very much that our city was burnt, and that it was my fault. I asked him how? He said in suffering ardent spirits to be left in the city after it was evacuated, saying, 'Who could command drunken soldiers?' There was no allusion made to General Hampton, to accident, or to cotton."

On the succeeding day, Sunday, 19th of February, 1865, the mayor and six of the citizens visited General Sherman in order to obtain food for the subsistence of the women and children, until communication could be had with the country. General Sherman, upon that occasion, talked much. "In the course of his discourse," deposes one of the gentlemen (Mr. Edwin I. Scott), "he referred to the burning of the city, admitting that it was done by his troops, but excusing them because, as he alleged, they had been made drunk by our citizens, one of whom, a druggist, he said had brought a pail full of spirits to them on their arrival. Again, on our leaving the room, he expressed regret that the liquor had not been destroyed before his men entered the place, but he never mentioned or alluded in any way to General Hampton, or the cotton, nor gave the slightest intimation that they were instrumental in the destruction of the city."

"At that time," deposes the same witness, "the universal testimony of our people was that Sherman's troops burnt the town. Since then I have been in the habit of daily intercourse with all classes in and about Columbia, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, whites and blacks, yet I have not met with a single person who attributed the calamity to any other cause. If," he adds, "a transaction that occurred in the presence of forty or fifty thousand people can be successfully falsified, then all human testimony is worthless."

#### A DESOLATED COUNTRY

As evidence of the general distress and suffering which resulted from the sack and burning of our city, and the desolation of the adjoining country, the committee refer to the fact, established by unimpeachable testimony, that for about three months daily rations, consisting generally of a pint of meal and a small allowance of poor beef for each person, were dealt out at Columbia to upwards of 8,000 sufferers.

Of the suffering and distress of the individual inhabitants some conception may be collected from the experience of one of them (Mrs. Agnes Law), a lady more venerable for her virtues even than for her age, whose narrative, almost entire, we venture to introduce:

"I am 72 years old," she deposes, "and have lived in this town 48 years. My dwelling was a brick house, three stories, slate roof, with large gardens on two sides. When Columbia was burnt my sister was with me, also a niece of mine, recently confined, who had not yet ventured out of the house. When General Sherman took possession I got four guards; they were well-behaved and sober men. I gave them supper. One lay down on the sofa, the others walked about. When the city began to burn I wished to move my furniture; they objected, and said my house was in no danger. Not long afterwards, these guards themselves took lighted candles from the mantelpiece and went upstairs; at the same time other soldiers crowded into the house. My sister followed them upstairs, but came down very soon to say: 'They are setting the curtains on fire.' Soon the whole house was in a blaze. When those who set fire upstairs came down they said to me, 'Old woman, if you do not mean to burn up with your house you had better get out of it.' My niece had been carried up to the Taylor house on Arsenal Hill. I went to the door to see if I could get any person I knew to assist me up there. I had been very sick. I could see no friend—only crowds of Federal soldiers. I was afraid I should fall in the street and be burnt up in the flames of the houses blazing on both sides of the street. I had to go

alone. I spent that night at the Taylor house, which a Federal officer said should not be burned out of pity for my niece. The next two nights I passed in my garden, without any shelter. I have been for over 50 years a member of the Presbyterian Church. I can not live long. I shall meet General Sherman and his soldiers at the bar of God, and I give this testimony against them in the full view of that dread tribunal."

The committee have designed, by the preceding summary of the more prominent events and incidents connected with the destruction of Columbia, to present only an abstract of the numerous depositions and proofs in their possession. The proprieties imposed upon them by the very nature of the duties to which they have been assigned have precluded their doing more. In the evidence thus collected may be read, in all its pathetic and heartrending details, the story of the tragic fate that has befallen our once beautiful city, now in ashes and ruins. Impressed with the historic value of the proofs referred to, and their importance to the cause of truth, and with a view to their preservation, the committee respectfully recommend that they be committed to the guardianship of the municipal authorities, and be deposited with the archives of the town, trusting that in after and better times they will yet be found effectual as well to vindicate the innocent as to confound the guilty.

J. P. CARROLL, *Chairman.*

MAY, 1866.

[From the Sunday Record, Columbia, S. C., February 17, 1929]

**COLUMBIA BURNED 64 YEARS AGO TO-DAY BY SHERMAN'S HORDE—THIS DATE IN 1865 WAS TRAGIC DAY—UNIONIST SOLDIERS SET FIRE TO CITY—FOLLOWED SURRENDER**

(By Frank Barfield)

Despite the fact that time has healed the wound and bitterness is no more, there are those in Columbia, and the entire Southland, who remember back 64 years when General Sherman wrecked the Southern States in his devastating and destructive march through Georgia and South Carolina. But there are many who forget that to-day, February 17, is the anniversary of the burning of Columbia by Federal troops under Sherman's command.

History points out this date and describes the ruins and sufferings caused in Columbia 64 years ago when Sherman's men set fire to homes, public buildings, and private holdings.

On February 17, 1865, the Confederate forces had been withdrawn from the city of Columbia and the city had been restored to the control of municipal authorities.

And so it was that about 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning that the mayor of Columbia, Mayor Goodwyn, and the aldermen advanced to the banks of the Broad River and surrendered the city to the commanding officer when he crossed over a pontoon bridge. General Sherman was not at hand, but the officer in charge of the Federal troops received the surrender and promised protection to the town and its inhabitants until the terms of the surrender could be communicated to General Sherman.

By 11 o'clock in the morning the city was in the hands of the Federal forces. The city had been promised protection, but the soldiers had scarcely marched into the town when they began to break into stores and to confiscate or throw the goods into the streets.

According to the pages of history the looting of the town continued until dark, when there was an undercurrent of feeling that told the residents that they were not through with their sufferings. General Sherman had come into the city about 2 or 3 o'clock and was met by the mayor. The general promised that there would be no more sacking of the city, but there were no determined steps to stop it.

An esteemed clergyman, Rev. A. Toomer Porter, testified that the Yankee general told him that there would not be any more danger and asked the pastor to go around and tell the ladies to retire. "They will not be disturbed any more than if my army was 100 miles off." Meanwhile the soldiers had burned many houses in the environs of Columbia, including the former home of General Hampton.

Sherman had told Mayor Goodwyn at one time that the day was too windy to attempt to destroy the public buildings that he thought necessary to destroy and he would wait until another day.

## THE THREE ROCKETS

One Columbia resident has told that at 7 o'clock on the night of the burning a soldier told him that the town was doomed and that the signal for the firing of the homes would be three rockets. And so it happened about 8 o'clock that three rockets ascended from a point in front of the mayor's dwelling, and immediately conflagrations broke out in varied sections of the city. The Columbia fire companies responded and attempted to halt the flames, but the invading soldiers cut the hose and disabled the engine. Fighting the fire against these odds was impossible.

The wind was high and carried the fire rapidly. Men, women, and children, aged invalids, and the very sick were thrown into the streets to spend the night, while their homes were being destroyed before their eyes. The night was described as exceedingly cold, and there was suffering from exposure on every hand.

By 3 o'clock in the morning two-thirds of the town was in ruins. And that part destroyed composed the most highly residential and business districts of the town. It was said that about this time General Sherman was walking around the streets of the city, and he was accosted by a Columbia pastor, who spoke of the suffering and devastation caused by the invaders. At the time the clergyman was speaking to the general a captain came by and General Sherman ordered that his troops be withdrawn from the city.

It was not over an hour and a half after this order was issued that the city was cleared of the soldiers and there were no more new fires to flare up.

General Sherman blamed the destruction upon the residents of the city because of the fact that the soldiers found cases of liquor in the cellar of a home. Sherman said that as a result of the liquor his soldiers became drunk and were out of his control.

And while Sherman's men were marching through Georgia and South Carolina they were planning the humiliation of the capital of South Carolina, and they picked the part of it to receive the torch of the Unionist because it was the first to secede from the Union.

## A REMINISCENCE OF SHERMAN'S RAID IN SOUTH CAROLINA

(By Nelle Gardner Morgan)

In Springfield, S. C., lives Mrs. Emma Porter Brodie. She was the daughter of Allan Porter, who owned a large tract of land in the Dean Swamp section above Springfield. In the mellowness of her 84 years, Mrs. Brodie seems to fairly radiate kindness toward everyone.

When questioned about her recollections of the famous "raid," which marked the closing days of the Civil War, Mrs. Brodie's face beamed with interest, and, with a glint in her soft blue eyes, she replied:

"Yes; I remember quite well when the Yankees came. Our house had been accidentally burned in 1863, and we were living in one of Mr. Charlie Stromann's houses.

"General Wheeler's cavalry was passing through our section just ahead of Sherman's raid. One of Wheeler's men, a Mr. Walker from Kentucky, stopped at our house for food. He told us how Sherman's men were doing, and advised us to bury our clothes. We had just butchered some fine hogs, and the pen was full of bloody shucks and litter. He dug a hole for us in this pen—we buried a box of clothing and covered the place with the trash in the pen. That box was not found when Sherman's men came.

"Father sent a colored man down the river on a raft which was loaded with bales of cotton, quilts, and meat. One of the negro boys showed the Yankees where the raft was. They took all the hams and shoulders. Then the old colored man hid the rest of the meat in the swamp, but there came a very wet spell and it spoiled before father could get in to haul it out.

"On Friday, father and brother Nathan's wife drove our stock, about 30 head, away from home. They crossed Dean Swamp and went several miles up the creek. The next morning they came back to see if I wanted to go; but my clothes were buried, so I did not go. Father and sister went on, riding gentle mules, and drove the stock to Edgefield County, thus saving them from Wheeler's men as well as Sherman's raiders. On their way home, father found two large

pones of corn bread upon a big stump—underneath it was written: 'Allen Porter.'

"Aunt Nancy Cadle and her daughter, Cousin Sophronia, were taking care of the Charlie Stroman house, as the family had gone away, so I stayed with them. Cousin Sophronia and I put the china in a strong bag and put it in a rowboat. I did not know how to swim, but Cousin Sophronia rowed that boat away up the pond at Dean Swamp Mill, and, lowering the bag, was fastened it to an old stump. The Yanks did not get to smash those dishes!"

"Saturday night the negroes kept bringing tales of how the Yankees were going to treat us. All during the night 'Aunt Laura,' one of the colored women, told us over and over that they were surely going to kill us. Naturally, our nerves were on edge from dread and horror. We decided to try treating them kindly, hoping that might help matters a little.

"Early Sunday morning they began to arrive. There were only three in the first party. The weather was terribly cold, and the negroes had already made a fire for us. When the men walked in we piled on more wood and invited them to come up to the fire. They seemed to be perfect gentlemen. However, in a few minutes the mob swarmed in like bees. They were all over the premises in almost no time. They literally ransacked the whole place. A big negro man, who came with them, stepped up to me and said: 'You are the finest-looking young lady I've seen since I left the North.' My goodness! I was scared to get out of the house the rest of that day and night!

"Presently some of them found a bullet mold. Then they demanded the pistol, which, of course, Mr. Stroman had taken with him. They became furious and broke locks and snatched everything to pieces, saying that they must have the pistol. They kept saying that they would burn the house, but we thought they surely would not. Aunt Nancy piled her meat on the floor and sat on it. The men kept telling her the house was already burning upstairs. Still she sat. Then, with a very uncomplimentary epithet, they said, 'We will snatch you baldheaded if you don't get up and get out.' Still Aunt Nancy sat upon the meat! They finally took her out by force, and, of course, they took the meat.

"They had the negroes to carry out and save a good many things from downstairs. I took a seat on my trunk while both houses were burning. My brother's uniform was in the trunk and I did not want them to get it, so I held a heavy iron poker in my hand. I was strong enough to use that poker, then, too, if I had been forced to do so!

"An officer kept harassing me and boasting about their having whipped us. I told him that they had overpowered us, but would never whip the South. Then I sang The Homespun Dress for him. They took everything we had to eat but some backbones and sweetpotatoes. We were very hungry, so we put those on to cook. Just as they were about done another crowd came in and ate up every bite! By this time it was almost dark.

"Imagine starting in on another night of terror after the 24 hours through which we had just passed! We had taken refuge in the kitchen with the negroes when a crowd of drunken soldiers came by and tried to drive us out, saying they were going to burn the kitchen. They even tried to lure us out by saying that they were burning the Walker house, a little way below there. But we were so terribly frightened that we did not dare go outside. Then they took red-hot fire coals and put them in a trunk out on the porch. Still I would not go. They put out the fire in the trunk after it had ruined a beautiful quilt and a red curtain that my mother had made.

"That party finally went away and another came. One of these men was so drunk that he rode his horse right on into the kitchen porch. And so it went on all through that terrible never-to-be-forgotten day and night! Sorrow and destruction on every hand! A few miles above us a Mr. Williamson was quite ill in bed with measles. He was tied to a horse and led away. His family never heard of him again.

"By Monday morning 'Sherman's raid' had passed. But in its wake what a broad trail of waste, desolation, and ruin! And on the fair pages of American history had been stamped an indelible blot."

