

again. Pinsey must have seen a bug in the trap, and thrust her foreleg through the cone, and finding she couldn't draw it out again, she struggled and bounced about until one of the wires had run into her leg almost to her toes. Now, here was something! Father did not want to kill her, but she couldn't live with that trap hanging to her. So he had to try to free her. He got a file and pinchers, and I got one or two crocus sacks, for I had to hold the creature. I placed her on my knees and Father patiently filed away on the wire. The poor thing didn't move; she seemed to understand perfectly that he was helping her. At last the wire was cut, he got the foot out, and with the pinchers, drew the rest of the wire from her leg. This took Father about one hour.

Both Em and I found Maggie Rion a delightful companion.³ We read the same books and discussed them together, which I think is the only way to read worthwhile books, for otherwise, how soon they are forgotten. My sister Janie, and Floride and Kitty Rion were together daily, and the children ran in and out at will. Hol was a funny little boy, so serious and earnest. In the garden, one morning, he, and his dog, Fanny, were following me around. He was bragging about her obedience. "She does *all* I tell her to do, everything. See here." Then picking up a bone, that had had no meat on it for months, he showed it to her and tossed it away. "Hie on, Fanny!" he demanded, but Fanny was lying down and had no notion of hieing. He ordered, he stamped, he agonized. At last, Fanny crawled on her stomach and picked up the bone. The relief on the child's face was comical. Folding his arms he said, "She does it, but she hates it."

³ Margaret H. Rion. She was for many years librarian at the University of South Carolina.

but here they came, so close, that I could almost catch hold of the elephant's trunk swinging just behind me. The youngsters took to their heels. I took some long steps, but expected every minute to be tossed up in the air or to be trampled upon. All along the way, every seat from top to bottom, was filled with Negroes. I couldn't slip in there, but at last I reached the white folks. Someone made room for me. Exhausted, I took my seat, thinking "This is enough, I never care to go again," and I never have. Don't believe we didn't enjoy life. These days look inane to me, compared with the gorgeous ones of my youth. But I see the young people do get a kind of sophistication from the movies that we did not have.

One summer, someone taught physical culture. She had a large class, and as she gave her lessons in the afternoons, we teachers could join. She was very jolly, and we used to have no end of fun. Then one winter, some professor lectured for a week on phrenology. Mrs. Rion was much interested. She gathered all the young people in the neighborhood and took them to the courthouse where the lecture was given. The town was interested. Different ones would step up to have their bumps examined and their characters accordingly, publicly proclaimed. Sometimes they were decided hits. One I remember, a gentleman known to be uncommonly close. The Professor passed his hands in silence over his head, then said, "Me and my wife, my son, John, and his wife, we four, no more, Lord." Nearly everybody bought a book and had an examination, which was duly marked on the chart in the book, which also contained explanations of the chart. The Professor said that Emily had a model head. He announced it everywhere.

Mrs. Carrie Moore and Miss Sallie Robinson opened their girls' school about this time. The Professor of Music, that they

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say her prayers. The child could scarcely keep her eyes open. Mr. Campbell, in the room said, "Oh, don't bother her any more. Marian is too tired and sleepy. Just let her say, 'Now, I lay me'." The next night Marian insisted that "Amen" was all she was going to say, for she was too tired and sleepy.

Our congregation was large still, though as our Episcopal boys grew up to manhood they nearly always left for a city job. Columbia, at that time, had become almost half Winnsboro. Miss Maria Porcher had taken her eight protégés, brother, sisters, nephews, and niece, to Sewanee for education and for jobs. Many of her relatives had settled there already. General Bratton said of this lady, that she was a cross between a bishop and a general, so much did he admire her valiant struggle through all those lean years for her young charges. This move meant a loss of nine to St. John's Church. Still, compared to what it is now, it was a full church.

In my own home a change was pending. Our brother expected to be married in October to Eunice Harris, of Chester. We were glad to see him settled but sorry to lose his daily companionship. He was a kind brother. True, he was not going far, but it could never be the same.

The Saturday before Norwood's wedding day, Janie and I were invited to come to Chester, to meet our future sister-in-law. She lived with her sister, Mrs. James Brawley. Every day others in the wedding party arrived, so, what with those in the house and the young people in the neighborhood, we certainly had a gay time. Eunice was a Presbyterian, so the ceremony was performed in her church but Father married them.

Back at home a wonderful piece of news awaited me; Colonel Rion was going to build and furnish a model school-room, and I was to teach in it. His idea was that his children

might better enjoy their school days, and it afforded him much amusement to spend his surplus money in this way.⁸

Of course, all Winnsboro was aware and deeply concerned over what was going on in South Carolina this fall. There were determined men here, too, who would risk their lives to get rid of Carpet-bag rule in the State. Those political meetings!! All the town trembled. Firearms had been stacked in some central place, ready for immediate use if necessary. On the day when Chamberlain was to speak, the Red Shirts, a Democratic Club, quelled all possibility of a riot, by walking their horses, silently, up and down, through all the streets of the town, under strict command to make no reply, not even to an insulting gibe. The mob was made uneasy by this unusual proceeding—it worked. By four o'clock the town was deserted, not a black face was to be seen.

Fearing trouble, a company of U. S. soldiers had been sent, and they camped in the pines just back of our house. We were waked by the reveille and went to bed by taps, if that is what they called it. We heard that the commanding officer said that that Red Shirt maneuver was grand, the best thing he had ever seen in his life. Avoiding anything that could possibly bring about a collision between these soldiers and the citizens, all daughters and young wives were forbidden to be on the streets after dark. There were many bar rooms in the town then, and reeling soldiers could sometimes be seen making their way back to the camp.

Lou was then living in what is now called the Coan house. Being a good walker, I thought nothing of the distance be-

⁸ James H. Rion, for whom Rion, S. C., is named. He was a native of Montreal, Canada, but came to South Carolina early in life. He was graduated with first honor from the South Carolina College in 1850 and taught in Mount Zion Institution under James W. Hudson. He served as a captain in the Confederate Army.

*Colonel of the
S.C. 7th Battalion*

when a roar like heavy thunder, or rather like a long, heavy freight train of cars, rolled swiftly under the house, coming from the southeast and passing to the northwest. We looked at one another in alarm for a second, not knowing what it was; but only for a second, for the house began to jerk from side to side for what seemed the distance of a foot, then commenced rocking. Before we had recovered speech, here came another shock. The lamp danced on the table, some of the pictures on the wall turned over, and the chairs rocked. We went out on the piazza—the cows were lowing, the dogs were barking, the chickens cackling, the leaves on the trees making a shuddering moan, while from the church on the other side of the freight depot, the terrified Negroes were screaming "Judgment!! Judgment!!" as they scrambled for the street. Those were the two heavy shocks, but light ones continued all night and for many months afterwards. I don't think the earth was quiet all winter, for the oil in a glass lamp that we used was always swaying, even when everything was quiet. I was not happy that winter. I was always expecting a shock. I had feared storms, but they were child's play to an earthquake.

Do you know what it is to be lonesome? Try spending a sleepless night out in the country during earthquake times, listening to a doleful chorus of frogs and katydids. I think you would find out.

News was brought to us, before breakfast one morning in December, that Col. Rion had had an attack of angina in the night and had died. Sorrow was again close to us. Following his death there was much excitement, for a story was circulated over town that just before he died, he told the doctors the secret of his life—that he was the son of the lost Dauphin of France, the son of Louis XVI. It is easy to imagine how such

a statement would be received in a small town, and *that* his home town, where he had been living for many years. "Incredible," said everyone. The doctors thought, as well as his son, Preston, that it was an hallucination caused by the opiates that had been given him. I don't think Mrs. Rion believed it, either. The doctors said he told them that he had promised Mr. John C. Calhoun, under oath, to keep the secret until he lay on his death bed, and never to hold any office in this country. He said he had told no one but his daughter, Maggie, just before she went abroad. *We* believed the story, for we knew we could spot the time he passed the secret on to her—that afternoon she had appeared so thrilled over Marie Antoinette. It was no hallucination, we were sure. How often we had seen him, in the summer afternoons, sitting on the railroad bank just opposite his home, pulling at his goatee, lost in thought or dreaming.

The doctors said that Col. Rion had told them that his father, the Dauphin, did not die in prison, but was smuggled out in a clothes-basket, and was later taken to Holland, disguised as a girl. From Holland he was brought to Canada by the wife of the Duke of Orleans. She called herself Madame de Rion and the Dauphin, Henry de Rion. Some years later, Count Argenteau came from France to the United States, on a secret mission. He visited John C. Calhoun, the Vice-President, at that time, and told him that the Dauphin was a British officer in Canada, under the name of Henry de Rion, and that he must be protected until a battleship called for him. He married Margaret Hunter May 28th, 1827, and died March 7th, 1828, a few weeks before the birth of his son, James Henry Rion. His tomb is said to be in Westminster Abbey and to bear the inscription, "A Gentleman of France." John C. Calhoun

was appointed the child's guardian. Different stories are told about this affair, but undoubtedly Col. Rion had a very unusual family, utterly unlike any other I have known. All of them were very talented.

CHAPTER IX

PROWLERS BY NIGHT

After Col. Rion's death, I felt it best to give the kindergarten back to Mrs. Rion. She immediately sold the entire furnishings to a school in Georgia. She then converted the house into a very comfortable cottage which she rented. Her home was never the same after the Colonel's death. All of her children were married and living in homes of their own, except Maggie and Hannah. Hannah was ten years old then, and I think was sent to a school in Charleston. Maggie lived with her brother Willie most of the time. Mrs. Rion seemed very restless, and to find it hard to adjust herself to changed conditions. At one time, no one was with her but little Jimmie, Preston's oldest son. Then Willie was stricken with a fatal illness, and she had him with her until he died, after which Maggie secured a position as librarian at the University of South Carolina and moved to Columbia, taking Lucille, Willie's widow, and her two children, Willie and Margaret, to make their home permanently with her. Many of the recollections of my early youth were interwoven with this family and it grieved me to see the home break up.

The young people ask me what did we do in those days when there were no radios nor movies. The long winter evenings at home were delightful, when Mother and Em knitted and crocheted, and I read aloud to them Dickens, Thackeray and Bulwer novels. How we did enjoy them! I think we were happier, too, than these pleasure hunters of the present days, who go to movies, not outstanding ones either, just to kill time. They are miserable if they are not going somewhere.