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Found On Johnson's Island.

By Mrs. G. Griffing Wilcox.

Historic Johnson's Island that little patch of land of some 300 acres, used during the civil war as a prison of the Confederate army is always of great interest to the people of the South, as well as those of the North.

It has been used almost exclusively for farming purposes, great fields of wheat, corn, vineyards and orchards giving up their products year in and year out.

The plow and the reaper, in due course of time, have been used to advantage within the very confines, now marked only by faint traces, of the once strong stockade, where hundreds of the brave soldiers of the South repined, while their brothers were heroically repulsing the onslaught of the enemy.

The spade, the hoe and the plow of the agriculturist have turned up

many relics of the civil war, both of the soldiers in gray imprisoned at Johnson's Island, as well as of the soldiers in blue who kept vigilant watch over them.

Canteens, parts of fire arms, sabres and swords, buttons of brass and bone and pearl, that once held the coat of gray, in place over the hearts beating with hope as meagre tidings of victorious battles were carried to them, or sad and disconsolate as the days of imprisonment lengthened into weeks and months and even years, and then bursting with grief as their comrades, to the number of more than 200 were removed from their messes cold in death to be buried on that lone island, among strangers, and in a strange land.

Every relic found on the little island has hidden within itself a story of trials and tribulations, hopes and fears, which will never be known other than to its insatiate self.

A find made by a party of summer tourists out on a pleasure jaunt reveals a story of more than ordinary interest.

While roaming about the island the attention of one of their number was attracted by a peculiarly colored snake lazily sunning himself on a large flat rock.

The party wishing to find to what particular family the reptile belonged, made an effort to capture it as soon as disturbed it darted under the rock. A lever was procured and the huge stone turned; when the task was accomplished his snake ship had disappeared; but their surprise was great to find imbedded in the earth beneath the rock, where they had presumably rested for more than a quarter of a century, a small, morocco-bound Bible, secured by a gold clasp much tarnished, but intact, with the letters "J. A. L." engraved on its surface.

By its side lay a large silver

match safe, similarly marked, "J. A. L." appearing on its side. These articles being formed of almost imperishable material, and having been so completely protected from the rain and weather by the immense bowlder, were found to be in a perfect state of preservation.

Examination showed that the fly leaves and the inside of the covers were filled with writing, but, having been executed with a lead pencil, was almost indecipherable without the aid of a microscope.

This Bible is different from others in that a story of love—love pure and simple is delineated upon its pages, and like others, because it appears to have been the joy and solace of its owner; the passages marked and the words written therein indicate as much.

On the title page of this book is inscribed in most excellent handwriting the name of its owner, as follows: "Lieut. John A. Lofton, Company A, Wade Hampton's Brigade, Jeff Davis Legion, Army Northern Virginia, Dec. 19, 1863.

On the reverse side of the title page also appears these additional markings: "Lieut. John A. Lofton, Johnson's Island, Sandusky Bay, Ohio, March 10, 1834".

Turning over the pages of this precious book the 35th verse of the second chapter of Acts of Apostles is under cored.

Lieut. Lofton must have had bright hopes for the future when he marked this particular passage, as a more appropriate text for a war prison sermon could not have been found. As interesting as is the foregoing, the inside of the first cover tells of the most pathetic tale.

This is an affair of the heart of a love story.

The chirography is that of a woman and executed with great care and precision, and seems to breathe undying love and devotion for the man for whom they are inscribed.

The following is the inscription: "Presented to Lieut. John A. Lofton by Blanche Lee, June 28, 1861. Magnolia Plantation, Miss." appended is the following: "My sincerest wishes for you will be found in Numbers, sixth chapter, 24th, 25th and 26th verses. Never forget thine own true and faithful Blanche."

So much for the Bible hidden away by a Confederate officer four decades and more gone. Now to its companion in those lonely virgils, "the match safe." This is of

sterling silver, heavily embossed and securely closed.

On pressing the spring the lid flew back, disclosing, not matches, Oh! kind reader! but something "far above rubies" in sentimental value to its owners—an "ivory type," clear, pure and beautiful, upon whose polished surface there appear a fair young face, all aglow with happiness and love, surrounded by a mass of golden hair: the eyes were deepest violet and laughed back at the holder just as they did four decades and more ago.

This memento is framed in the purest gold.

Tied with a knot of now faded blue ribbon was a long soft curl of the same golden hair shown in the picture.

These sad memorials of love, trust and the "lost cause" were tearfully and sorrowfully gathered together and tenderly carried to Cincinnati and there laid away in the safety deposit vault of the First National Bank of that city.

The finding of these relics by this party of pleasure seekers show the pathetic phase of at least one of the 3200 Confederate officers, who were prisoners of war on the island.

The old records of those who passed away at Johnson's Island, and subsequently found a final resting place there, have all been closely examined, but no such name as the one given above has been found, and accordingly the conclusion may be drawn that "Prisoner Lieut. John A. Lofton" did not die while in captivity, but was one of the 3000 who were given their liberty at the close of the struggle, and it may be possible that he is still among the living and can claim his long lost treasures.

Jumps From Boat.

The 5 year old son of Indian Far, of Mandeville, jumped from a boat while a half mile out in the lake last Monday and was drowned. A drunken negro woman had charge of the child and let him get into the boat.

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LEAVES ARRIVES

Daily, Except Sunday.

7:45 a m Jackson, Columbia, Tyertown, Bogalusa, Folsom, Covington and Intermediate points 5:55 p m

4:20 p m Folsom, Columbia, Tyertown, Bogalusa and intermediate points 8:50 a m

SUNDAY ONLY

7:35 a m Jackson, Columbia, Tyertown, Bogalusa and intermediate points 8:05 p m

8:00 p m Columbia, Tyertown, Bogalusa, Folsom, Covington and intermediate points 10:20 a m

Sunday and Wednesday Excursions

7:35 a m Folsom, Covington, Abita Springs, Mandeville, Lacombe, Forest Glen and intermediate points 8:05 p m

LOCAL TIME TABLE.

ARRIVES LEAVES

North Bound

8:50 a m No. 2, Daily except Sunday 10:00 a m

New Orleans to Jackson

7:00 p m No. 4, Daily except Sunday 7:10 p m

New Orleans to Columbia

10:55 a m No. 12, Sunday only 10:50 a m

New Orleans to Jackson

8:50 p m No. 8, Sunday only 8:05 p m

New Orleans to Columbia

6:40 a m No. 11, Daily except Sunday Tyertown to Bogalusa

3:40 p m No. 16, Daily except Sunday Tyertown to Bogalusa

7:55 a m No. 18, Sunday only Tyertown to Bogalusa

8:40 p m No. 20, Sunday only Tyertown to Bogalusa

SOUTH BOUND

2:55 p m No. 1, Daily except Sunday 3:05 p m

Jackson to New Orleans

6:00 a m No. 3, Daily except Sunday 6:10 a m

Columbia to New Orleans

4:50 p m No. 11, Sunday only 5:05 p m

Jackson to New Orleans

7:00 a m No. 7, Sunday only 7:20 a m

Columbia to New Orleans

No. 13, Daily except Sunday 9:15 a m

Bogalusa to Tyertown

No. 15, Daily except Sunday 6:25 p m

Bogalusa to Tyertown

No. 17, Sunday only 10:00 a m

Bogalusa to Tyertown

No. 19, Sunday only 8:20 p m

Bogalusa to Tyertown

For further information write ticket agent, or M. J. McMahon, General Passenger Agent; G. B. Auburtin, Assistant General Passenger Agent, Suite 905, Whitney-Central Bldg., New Orleans, La. Long Distance Phone Main 488.

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