

Pioneers in Old Hodgeman in Western Kansas

To appreciate this story, you must carry with you a mental picture of the tiny woman who was the mother of the family.

An only daughter with five loving brothers, and possessing a gentle and amiable disposition, her life had been serene and sheltered.

She was born in New York of New England ancestry, and came with her parents to Waukegan, Ill., when about six years of age. Educated at Hillsdale College, Michigan, she not only was a conscientious student but took an active part in the dramatic work of the school—often writing the play and taking a leading part. She had a sweet true soprano voice and played the melodeon.

The young man to whom she became engaged was also born in New York, of New England stock.

He was nearing graduation from the old well-known Dyrenforth College at Waukegan, Ill., when the guns were fired on Ft. Sumter and Lincoln issued his first call for men.

Leaving school at once he, with his close friend, E. B. Payne, began recruiting men for the 37th Illinois Infantry.

He was a thorough musician playing the violin and other instruments well, and was made Fife Major of the regiment. The young couple decided to postpone their marriage until the end of the war.

He served five years, as at the close of the war, the 37th Illinois was retained a full year guarding government stores in Texas. During those long anxious years, after finishing at Hillsdale, the young woman taught school.

Her letters during those years were destroyed as the young man did not wish to risk their falling into enemy hands, but his letters to her are extant and marvels of dignified affection, historic interest in the old south and pleasing sketches of trifles by the way.