

Excerpt from letter to Dr. Sarah I. Morris

"The name Chambersburg recalled parts of a poem in some magazine of my childhood that so caught my fancy as to make me learn it:

"'Twas the time when the Rebel raiders
Under Early's mad command
O'er the border made their dashing raid
To the north of Maryland,
And Chambersburg, unransomed,
In smoldering ruins slept,
While up the vale, like a fiery gale,
The Rebel raiders swept.
And a squad of gray-clad horsemen
Came thundering o'er the bridge
Where peaceful cows in the meadows browse,
At the foot of the great Blue Ridge."

Well, the Captain stood outside the Widow Brown's door and ordered his men to scatter and forage.

"Then he called, 'Halloo, within there.'
A gentle, fair-haired dame
Across the floor to the open door
In gracious answer came.
'Here, stable my horse, you woman,'
(The soldier's tones were rude.)
Then bestir yourself and from yonder shelf
Set down your store of food.'"

But he got more than he bargained for!

"For her guest she set the table
And motioned him to his place
With a gesture proud - then gently bowed
And quietly asked a grace -
'If thine enemy hunger, feed him.
I obey, dear Christ,' she said.
A creeping blush, with its scarlet flush,
O'er the face of the leader spread.
He rose: 'You have said it, Madam.
Standing within your door is the Southern foe,
But as forth they go they shall trouble
not you, nor yours.'"

However, dear old Brindle was among the loot that the laughing soldiers carried off!

Then ten years old, barefoot Jamie dashed after them, spotted the cow, rode up to the Captain and demanded that he keep his word and return Brindle. And as the boy and cow turned home -

"The rollicking Rebel raiders
Forgot themselves somehow,
And three cheers gave for the hero brave,
And three for the brindle cow!"