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*The Loyal Girl of Winchester =  
Rebecca M. (Wright) Bonsal*

*September 1864*

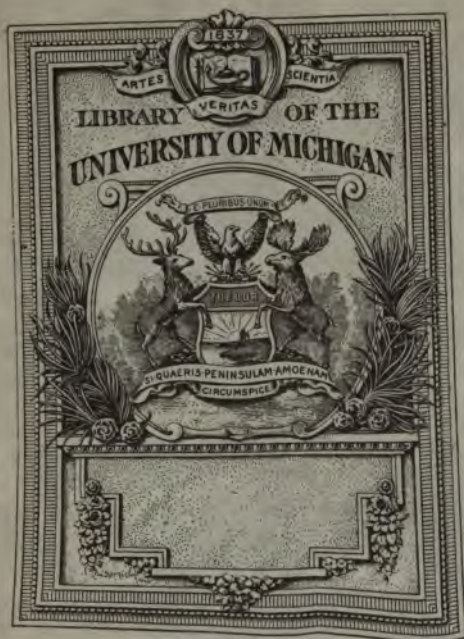
A few copies of "THE LOYAL GIRL OF WINCHESTER" were presented by Gen. R. B. Hayes to the Birchard Library for distribution.

On behalf of the Library I take pleasure in presenting the enclosed copy.

I should be glad to have the Birchard Library placed on your list to receive any books you may have to distribute.

BIRCHARD LIBRARY,  
Fremont, Ohio.

HARRIET A. GAST,  
Librarian.



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*The Loyal Girl of Winchester*

*Rebecca (the daughter) ... of*

*September 1864*





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SPIEGEL GROVE,

FREMONT, O., October 4, 1888.

*My Dear Colonel:*

I hand you herewith a pamphlet now out of print, with the request that you reprint it with the addition of three letters—one by Col. Theodore W. Bean, of Norristown, Pa.; one by Gen. George Crook; and one by Major H. Kyd Douglas, an ex-Confederate officer on Gen. Early's staff.

The incident is too interesting not to be preserved in permanent form. It is to be regretted that neither the scout nor the colored man referred to in the correspondence can now be accounted for. They remain, after diligent search and inquiry by both Mrs. Bonsal and Gen. Sheridan, among "the unknown heroes of the war."

Sincerely,

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES.

Col. JOHN P. NICHOLSON.

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September 15th, 1864.

I learn from Major-General Crook that you are a loyal lady, and still love the old flag.

Can you inform me of the position of Early's forces, the number of divisions in his army, and the strength of any or all of them, and his probable or reported intentions? Have any more troops arrived from Richmond, or are any more coming or reported to be coming?

I am, very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Major-General commanding.*

You can trust the bearer.

Ms. A. 9. 2. 11

September 16th, 1864.

I have no communication whatever with the rebels, but will tell you what I know. The division of General Kershaw and Cutshaw's artillery, twelve guns and men, General Anderson commanding, have been sent away, and no more are expected, as they cannot be spared from Richmond. I do not know how the troops are situated, but the force is much smaller than represented. I will take pleasure hereafter in learning all I can of their strength and position, and the bearer may call again.

Very respectfully yours,

\* \* \* \*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF,

NEW ORLEANS, January 7th, 1867.

*My Dear Miss Wright:*

You are not probably aware of the great service you rendered the Union cause by the information you sent me by the colored man a few days before the battle of Opequan, on September 19, 1864.

It was upon this information the battle was fought and probably won. The colored man gave the note rolled up in the tin-foil to the scout who awaited him at Milwood. The colored man had carried it in his mouth to that point, and delivered it to the scout, who brought it to me. By this note I became aware of the true condition of affairs inside the enemy's lines, and gave directions for the attack. I will always remember this courageous and patriotic action of yours with gratitude, and I beg you to accept the watch and chain which I send to you by General J. W. Forsythe as a memento of September 19th, 1864.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

PHILIP H. SHERIDAN,

*Major-General.*

Miss REBECCA WRIGHT.

## BIOGRAPHICAL.

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REBECCA M. WRIGHT, daughter of Amos M. and Rachel Wright, was born near Winchester, Va., January 31, 1838. She is connected by birth with the Society of Friends, as were her ancestry for many generations. Her parents were members of Fairfax Quarterly Meeting, Virginia, and Baltimore, Maryland, Yearly Meeting. Her father died August 27, 1865, and is buried in the Friends' burying grounds attached to Ridge Meeting, Virginia. Her mother died June 21, 1874, in Rice County, Kansas, while visiting her daughter, and was there laid to rest in private burial-grounds. Miss Wright enjoyed the advantages of a fair education, obtained in the schools at Winchester, Va., and, at the age of fifteen years, was employed as a teacher. At sixteen she declined further employment in this calling, and took a year's course of study at the Friends' School in Loudon County, Va., taught by Samuel M. Janney. For three years prior to the war she taught a private school under the care of the Friends at Hopewell Meeting, Va. Subsequently she was assistant teacher in a private school of eighty pupils, but her pronounced Union sentiments, during the early days of the rebellion, were distasteful to the management and the popular feeling of the community. She therefore withdrew from the institution, and opened a private school in Winchester. Her sentiments were well known; she taught the children of loyal parents, and never lost faith in the Union cause, or refused to aid the friends of the National government and its armies in the many and memorable struggles for the possession of the Shenandoah Valley.

Miss Wright was appointed to a position of honor in the Treasury Department at Washington in the year 1868, in recognition of her distinguished service to the country. She subsequently married William Carpenter Bonsal. She still retains her position, and at present resides at the National Capital.

T. W. B.

HAGERSTOWN, MD., July 9, 1883.

Colonel BEAN:

In reply to yours of the 2d inst.

General Early was reinforced in July, 1864, after his return from Washington, by General Anderson, commanding Kershaw's division of infantry (about 4,000), Fitz Lee's cavalry (say 1,500), and Cutshaw's battalion of artillery (twelve guns and necessary men). This command was not engaged except in unimportant skirmishes while Early was cavorting over the lower Valley. On September 14 Anderson left to join Lee with Kershaw's division of infantry and Cutshaw's battalion of artillery. Sheridan a few days afterwards attacked and defeated Early at Winchester, *having learned of Anderson's departure.*

After Early's defeat at Fisher's Hill, and before the battle of Cedar Creek, Kershaw and Cutshaw were again ordered to Early (Kershaw's division reduced to about 3,300) and made up to him his losses at Winchester and Fisher's Hill. About the same time (October 5) Rosser's brigade of cavalry (a small one of say 700) also joined Early, and got whipped at Tom's Brook almost as soon as he had come up.

You will find these facts are stated in Early's pamphlet and also in Pond's book on the Shenandoah Valley in 1864. The estimates I have given you are larger than General Early's (for he only speaks of the actual effective strength), and about the same as Mr. Pond's.

Very truly,

H. KYD DOUGLAS.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE PLATTE,  
OMAHA, NEB., September 26th, 1886.

Colonel THEO. W. BEAN, Norristown, Pa.

*My Dear Colonel:*

In reply to your favor of the 19th inst. I have to say that I became acquainted with Rebecca Wright previous to General Sheridan's arrival, and became convinced of her loyalty and high character; but as about the time referred to General Sheridan and myself had many conferences during each day, sometimes in the presence of other persons and sometimes alone, sometimes in our tents, and at other times in the open air, beyond the fact of my recommending her to General Sheridan's favorable consideration I now have no other recollections on the subject.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE CROOK.