

December 24, 1864 - "Nothing is safe, no help is anywhere. . . " the emolument of war in Maury County, an excerpt from the diary of Nimrod Porter



Gen. Croxton's headquarters is in our house, with his whole brigade camped all over our yard, lots, lane and everywhere they can get near enough a fence to keep them in wood. With reluctance the Gen. Ordered the provost guard to station out their guards all around the house, but it only gave the guards a better opportunity for marauding than the common soldiers, and they made the best of it. They took all the apples out of the cellar. They broke the weatherboarding off the house for fires, burnt the yard fences, went in our smoke house and took the meat. They cooked the last old gobbler and all the chickens over a fire in the yard.

They even took the boots off the blacks [i.e., slaves]. Considerable fuss over that. They should not rob the blacks.

Last night they took all black Sukey's^{Note 1} money, all my corn and what little oats I have left.

There is great tribulation in the country, stealing horses, mules, hogs, breaking in houses. The soldiers are very insulting and impose on everybody, stealing and encouraging the blacks to steal and do every manner of rascality. Nothing is safe, no help is anywhere for our unfortunate condition. All, all that we have is nearly gone. How will we live? What will we eat?

I wish there was a river of fire a mile wide between the North and the South that would burn with unquenchable fury forever more and that it could never be passed to the endless ages of eternity by any living creature.

Is there no hope for this dying land?

Tomorrow is Christmas day, a bitter one for us, black or white. A grey fox ran under the kitchen walk. I shot it for dinner. We have a little parched corn.

Diary of Nimrod Porter, December 24, 1864.

Note 1: Unidentified.