

Within thy warmth and light I feel  
That life, that death, that all is well."

### My Creed

I cannot kneel and pray  
To wind or water, or to ethereal  
Wide spaces, for they do not meet my need  
From day to day.

Not evolution's tale,  
Nor layered stones of science cold and bare  
Can sooth and comfort and lift out the spirit  
From sorrow's vale.

But in some quiet place,  
A temple, or a lovely woodland scene,  
My full heart speaks, and I lift eyes unto  
My Father's face.

—Agatha Tiegel Hanson.

### Reminiscences

By Agatha Tiegel Hanson  
Washington, D. C.

As the years have passed and I have frequently glanced back at my girlhood, I realize more and more how fortunate I was to attend Gallaudet just when I did, graduating with the class of 1893. Our patron saint was then in his prime. One birthday morning I remember his coming into the senior class he conducted, and when the applause had subsided he said with a smile, "I am fifty-five years young." And indeed he was. Dr. Fay and Professors Hotchkiss and Draper, the three men who next to Gallaudet most influenced the students, were also in their best years. The various contacts we had with these men, in the classroom, in the groups of on-lookers on the athletic field, at the chapel talks, at social gatherings, and in the cordial kindness and fine manners of their homes, have influenced for life, many other students besides myself. I particularly remember the Sunday morning Bible classes, the seniors with Dr. Gallaudet. These friendly contacts, and the deep interest shown to every one of us, made our college days golden ones. The weeks, months and years slipped away, and all too soon we stood at the threshold of the world, where we had to prove that we were worth all the instruction, care and kindness that we had received.

Then for me followed another fortunate occurrence. I was appointed a teacher at the Faribault, Minnesota, School for the Deaf, and passed from the pleasant environment of Gallaudet to the equally pleasant surroundings of the Minnesota School. This school was built up and fostered by Dr. J. L. Noyes, who was a man sent by God for that work. Tall and serious, imposing and yet unassuming, he created a fatherly and benign atmosphere at that school. It was like a big, happy family, and the creed of Dr. Noyes was to do his duty every day, and well indeed did he do it. His interest extended to every pupil, teacher, and employee. He belonged to the great superintendents of that day, ranking with Currier, Crouter, Wilkinson, Peet, Jones, Gillett, Mathison,

and as I knew him better than I did them, he seemed to lead them all. His graduates showed a high degree of education and good character, and attained a good degree of success after leaving school.

These six years at Faribault are for me full of pleasant memories. In the fall, shortly after school opened, came the glory of the autumn leaves, the frost transforming the landscape with a colorful brush. Then, as it grew colder and the snow fell, there were sleigh rides under warm buffalo robes. It was in the day before automobiles, and the horses trotted to the sound of jingling bells, which we seemed to hear. Later still, on the crooked little river near the school, waggishly named Straight River, were the frequent skating parties when pupils and teachers mingled, stopping now and then in their skating to warm fingers and toes at the fires on the bank. And the coasting parties down the long snowy slopes, on great bob-sleds expertly controlled by keen eyes and quick strong arms. I particularly remember one coasting party made up of teachers, who shot down the long hill on a brilliantly moonlit night. The big boys made skis in the carpenter shop and were seen out of school hours speeding down the hills.

On Sundays Tom Sheridan and I, being unmarried, had long free afternoons, during which we visited alternately at the Smith and Schwirtz homes, short walks away. When the freshly



Agatha Tiegel Hanson

fallen snow was deep and had not yet been cleared from the paths, Tom would go ahead and I would follow, planting my footsteps in his. We always received a cordial welcome at these two homes, whose ladies were of a hospitable spirit. There we sat, safe and warm, the Smiths with us at the Schwirtz house, and the Schwirtzes at the Smith abode, and discussed every topic, history, religion, politics, people, current events. Dr. Smith being principal and the exceedingly able editor of the Companion, was, if not a professor at the breakfast table, then a professor at our Sunday afternoon gatherings. He had a masterly command of strong, clear English, and forceful plain sign language, and we listened to him with absorption while the afternoon hours sped away. Sometimes Mr. L. C. Tuck was with us, and though he was an able thinker and speaker on his own account, he usually preferred to sit back, observe and listen. Occasionally Dr. Olof Hanson joined the group and he and Dr. Smith had discussions which held the interest of us all. They were in opposite political camps, or pretended to be for the sake of argument. Tom, being newly out of college, was content mostly to listen to the older men, though now and then we had a glimpse of his characteristic humor.

And so six happy years glided away, and the contacts I made both at Gallaudet and at Fari-bault have given me the conviction that there is nothing under heaven so fine as simple kindness, plain honesty, and an unassuming demeanor.

"Sublimity always is simple," says our great poet, Longfellow.

## History of the Purple Heart

General Washington pinned the first one on a soldier from Connecticut, a man whose direct descendant was to win it at a place called Guadalcanal . . .

By Pauline Mackie Hopkins

A few years ago an old coat of blue homespun was found in a barn in New Hampshire. A tiny silk heart, bound with a tarnished gold cord, was pinned on the left breast of the coat and sufficient color remained in the faded silk to identify the decoration as the Badge of Merit, the Purple Heart. It looked more like a Valentine, or a small pin-cushion for a lady's workbag, than an order designed and conferred by one of the greatest and most uncompromising generals who ever lived.

The coat had belonged to Daniel Bissell, a soldier of the American Revolution, one of the three men—all from Connecticut—on whom General Washington bestowed the decoration.

The others were Sergeant William Brown, who received it "for unusual fidelity and most essential service," and Sergeant Elijah Churchill, a carpenter of Enfield, who was cited for his "extraordinary gallantry making midnight raids with his small company"—rather like our Commandos in the present war.

The original Purple Heart—now in Deerfield, New Hampshire—is believed to be the first military decoration for bravery given without respect to rank, except the Russian Order of St. George. It is thought that the purple silk of which the first ones were made was a gift, to be used for a

waistcoat, given to General Washington by a French friend.

It was in June, 1783, that the Purple Heart was awarded to Sergeant Daniel Bissell, of the Second Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Army—"Sergeant Bissell having performed some important service with the intimate knowledge of the Commander-in-Chief in which the fidelity, perseverance and good sense of the said Sergeant were conspicuously manifested."

This "important service" started on an August afternoon in 1781 when Daniel Bissell, tall, brown-haired and hazel-eyed, walked up the brick-bordered path of the Dutch farmhouse at Newburgh, New York, where General Washington had established his headquarters. The room he entered was a pleasant one with heavy rafters and huge fireplace "so big that a man could stand upright in it." A basket piled with sewing was on a table and a bunch of marigolds was in one of the row of silver camp goblets on the mantel, for Mrs. Washington was in camp with her husband.

Bissell saluted as the tall figure of Washington filled the narrow aperture.

"Sergeant," said the General, "you have been highly recommended to me by Colonel Hamilton.

"Thank you, sir."

"I wish you to enter my secret service."

Bissell paled, but he returned his commander's look with as sincere and unflinching a gaze as that which met his.

"Yes, sir."

"I need exact and detailed information as to what are the real intentions of the British. I have had communications from them, telling me that peace negotiations are on the way, but from the perverse system of their policy, I confess I am inclined to doubt and suspect everything from that quarter. I want you to go to New York and mingle with the officers and refugees in the taverns and coffee houses. I have other means of finding out positions and supplies."

Washington paused and took a bottle of ink, a paper and purse of money from the desk. "Here are written instructions and the name of my agent, to whom you will deliver information of value. Memorize them and destroy the paper. Occasionally write your information on any new publication, ends of books of small value, blank leaves of almanacs, but test the paper to be sure it is of good quality as the ink is not easily legible on poor paper. The enemy will watch for letters, not so much for scraps of paper. This is a bottle of white ink. Be careful of it for I have not a great supply. Use money openly when you need to. In order to give verisimilitude to your action as a spy, take advantage of the first opportunity to leave camp as a deserter. Remember we must have New York back."

"Yes, sir. I will carry out your instructions to the letter," said Bissell.

Under the guise of going fishing, Bissell rowed up the river, set the boat adrift and made what progress he could the first night. At break of dawn he entered a barn and found the clothes of a drover, put them on and hid his uniform in the woods. He journeyed by night and lurked in the woods by day. He saw men of his own company searching for "the deserter," and shuddered as he thought of his fate if he were caught.