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Ida Powell Dulany. *In the Shadow of the Enemy: The Civil War Journal of Ida Powell Dulany.* Edited by Mary L. Mackall, Stevan F. Meserve, and Anne Mackall Sasscer. Voices of the Civil War Series. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009. 328 pp. $44.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-57233-658-2.

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A Journal of Deprivation and Survival in the Chaos of Civil War Northern Virginia

The Civil War journal of Ida Powell Dulany (1836-97) is a vivid and elegantly written account of a young woman's relentless struggle to survive the chaos in one of the war's most hotly contested regions. *In the Shadow of the Enemy* recounts in detail Dulany's daily tribulations and successes as she attempted to hold together her family and her estate after her husband joined the Confederate army. Published as part of the Voices of the Civil War series by the University of Tennessee Press, Dulany's journal offers students of the conflict extraordinary insight into how the local inhabitants coped with a steady flow of deprivation, violence, and uncertainty.

Two key features of Dulany's life added to the drama she experienced. One was her youth; she was twenty-five-years-old when she assumed sole responsibility for Oakley, the large and prosperous estate that she shared with her husband, Henry Grafton "Hal" Dulany. The other feature was the number of people for whom she was responsible: the couple's three children of ages five, four, and two; her mother; her maternal grandmother; and her two younger sisters, Kate and Jenny Powell. In addition, Oakley was home to sixty-nine slaves, more than half of them under age fourteen. All of these people depended on Ida's ability to manage the estate in the face of overwhelming odds.

Probably no part of the nation suffered more during the Civil War than the counties of northern Virginia on either side of the Blue Ridge. Squads, companies, brigades, and even entire armies from both sides swept back and forth across the region. From June 1861 to April 1865, the Old Dominion counties closest to the Potomac River were overrun not only by regular troops but also by partisans, guerillas, and deserters.

Dulany's journal does not cover the entire war years from beginning to end. There were periods when she did not write, some of which she commented about when she resumed her writing. There is one huge, unexplained gap in the journal, from July 1863 to December 1864. She may not have written, or what she wrote may have been lost.

Since about 1990, interest in the Civil War's impact on civilians, and on women in particular, has resulted in the publication of a host of revealing diaries of Southern women, including northern Virginians Cornelia Peake McDonald and Lucy Buck (*A Woman's Civil War: A Diary, with Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862*, ed. Minrose C. Gwin, [1992], and *Shadows on My Heart: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Rebecca Buck of Virginia*, ed. Elizabeth R. Baer [1997]). Dulany's account rounds out these two publications by offering insight into civilian life just across the Blue Ridge on the Virginia Piedmont.

Although some Civil War diarists assumed that they were writing only for themselves and that no one else would ever read the intimacies they put down on paper, Dulany apparently had an eye on the future. She began her journal on July 25, 1861, just a few days after the war's first major battle at Manassas, less than twenty miles from where she lived. "This morning my personal participation in the sad experiences of this dreadful war commenced. Hal has gone … and to-night I begin my journal, not so much to record my own feelings as to give a simple statement of events as they pass from time to time" (p. 4). Her entry of August 10, 1862, indicates that she suspected that she was making a record for "history" (p. 130).

The intensely personal nature of Dulany's journal does not seem to suffer in the slightest from her apparent belief that someone else might someday study it. The most prevalent theme she put down on paper was her intense devotion to her husband. They married six years before he joined the army when she was nineteen and he was twenty-one. On page after page she fretted about his

health and safety. Hal ended up serving only one year in the Confederate cavalry; he was blinded in one eye from an accident in his youth, and an army surgeon advised him that if he did not resign his lieutenant's commission, he would lose the sight in his good eye. Even after Hal was back at home, Ida worried about him constantly. He was the target of continuing harassment by the Federal troops who regularly visited Oakley and hid out both in the mountains and, during one surprise home invasion, in the attic of their substantial Italianate-style house. One of the many excellent features of the editing of Ida's journal is the inclusion of the surviving letters that Hal sent to Ida from the front. He was as devoted to her as she was to him, and he respected her ability to manage Oakley in his absence, even at her young age and with little or no experience.

One of the challenges that Ida faced after her husband left was the management of the plantation's slaves. She had a fairly typical experience. As the liberating Union army got closer–and it got close to Oakley early in the war due to the estate's proximity to Washington DC–many of the slaves began to act with "insubordination"; at one point, Dulany remarked how difficult it was to deal with a "dissatisfied unwilling servant" (pp. 35, 24). When Federal troops arrived, many of the slaves fled. Some of them, particularly among the older household servants, remained, and some who left later returned when they encountered significant hardships trying to survive in a hostile world. Back on the farm they were then often paid wages.

Some Southern women confided in their diaries their doubts about the morality of slavery, and a few wrote that, in the end, everyone would be better off without it. There is nothing in Ida's journal, however, that suggests that she questioned whether the "peculiar institution" benefited slave and master alike. While she expressed sympathy for her slaves when they faced family dislocation or suffered in other ways, she also proved willing to order whippings if the slaves' behavior did not suit her.

Like Sarah Morgan, Buck, and countless other diarists, Dulany's devotion to the Southern cause strengthened as the war continued (*Sarah Morgan: The Civil War Diary of a Southern Woman*, ed. Charles East [1991]). This seems counterintuitive at first, for in her expressions of outrage about the war, Ida did not discriminate between Southerners and Northerners. "It would have been well if before this war had begun, the people who are responsible for it had counted the cost, and compared it with the gain, that seeing how immeasurably the former exceeded the latter, they might have been wisely dissuaded from it" (p. 24). And, "At times I have an indescribable feeling of rebellion against this wicked cruel war" (p. 35).

Morgan, McDonald, Buck, and Dulany all described friendly encounters with a few of the Union men who came to their homes early in the conflict. As the war progressed, however, charitable references to the enemy got rarer and then vanished altogether. Dulany and her fellow diarists ultimately concluded that no Union soldier could be trusted, not the educated officers whom they had previously described as "gentlemen," nor those who were known to their families before the nation divided, nor those to whom they were distantly related. Mistreatment at the hands of the Yankees made these women and girls firmer in their support of the Confederate cause. And, of course, the most abusive Union soldiers got the most ink in the diaries.

In Stephen Ash's seminal study of the war's impact on Southern civilians, he describes the vastly different experiences of Southerners depending on where they lived: the relatively secure and orderly towns garrisoned by Federal troops; the ever-changing Confederate frontier where the two warring armies clashed but often did not stay for long; the Confederate interior where the Federal army did not penetrate until the end of the war; and no-man's land, that vacant space between the two warring armies where there was a near complete breakdown of law and order and where soldiers from both sides did as they pleased, including plundering from local inhabitants (*When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* [1995]). In many ways Fauquier and Loudon counties in northern Virginia–Oakley was right on the county line–were the Civil War's ultimate no-man's land.

Added to the conditions that afflicted citizens of other no-man's lands was the activity of John Singleton Mosby, the celebrated "Gray Ghost of the Confederacy," whose band of partisan rangers operated with impunity in northern Virginia. Federal authorities were continually frustrated by their inability to catch Mosby and his men, and they took out their frustration on the local population, particularly those whom they suspected of harboring the irregular cavalry troopers. That included Dulany, who provided assistance and comfort to Mosby's men.

Federal troops visited Oakley constantly. Sometimes they simply made a nuisance of themselves by their mere presence. Other times they helped themselves to commodities that they needed: cattle, horses, goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, ducks, hogs, eggs, hams, bacon, wheat,

corn, wagons, harnesses–anything they could eat or use. Sometimes they simply vandalized the Dulanys' place, killing animals, burning farm buildings, and destroying crops. At one time they threatened to burn the mansion. These incidents only strengthened Ida's resolve to resist the "horrid looking brutes" and "blue devils" (pp. 166, 168).

Inevitably, such a profound experience changed Dulany. Her whole world was turned upside down. "I am … struck with the great change these times have effected in my own character…," she wrote on August 10, 1862. Incidents that had outraged her at first became commonplace as time went on. "As blow after blow falls and our hearts are in a measure seared by the constant touch with the fire, we grow graver and older and take a great shock more quietly than we would a year ago have taken a trifling annoyance" (p. 130). Perhaps nothing afflicted Ida more than the uncertainty of it all, not even the "sick" (migraine) headaches that occasionally sent her to her bed. Again and again she recorded the anxiety she felt because she simply had no idea what each day would bring.

Through it all, Ida fed and clothed her children and the rest of her extended family, fed and clothed the slaves who remained, read to and taught lessons to her children, worshiped and prayed, carried on an almost daily correspondence with her husband when he was away, read every newspaper she could get her hands on, nursed wounded soldiers from both sides after she witnessed a deadly skirmish in front of her house, made trips to neighboring towns to try to buy merchandise, made one shopping trip to Baltimore, aided her neighbors and friends, pleaded with ranking Federal officers to return her horses, oversaw the planting and harvesting of crops, bred and sold livestock, fussed over her slaves, and wrote in her journal. It is impossible not be impressed with her.

One topic missing from Ida's journal, as it is from nearly every diary even in the most liberal of times, is any discussion of time alone with her husband when they were together during the war. Ida's diary and Hal's letters leave no doubt about their passion for each other. They had three children in quick succession following their marriage in1855, but no more children were born after the war began. Those who study the war's impact on families are left to speculate about the conflict's effect on intimate marital relations.

Most of the women's Civil War diaries published since 1990 benefit from expert editing, and Dulany's journal is no exception. Mary L. Mackall and Anne Mackall Sasscer have deep roots in the rolling Piedmont region where Ida lived. They were assisted by Stevan F. Meserve, author of *The Civil War in Loudoun County, Virginia: A History of Hard Times* [2008]). Several aspects of the editing make it outstanding, including a thorough introduction to the family. "Timeline of the War" inserts are placed throughout the text to put Ida's experiences in context, while maps put her story in geographic context. One map shows nearly every place Ida mentions in her diary, and the other shows how her area fit into the larger region of northern Virginia and adjacent Maryland.

The editors' endnotes are complete almost beyond belief. When Ida describes an encounter with someone, including soldiers whom she does not name, the editors identify the person. Anyone who has researched the Compiled Service Records of combatants at the National Archives will be impressed with what an accomplishment this is. The otherwise superbly edited work would have been enhanced by using footnotes rather than endnotes and by including a page or two with an alphabetical, descriptive list of the names frequently mentioned in the text. As it is, the reader is required to continually sift through the introduction and the endnotes to identify people.

The six-page epilogue to *In the Shadow of the Enemy* informs us reasonably well about Ida's postwar life. Not unexpectedly, her health suffered as a result of all she went through during the war, but this strikingly beautiful woman of extraordinary intelligence and ability remained renowned for her grace and charm. Hal too suffered from bad health after the war and was afflicted by arthritis that disabled him later in his life. It is unclear whether he lived up to his postwar pledge to abstain from alcohol that he wrote in the family Bible. Oakley slowly returned to being a prosperous estate, and Hal resumed his career as a breeder of fine horses. Ida's two younger sisters married and so did the Dulanys' children. Hal died at age fifty-four in 1888, while Ida lived to age sixty-one and died in 1897. They are buried side by side not far from Oakley. By all accounts, they maintained their devotion to each other to the end.

When I first started reading Dulany's journal, I thought: "Oh no, another Civil War diary." (I have recently read about two dozen of them as background for a writing project.) I quickly became engrossed in the book, however, and it ranks among the most engaging and informative I have studied.

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