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Memoirs of Harriett F Switzer - 02 First Letter

Harriet F. Switzer

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of their varying expressions - that was the
human side, but above all was the blue, blue
sky & the stately pines that whispered - peace.
As we sang "Faith's journey ends in welcome to
our home," we knew that "Lies, Long Shadows"
were forgotten, swallowed up in the "Cloudless Time."
That she, who had suffered so long & so patiently
was experiencing the "joy that ends the night of
weeping."
(Jan. 1884)

A Family Letter. February 1884.

Dear Over All. This is to be a family letter for
I have so much to tell it is going to be long enough
to go round the circle, & then some! I wish in
my last Epistle that Russell had gone to Gainesville
to see about a fine piece of high pine land that
he wished to homestead. I looked for him back
for several days, Joe driving me to the depot
to meet him; as the six o'clock train is apt to be
anywhere from 1/2 an hour to several hours late,
the waiting at times became "tiresome." However,
patience was rewarded at last & I discovered
the dear yellow standing on the platform, waiting
for me that time. He has had quite a little
experience of uncomfortable travel on this ter-
He has taken a bad cold from getting wet
in Gainesville, & - no fire in his room, & I
as hoarse as a crow. En route home, the man-
gave over a cow, the engine kept the track, but the
passenger car went off & - if you will believe it -
there was no bell rope. So it was some few minutes
before the engineer knew what the difficulty
was by the time the train was stopped. The passengers
had been banged from side to side several times,
bruising them pretty badly. Poor Russ was very
lame all over. Fortunately the old fashioned
coupling on the car twisted & saved the train
from going down an embankment. So call
the chimney! There were no accommodations to be had
on the boat & the floor was the only sleeping place.
So you can imagine that my traveller was glad
to get home! And now, you can't guess what

I didn't know it was so interesting to watch
 the removal of pine stumps, there is quite a
 science about it & a great deal of work too.
 We keep about 30 fires going all the time & it takes
 from two to three days to burn one ~~out~~ down
 enough to chop it out. The men first
 dig down quite a deep hole to get at the
 roots, especially the tap root, put a lot of
 rubbish in & set it on fire, when this is
 blazing, one of the stumps that has been
 cut out is thrown on, & there what a
 glorious bonfire we have & the air
 becomes laden with the resinous essence
 of the pine & never fire of it, at night one
 can imagine all sorts of things in the lights
 & shadows of the dancing flames. They
 are getting on finely with the work, but I
 shall be really sorry when the stump
 burning is finished.