

MRS. ALBERT G. BLANCHARD

Follows Her Gallant Eldest Son to the Grave.

Accompanied Her Husband Through War and Leaves Glorious Record to Many Descendants.

The pall of gloom had hardly lifted from the Blanchard household when Death again insinuated its dark presence, and this time Mrs. Marie Louise Forminie Benoit, widow of the late General Albert Gallatin Blanchard, a hero of the Mexican and Civil Wars, answered the inevitable summons. Just eight days ago Major Dawson A. Blanchard, her eldest son, quietly passed over the river to join his comrades of the Grey Army, which awaited his coming on the eternal shores of death. Her motherhood had been her most sacred religion, and the little tender offices of love towards her children had been the expression of her deepest devotion to the Master, who had been her guide through life, and so when her eldest born passed away on last Wednesday one of the strongest ties



MRS. MARIE L. H. B. BLANCHARD.

that had bound her to this life was severed, and gradually she slipped farther and farther from the things of this world, until the end was reached yesterday evening at 2 o'clock. General debility was given as the cause of death, and her passing was like the falling of the daylight, with the glory of night following in its wake.

Mrs. Blanchard was a woman of the old South, and was the highest expression of that womanhood, that has justly given everlasting fame to the land of her birth. To her the land of her nativity was ever some holy and sanctified object, on whose altar should be laid the deepest tribute of love and sacrifices, and so when the war between the States broke out she was not content to stay at home, but followed her husband throughout the whole campaign, that she might be near him and give him her aid and encouragement, and help in every way the men who were fighting for what was dearer than life itself to her.

When General Sherman started on his march of devastation, Mrs. Blanchard was in Columbia, S. C., and was living in a house which had formerly been the Convent of the Valley of the Cross, and when she was notified by one of her faithful negro servants that the army was approaching, full of the resourcefulness of the women of those times, she disguised herself as a nun, and, gathering her children around her, in an attitude of prayer, she waited the coming of the soldiers. When they came they overran the house, until they came to the room where she was, and then, an officer seeing the Sister, told the soldiers to halt, that no one should touch a Sister, as they had been angels of mercy during the war. He thereupon sent for a written order, protecting the house, and this was signed by General John A. Logan, and this insured the safety of the house, for it was the only one left standing. Several years later General Logan came to visit General Blanchard, and Mrs. Blanchard showed him the order, and asked him if he remembered it, and when he said that he did, she told him, to his astonishment, that she had been the Sister who had been accorded protection. She continued to follow her husband until the end of the war.

Mrs. Blanchard was born in this city in 1823, and came from one of the most aristocratic families. She was educated in Paris, and received the best training of those days, and was not only educated, but highly cultured, and was a pencil and brush artist of no mean ability, while she was possessed of a highly cultured voice, and, in addition, was a musician of much power. She was one of the belles of her time, and when only 16 met and married Captain Blanchard, who was a graduate of West Point, and who was in the United States Engineering Corps stationed at Sabine Pass. After his marriage the Captain entered the cotton business, in which he remained until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Mrs. Blanchard raised a large family of children, of which there are still living Mrs. T. J. Hooper, Mrs. M. F. Dunn, Mrs. J. A. Sinclair and H. L. Blanchard. She also leaves two step children, whom she raised and who were devoted to her. One of them, Mrs. Susan B. Elder, was at her bedside when she died. The other is the Rev. Henry Blanchard, of Portland, Oregon. Besides these she leaves twenty-seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Blanchard was a devout Catholic during her whole life, and during her last illness was fortified by the last rites of the Church. The interment will take place this evening from the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, on Napoleon Avenue.