

Mrs. Nancy Staples Dead, Aged Ninety Years

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[Misspellings have been corrected]

Mrs. Nancy Jane Staples passed quietly away Sunday afternoon, April 3rd, at 6:00 o'clock, after an illness of nearly three years, following a stroke of paralysis. Death was not unexpected, as she has been very ill for some weeks, and those who tenderly cared for her realized for several days that the end was near.

Nancy Jane Morton Staples was born on a farm near Prairie Grove, Feb. 19, 1831, having passed her ninetieth birthday. She was a daughter of William and Rachel Morton, and was a twin sister of the late James Morton. She is the last of her father's family, one sister and three brothers having preceded her. With the exception of two years spent in Tennessee, Mrs. Staples has lived practically all of her long and useful life here in this community. She had a most remarkable memory and retained full possession of her faculties until a few hours before her death. She was married to Mr. Rufus Staples in 1884. Mr. Staples died in 1900.

She was a woman of generous impulses and never forgot the hospitable ways of the pioneer. The stranger, even though a beggar, never failed to find food and shelter at her door, and she was at home by the bedside of the sick, and delighted in doing a kind and neighborly act when opportunity presented itself. Before the war between the states, Nancy Morton taught school and during the troublous times she still kept her school and Sunday school going, having for a time to teach in the barn loft of Ed Pittman. Three of the pallbearers at her funeral, Messrs. Pink and James Shofner and Tom Neal, were in her Sunday school class.

It was during the days of the 60's prior to and after the battle of Prairie Grove that Nancy Morton proved herself a heroine. She ministered to the wounded and dying all day that cold Sabbath day, Dec. 7th, and when all had been moved to improvised hospitals here and near by towns, she with a number of young women built rail fences around the dead bodies which were placed in heaps, to secure them from the ravages of wild hogs, which were plentiful here at that time.

After this a party of bushwhackers coming through here visited the Morton home and finding the father in bed with rheumatism, they believing he had much money hid away, proceeded to make him tell where it was. After trying several devices, they put the fire poker into the red hot coals in the big fire place and began to burn his feet. Nancy grabbed the red hot poker to save her father and her hands were burned severely, and for years were drawn out of

shape. However, with those hands she wrought much good for humanity and for her Master. The beautifying influences of a pure religion spread over a life and character as spotless and charming as was ever possessed by any of the noble women who have lived and died during the ages that are gone. When a young girl, she gave her tender heart to God and united with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A few years ago, she became a member of the Presbyterian church U.S.A., and was in this church as she had always been, faithful and true.

Having suffered an accident that made her a cripple for twenty years, she went on a crutch, but till the past three years she was a regular attendant at church and her missionary society. She was industrious and kept knitting and doing fancy work, which she sold for the benefit of missions, which amounted to many dollars.

During the world war she had a part in the knitting for the soldiers, and took a keen interest in our boys, and her daily prayer was that she might live to see it over and our boys return. Her life was gentle, but like the still waters it was deep. In her heart of hearts she carried those she loved.

She was an honorary member of Prairie Grove Chapter United Daughters of the Confederacy, and contributed much history of the old South to the State. She was made Honorary President of the Arkansas Division in 1918.

The funeral service took place from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church Monday afternoon, her former pastor, Rev. E.M. Freyschlag, paying a beautiful and impressive tribute to her life. He was assisted by Rev. Ernest G. Downs and Rev. G.C. Bidwell. A tribute of love and respect was read from her U.D.C. Chapter, and the remains were laid to rest in the cemetery beside her husband and near the other members of her family. Many beautiful flowers were contributed by friends and relatives, and an emblem of red lilies tied with red and white ribbon was sent by her Chapter.

Those who attended the funeral from out of town were Mr. W.H. Morton, Mr. and Mrs. Homer Pearson, Mrs. Ellen Richardson, and Mrs. Gus Bridenthal of Fayetteville, Mr. and Mrs. Mac Morton, Mrs. J.C. Barnett, Mrs. Sallie Allen, and Mrs. John Burdgress of Farmington, and Mrs. T.L. McColloch of Lincoln.