



A Comrade's Lament

on the death of

Samuel H. Peshall

Private, Company G, 18th Illinois Volunteer Infantry

Submitted by John Bartos

The following letter written by Orlando Devere Schooley, Sr. was found in his personal diary. It contains numerous writings, notes, autographs and some Civil War memorabilia. The fly leaf of the diary contains the following inscription: "O.D. Schooley's Book A.D. 1859." Several pages into the Schooley diary is a writing which says the following:

"Lines addressed to the Parents of the late Samuel Peshall killed at the Battle of Fort Donelson, Tenn. Feb 15th, 1862.

Dear Friends,

Let me join in your mourning.
My heart thinks the same saddened tones.
Your son died defending my country.
Then surely your grief is my own.

He fell by the hand of a traitor;
And shall his blood unavenged flow!
O Mother, though heartstrings are breaking,
Let winds hear the echo "No, No".

I know not a Mother's deep anguish,
As she yields to the grave her son,
But O! If my country demanded
I'd whisper, Let thy will be done.

My sympathy gladly I give you,
Alas, your sad heart asks for more!
It yearns to embrace as it has done,
The dear form, earth cannot restore.

No more from his sleep shall he waken,
To hear the reveille at morn,
No booming of cannon shall rouse him,
To brave with his comrades the storm.

I think not his young life was wasted,
How few that have lived to old age,
Have left us so bright an example.
To record on history's page.

The price of a Nation's preserving
Is seen at Fort Donelson's grave.
But better our sons die in battle
Then we all submit to be slaves.

May the kindest of Heaven's rich blessings
Be granted the parents who mourn,
And a Nation with gratitude cherish,
The sacrifice bravely they've borne.

Eternity only will show thee,
Why blights o'er thy brightest hopes fell,
Until then, in quiet submission,
Like Samuel respond, "All is well".

Composed by Emily E. Sperry per O.D. Schooley"