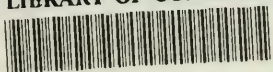


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*S. W. Weld*







*S. M. Weld Jr.*



✓ WAR DIARY AND LETTERS  
OF STEPHEN MINOT WELD

1861-1865 ✓



PRIVATELY PRINTED  
THE RIVERSIDE PRESS

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WAR DIARY AND LETTERS  
OF STEPHEN M. WELD

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IN REMEMBRANCE OF  
MY FATHER  
AND HIS INSPIRATION AND EXAMPLE  
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
TO MY CHILDREN





## PREFACE

THINKING over my life, it has often occurred to me that my children and their descendants might find it of interest to know something about the life of their ancestor who fought in the Civil War, just as I myself would give a great deal if I had some story of my ancestors in the Revolution. Accordingly I have gathered together from my diary, which I kept during a greater portion of the War, — some of which I lost, which made it, of course, unavailable, — also from letters written home to my father and mother and sisters, facts which will interest my children. I have added to it a brief account of the genealogy of the family so far as it is known, also some facts in my father's life, and some in my own life not connected with the War.

Altogether my life has been a varied and interesting one, full of happiness and full of sorrow. Perhaps no fuller than the lives of hundreds of other people; still I give the account to my children for what it is worth, and hope they will be repaid for the trouble of reading it. I have left out a great many portions of my letters, as I realize now that my ideas then were often very faulty and wide of the mark, and that conclusions that I arrived at then are hardly worth printing now. My children reading the war diary must remember that I was only twenty years old when I went into the War, that I had graduated from Harvard when I was eighteen, and was still very young, and must make allowances for opinions expressed in my letters as being those of a very young man, — almost a boy.



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WAR DIARY AND LETTERS  
OF STEPHEN M. WELD





# WAR DIARY AND LETTERS OF STEPHEN M. WELD

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY — THE WELD FAMILY — COLLEGE LIFE

I WISH that during my lifetime, at least, this book should be kept strictly private. There are many remarks about people who are perhaps now living, or whose near relatives may be living, which I should omit if the book were to be made public property by publishing it. Furthermore, there are several laudatory letters which it is right and proper and very pleasant to have my descendants read, but which it would be in exceedingly bad taste for me to publish or give out in any book for general circulation. After I am dead it will be no matter who sees it — perhaps no one will care about reading it.

I think to my grandchildren particularly, and to their children, it may be interesting to read of what will be to them the earlier times of the Republic; and it may help them to realize how important it is for them to support the form of government which their ancestors fought so hard to keep alive and to sustain in time of trouble. I am going to give a short sketch of my life before the War, and also some of the, to me, most important matters that had a bearing on the making or marring of my life up to the time of my seventy-first year. On my last birthday, the fourth of January, 1912, I was seventy years old.

As being of interest to my descendants, I propose to insert here an article written by the Reverend Andrew

P. Peabody, Plummer Professor at Harvard, and a class-mate of my father's, and printed by him in his volume, *Harvard Graduates Whom I Have Known*.<sup>1</sup>

## STEPHEN MINOT WELD

1826

If the members of my class had been asked at any time who of the class was more beloved than any other, I suppose that every one of them would have answered, "Stephen Weld." I do not mean that he was popular, in the vulgar sense of that term. He had none of the traits, arts, or ways by which one wins that title. He united, to a degree which I have seldom or never known beside, the simplicity of a child, the exuberant mirthfulness of an untamed boy, and the thoroughly formed manliness of spirit which could resist evil, surmount obstacles, and make a hopeful beginning of a vigorous life work. I doubt whether the Faculty loved him; and yet such a person as he would be a prime favorite with the present Faculty, so entirely has the pervading spirit of the college régime been revolutionized. He was full of fun and frolic, and no one enjoyed as he did a practical joke, when it could do no harm. His laugh was joy-giving, and I seem to hear it as I write. Though not irregular in attendance on college exercises, I doubt whether he studied much till his Senior year. Yet it was perfectly well understood that he all along had possessed the capacity and taste which he then began to show, and which were sure to make him an excellent scholar whenever he gave his mind to the work. We all recognized in him not only good-nature and good-fellowship, but a thorough nobleness of spirit and character, inborn and inbred. We should have gone to him to take the lead on any gay or festive occasion; but we should have gone to him equally for sympathy under adverse circumstances, or for help which could be rendered only with labor and sacrifice.

Stephen Minot Weld was born in Boston in 1806. His father,

<sup>1</sup> Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1890.



MY FATHER: STEPHEN M. WELD



William Gordon Weld, was an enterprising and for many years a successful ship-master and ship-owner, and distinguished himself by defeating some Algerine pirates who attacked him, and capturing two of their vessels. Subsequently, in our War of 1812, a vessel of his, under his own command, with a valuable cargo and a large amount of specie, was captured by a British frigate off Boston harbor. He had become, by the standard of the times, a rich man, but was so no longer. Several years before this loss, he had removed to Lancaster, and there Stephen was fitted for college, in the school of which I have already spoken. He must have commenced his preparations under the tuition of George B. Emerson.

He entered college at sixteen years of age, without the initial experience of the outside world which a boy gets by attending school away from home. He came with exuberant spirits, with a proclivity for play rather than for work, and with a mirth-provoking power that made him a favorite with the least industrious of his class, while his ingenuousness, his moral purity, and his keen sense of honor won the esteem and affection of those of the opposite type. His father died at the close of his Junior year. From that time he evidently thought more of the future and of his responsibilities in and for it than he had before. He became more studious, and his college work in the Senior year was in every respect creditable. He determined to be a teacher, and felt the necessity of first being a learner. During that and the following year, if my memory serves me aright, he reviewed with care the studies required for admission to college.

On graduating, Mr. Weld was employed for one year as an assistant teacher in the long-established boarding-school of Mr. Greene, at Jamaica Plain. In the following year he opened a similar school in the immediate neighborhood of Mr. Greene's. His mother joined him in the enterprise, taking charge of the housekeeping, and performing her full part in making for the boys under their united care not only a comfortable home, but one on which they always looked back with pleasure and gratitude. She had several younger children to be educated. Of her

older sons, William F. Weld was already in business, yet with no more than the remote prospect of the wealth which he afterward obtained, and he did everything in his power to eke out her slender income; forming habits of personal self-denial which lasted for life, in thus meeting the calls of filial duty. As Stephen prospered, he of course came to share in this work with his brother; for there never was a time when for him the chief happiness of possessing was not the privilege of bestowing. His school grew rapidly in numbers and in reputation, and it is hardly too much to say that its reputation was national; for pupils came to it from every part of the country, and even from Cuba, Mexico, and Yucatan. It continued in undiminished success, till at the end of thirty years Mr. Weld thought himself entitled to the only rest which a man ever ought to seek — a change of work.

In this case the change was not rest. In 1858 Mr. Weld was chosen president of the Metropolitan Railroad Company, then in its infancy; but he suffered so severely from overwork in the complicated affairs of the company, that he felt compelled to resign the office in the following year. The only political offices which he ever held were as a member of the Executive Council under Governors Clifford and Emory Washburn, and as presidential elector in 1864.

During the War of the Rebellion Mr. Weld was second to no one in the country's service, giving time, money, counsel, and effort unsparingly, and always with a sound discretion that largely enhanced the value of whatever he gave or did. He was recognized by the citizens of West Roxbury as foremost in patriotic devotion among those at home or in the field, the living or the dead. Had he been a younger man, I know that he would have enlisted for active duty, and it was in his spirit and under his strong encouragement, that his eldest son, bearing his name (H. U. 1860), entered the army, in which he held an important command with distinguished honor.

Mr. Weld was for nine years, and at the time of his death, one of the Overseers of the College, and among all its alumni there was not one more devoted to its best interests. Shortly

before the War, I forget in what year, he had a class supper at his house, and invited his brother, William F. Weld, to meet us, for the purpose of enlisting him in some enterprise for the benefit of the College. What that enterprise should be, was the subject of the evening's talk. The result was that Mr. Weld determined to erect a building, which should at once meet the actual need of a new dormitory and yield a fair interest on its value as an investment. In accordance with this purpose, he procured plans and estimates, and would have gone on with the building had not the War intervened. When the project was renewed, Stephen was no longer living, and Weld Hall is his brother's tribute to his memory.

Mr. Weld was generous and kind, not only in special channels of beneficence, but in every form and way. He never lost an opportunity of doing good, and no man could have been more ingenious and inventive than he was in discovering and creating such opportunities. It was said that in Jamaica Plain there could not be found an individual who had not in some way been indebted to him for good offices; and none that needed pecuniary help by loan or gift that had not received it from him. He died in 1867, after a short and painful illness, during which he was fully aware of its inevitably fatal issue, which he met with entire calmness and resignation. I was one of the officiating clergy at his funeral. The large church was crowded; and of the many occasions of the kind that I have witnessed, I have never seen one at which there were such tokens of profound sorrow in the entire assembly. The whole community were in mourning for a man who had been every one's friend, and whom every one had loved.

A few anecdotes which I used to hear from my father about his youth may not come in amiss here. When he lived at Lancaster he had to go some two miles every day to school, winter and summer. In doing so he had to cross the Nashua River, and as there was no bridge, he and his brothers crossed in an old boat. He used to tell

me that often he had to break the ice to get the boat across. What a contrast this is to the case of children nowadays, who are provided with transportation by the cities or towns in which they live, if they happen to be any distance from school, — in my opinion a poor and miserable way of bringing up children to meet the hard times and trials of life.

The following sketch of the Weld family is largely taken from the *Historical and Genealogical Register*, of April, 1891.

The family of Weld dates back to 1352, William Weld, High Sheriff of London. The New England branch came from Suffolk, the home of Governor Winthrop.

In 1632 Captain Joseph Weld, with his brother, the Reverend Thomas Weld, being "Puritans of the Puritans," came to New England for freedom; not penniless adventurers, with nothing to lose and everything to gain, but leaving behind home, comfort, prosperity and assured position, for conscience' sake.

Captain Joseph Weld settled in Roxbury, Massachusetts, and became a freeman in the colony, which made him a grant of several hundred acres, now West Roxbury Park and Arnold Arboretum. My grandfather lived in what is now known as the Peters House, opposite the Bussey Institute. This estate was the family home for nearly two hundred years.

Being well trained in arms, Captain Joseph was a valuable aid to Governor Winthrop in military affairs, and served in numerous fights with the Indians. His death was a great loss to the colony, and is mentioned by Winthrop. Savage stated that he was the richest man in the colony, at the time of his death, and was one of the first donors to Harvard College, of which his brother



Thomas was of the first Board of Overseers. My father also served for nine years as an overseer, and I too had the honor to be a member of the Board for about twenty-five years.

Stephen Minot Weld, my father, was born in Boston, in 1806. His grandfather, Eleazer Weld, was a judge, also a colonel in the Revolutionary War, and Paymaster of Washington's army at Cambridge in 1777 and 1778.

His father, William Gordon Weld, was intended for the bar, but became a ship-owner, loaded his own ship and sailed her to foreign ports. It was he, who, while commanding his armed ship, the *Jason*, in 1802, off Tunis, beat off an Algerine pirate vessel and recaptured two American brigs with their crews. In July, 1812, returning in the ship *Mary*, with a valuable cargo of wine and Spanish silver dollars from Spain, not knowing that war had been declared, he ran into Boston Harbor, right into the jaws of the British frigate *Spartan*, 38 guns, was captured, and his vessel, crew and cargo sent to Halifax, and condemned. But the commander, Brenton, being an old friend, allowed him to escape without imprisonment, but almost penniless, to his home. In 1798 he married Hannah Minot, daughter of James Clarke Minot, a well-known merchant of Boston.

The family losses during the Revolution, and the death of Colonel Weld, necessitated the sale of the old homestead in Roxbury, in order that the property might be divided among his brothers and sisters.

My father married Sarah B. Balch, daughter of Joseph Balch, in June, 1838. My mother died in 1854. My father married again, in 1856. His second wife was Georgianna Hallett. I remember going with them on a journey to the White Mountains. One of the guides at the hotel took us to a waterfall but little known, which

Father christened Georgianna Falls. About five years ago, I heard some people just back from the mountains speaking of going to some beautiful falls called Georgianna Falls — but “such an ugly name!” they said.

I was born on the fourth day of January, 1842, in Jamaica Plain, on the place where my sister's house now stands. The house in which I was born was burned, some time, I think, in February, 1845.<sup>1</sup> This fire is one of the first things that I can remember. The weather was intensely cold, below zero, as I was afterwards informed; looking out of the nursery window, I saw the pupils of my father's school come running out of the school-house, on the other side of the yard, shouting, “Fire!” My mother, and my cousin, Miss Doubleday, had been speaking of the soot falling down the fire-place, and it seems that the chimney had caught fire and set fire to the roof. In almost no time, the house was in flames. I remember I was wrapped up in a blanket and taken over to the house across the way, which my father owned.

Another thing that I recall is the Mexican War, — hearing my parents discuss it, and being taken in town to see the “Flying Artillery” coming back from the war. I expected to see guns with wings, instead of which I was much disappointed to see cannon drawn at a slow pace by horses.

I was early sent to a Miss Baker's school, which stood on the right-hand side of the road leading to Boston, about a quarter of a mile from Hogg's Bridge and a mile and a half from my home. I tramped to and fro every day to this school, when about five years old. I well remember that once, when a small child, I lost my hat, having neglected to hang it up in its proper place. My mother

<sup>1</sup> I have lately found a print of the house in which I was born, and which was burned, a reproduction of which is printed on the opposite page.





made me wear my sister's bonnet to school as a warning against untidy conduct. It made such an impression on me that I have never forgotten it.

I then went to school to Miss Jane Lane, a second cousin of my father's, and a most excellent teacher and splendid woman. I used to be very obstinate, and I am afraid that my misdemeanors had the effect of making her pass many a weary hour after school, keeping me in by way of punishment.<sup>1</sup>

From there I went to Father's school. I was intensely fond of home and disliked exceedingly the row and turmoil that necessarily accompanied a boarding-school for boys. My father told me that if I did not behave myself in his school he would send me off to some other boarding-school, which certainly resulted in making me behave as well as I could. My father at that time came into school for about an hour every day and heard the classes in Latin and Greek. I think I never knew in all my experience a teacher who could impart to his pupils such knowledge as he had so easily as he could. He made a dull study most interesting, and many quotations from Virgil and the old classic writers were implanted in my memory by his tact in teaching.

I was prepared for college at quite an early age, too early indeed to get the full benefit from the studies there. I entered in the summer of 1856, when I was fourteen and a half years old, without conditions, and became a

<sup>1</sup> Every winter Mr. Papanti came to Father's school and gave lessons in dancing. After the lessons were over a party was always given. At one of these parties, somewhere about 1849, I was chasing Joseph Joy, one of the pupils at the school, when I fell and struck my teeth on the side of a mahogany chair. I knocked out a tooth and left the imprint of two or three others on the side of the chair, which my sister still owns and shows with much pride. My mother picked the tooth up and put it back. It remained in place till I was sixty-five years old, when it got tired and came out for a rest. The dentist still has it and shows it as a wonderful case.

member of the famous class of 1860, often called the "War Class" of Harvard. I did not touch a drop of wine or liquor all through my college career until about a month before I graduated, nor did I smoke until then. I was up to a great deal of mischief, but got through all right and took my degree in 1860, graduating, I believe, number 28 in a class of 108.

A description of the life at Harvard while I was there may be interesting. We got up to prayers the first year at six o'clock in the morning in summer, and seven in winter. We were allowed ten absences, or "cuts," during the term; ten more got us a private admonition and a deduction of 32 marks from our ranking marks, and twenty a public admonition. More than that subjected us to severe discipline and possibly suspension or rustication.

I remember going over for my examination. I had only just gone from a jacket into a coat, and felt very uncomfortable and green. We were all put in a big room, I think in University, and orally examined in every study that we had to pass. I remember some of the answers were most curious. One of the boys was asked who the Heraclidæ were. He answered, "The seven wise men of Greece." The examination was largely a matter of luck. If you could keep your wits together and show any sort of knowledge of the subject on which you were being examined, you got through. Either Latin or Greek was compulsory during the whole course.<sup>1</sup> Mathematics, I think, we had to take for only two years, the Freshman and Sophomore. Recitations were oral, supplemented at the end of the term by a written examination.

The annual football fight between the Freshmen and

<sup>1</sup> I consider that the training one's mind and intellect get from the study of Latin and Greek cannot be surpassed in any way, and I regret exceedingly the tendency of modern times to abandon the study of these subjects.

Sophomores took place the first Monday night, at the beginning of the term. Our class won, a most unusual experience, and we were very much elated by the victory. The ball was simply put between the two classes, then some one kicked it, and then it was a rough-and-tumble fight, fisticuffs, kicking of shins, and shoving and pushing. A favorite amusement of the Sophomores was to get a Freshman standing on the doorsteps and duck him with a glass of water from the window above. Then, too, their windows were broken at night.

I was saved a great deal of this by rooming with my half-uncle, Mr. Francis V. Balch. He was two or three years older than I and in the class ahead of me, 1859. It must have been an awful nuisance to him to have a young Freshman in his room, with his friends coming in and interrupting him at all times. Balch was a great student, and at the head of his class, and was very kind to me. He was my mother's half-brother. The first year we roomed in Hollis 4, the second year I roomed in the same entry, Hollis 5. The third year I roomed in Stoughton 6, with George S. Osborne. The fourth year I roomed with Tom Sherwin in Holworthy 7.

My chum, George Osborne, got caught in an unfortunate scrape. I had gone to bed, feeling tired, when my cousin, George W. Weld, and Osborne came to me and wanted me to screw in one of the tutors, named Pearce. The plan was to take a hinge and screw one part to the bottom and the other to the sill of the door, so that in the morning when Pearce started to come out, he would find himself locked in and unable to attend prayers, and so could not mark us for our absence. I refused to get up, so Osborne and my cousin set off. They got the hinge fastened all right to the bottom of the door, but Pearce was on the lookout and heard them. He waited until they

got pretty well along on the work, then opened the door. Osborne got down the stairs first, followed by my cousin George, with Pearce close on their heels. When George Weld got to the bottom of the flight, he grabbed the banister and swung under the stairs, but Osborne ran out. It happened to be snowing that night very heavily. Osborne plunged into a snow-drift and stuck there, and Pearce jumped on him. They had a row and a good deal of scuffling, and in it Pearce, who wore a red wig, lost it. It got lost in the snow and was never found until the next spring. Accordingly Pearce in the morning had to appear at prayers without any wig. Poor Osborne was expelled and it was only after a great many years that he got his degree. George Weld escaped by his quick wit in swinging under the stairs.

The whole spirit between the Faculty and the students was one of war. We looked on the Faculty as our oppressors, and we were — a great many of us — up to every devilment that we could think of, to trouble and bother them. A very different state of affairs I am glad to say now prevails. The College then was more in the nature of a boarding-school. There were about four hundred undergraduates, where now there are some four or five thousand.

The following entries from my diary while in College give an idea of my daily life there.

*Friday, November 13, 1857.* — I was up in Mathematics and did pretty well. I was up in Latin and did pretty well. Cooke gave us a very interesting lecture. At the Institute to-night I was drawn as a juror for the mock trial next time, but was challenged by Wheelock. It has been rainy and pleasant to-day. I broke my 17th window this evening. I finished my theme at 10 o'clock in the evening.



I looked behind the Scientific School to-day and found that Mrs. Gardner's gate was still there. Frank Balch went home this evening. My pants came from Earle's to-day. Shaw gave us a first-rate lecture this evening at the Institute.

*Thursday, December 31, 1857.* — I was up in Mathematics and did so-so. I was up in Greek and did pretty well. All the tutors were out this night because it is New Year's Eve. They caught several fellows out and sent them to their rooms. I went to bed at 10 o'clock. The Faculty had policemen all round. It rained hard all the morning but in the afternoon it cleared off. Frank and George were caught out in the Yard by Chase and Lane. We recited to Goodwin at 4 o'clock instead of 5 o'clock, so he could get some sleep.

The college pump stood pretty nearly between Hollis and Stoughton, and was the only source of water-supply for the undergraduates. The students who were rich, or pretty well off, usually had a negro or some striker who brought them a bucket of water, blacked their shoes, and made their fires. The majority of the students went down and got their own water and did all their so-called chores themselves. There were no toilet-rooms or any conveniences of that sort. There was one low stone building behind University Hall, which was used by all the College in place of our modern water-closets. It was called by the students "the College Minor."

Holworthy Hall was the Senior building. In every dormitory there was a tutor living in the corner room on the second floor. The room underneath him was occupied by some student, usually a Freshman, who, in return for the use of the room, acted as a messenger for the tutor in various ways, such as summoning any member of the

class who had been disorderly, or whom the tutor wished to communicate with, and in general was known as "So-and-so's Freshman," that is, the tutor's Freshman. In the same way the President had a Freshman who acted as messenger between him and the students, or between the Faculty and the students, who was called the "President's Freshman"; and in return for the services he performed, he had certain privileges and emoluments given him.

The buildings that existed when I was in College, if I remember correctly, were University Hall, Holworthy, Stoughton, Holden Chapel, Hollis, Harvard Hall, Massachusetts Hall, Dane Law School, the President's old house, and the Library, or Gore Hall. Then, at the back of the yard were several of the professors' houses, among them Professor Peabody's, Professor Felton's, and others — Professor Pierce's, too, I think. I remember that at one time I hung some Chinese lanterns out of my window on the evening of the Faculty meeting, which was Monday. I received a parietal admonition for doing it. The next Faculty evening I hung them out of the window of the president of the Parietal Committee's room. Of course the Faculty must have suspected who did it, but I was never questioned about it.

We went to Chapel then in University. The Freshmen and Juniors went in by one flight of steps, and the Sophomores and Seniors by another. This was the only way the two lower classes could be kept from pushing and fighting. My impression is that Appleton Chapel was built while I was in College, but I am not positive about this. We had the Reverend James Walker as President, a very shrewd, keen, level-headed old man. He was a Unitarian minister.

He was succeeded in our Senior year by Cornelius C.

Felton, who had been Professor of Greek. We felt very much aggrieved because, at the inauguration ceremonies, which were to take place the day before our graduation, the Latin oration, which had always by universal custom been given to the graduating class, was given to the class below us because our first scholar had not taken Latin as an elective. It caused a great deal of feeling. The members of our choir refused to sing and our class would not take part in the inauguration ceremonies, so they were postponed until the day after our graduation. At the meeting of the Alumni held in University Hall on that day, we proposed a vote of censure on the Faculty for their treatment of us as a class, which was exceedingly ill-advised. I remember Thornton K. Lothrop and Judge Gray<sup>1</sup> getting up and speaking on our behalf. Judge Gray was then a comparatively young man. I recollect that his uncle went up to him and shouted, "Sit down, young man, sit down! How dare you speak so!" Altogether we had a lively time. President Felton was very angry and annoyed. He started to rush up the aisle and say he would not be inaugurated at all, but was pulled back by his coat-tails and persuaded from doing so rash a thing. Altogether we were a lively class and one that gave the Faculty a great deal of trouble. There were not many vicious men in the class, but lots of foolish ones and lots of good ones. The foolish ones soon got over their folly, and when the call of the War came our class responded nobly, seventy-seven out of one hundred and eight answering the call.

I used to go home every Saturday morning and come back Sunday afternoon. I never shall forget, — I think it was in my Senior year, — when the *Volante*, I believe,

<sup>1</sup> Horace Gray, afterwards Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, and Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

or some Boston crew, whipped the Harvard boys in a boat-race. The Reverend Mr. Huntington,<sup>1</sup> the Plummer Professor, gave out the hymn:—

For oars alone cannot prevail to reach the distant coast,  
The breath of Heaven must swell the sail, or else all hope is lost.

There was a good deal of rivalry then between a nice set of fellows in Boston who had not gone to College and those who had. Those who had not gone formed a boat club in Boston, and there were several contests which were quite exciting between them and the college crews.

Robert Gould Shaw was a classmate of mine. He won immortal fame by commanding a negro regiment, and giving up his life at Charleston in the attack on Fort Wagner. The tablet or monument opposite the State House in Boston is an exceedingly good likeness of him, apart from any consideration of it as a work of art.

Communication with Boston took place, I think, every half-hour, by stage. I took my meals at Miss Willard's on Mt. Auburn Street during most of my time in College. She kept a most excellent table. Board was \$4 a week at first, then \$4.50. Club tables existed, but there were not many of them.

In the light of the development of telegraphy, both wireless and the ordinary sort, during the last fifty years, a lecture that Professor Lovering gave us when I was in College is very interesting. The first message across the Atlantic cable after it was laid had just been received, and Professor Lovering told us that it was an impossibility for an electric message to be sent such a long distance, that batteries were not strong enough, and that the message was a fake. It was a message from Queen Victoria or Prince Albert, I have forgotten which. Professor Lovering

<sup>1</sup> Frederic Dan Huntington, afterwards Bishop of Central New York.



(Exhibition part given me in College)

EXHIBITION, October 18, 1854.

SUBJECT. An Essay. —  
"The Monastic Republic of Mt Athos." \*

6 Minutes.

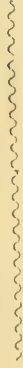
By S. M. Weld.

James W. M.

President.

CAMBRIDGE,

Sept. 12, 1859.



Performances must be in readiness for rehearsal *one fortnight* before the Exhibition.

A fair copy of each performance must be delivered to the President *one week* before the Exhibition.

No student will give any entertainment on Exhibition day, unless by permission of the President.





told us that the message had been sent to Valencia, if sent at all, there put on board a fast steamer and sent to Cape Race, and from there transmitted by telegraph. Thus it is curious to see how the world moves.

I think it was usually some Saturday morning in October, after the regular Exhibition parts were declared, that the so-called "mock parts" were given out. The class was addressed by one of the class officers from a window in Hollis. The class was supposed to pass in a procession, and as each man came by, his part was given out. They were usually based on some physical or mental peculiarity, and were rarely ill-natured or ugly. For instance, my mock part was, "S. M. Weld will display his big feet [feat]." Another classmate, the sitting-down part of whose body was very large, was introduced by the quotation from Shakespeare, "I will a round, unvarnished tale [tail] deliver." Another man, who was rather penurious, had the mock part, "Though on pleasure he was bent, he had a frugal mind." I remember that in the class ahead of me William Swan, who was accustomed to wear a beaver (which was rather unusual), and Ames, who was very attentive to Miss Felton, were introduced in this way: "Swan with his beaver, and Ames with his felt on [Felton] will appear in this procession." I cannot recall any of the other mock parts at the present moment. Charles A. Whittier was the one who read out ours. I remember the occasion very well.

When I graduated, my father put me into the office of Peleg W. Chandler to study law, his idea being to keep me there for a year and then put me into the Law School. I stayed with Mr. Chandler for about a year, and then entered the Law School in 1861. My father then told me I would have to help earn my living, and he got me the appointment of tutor in Latin to a class in the school of

a Mr. Smalley in Jamaica Plain. The times were quite stirring then. The Anti-Slavery party was very strong, and feeling was running exceedingly high between the North and the South. I was very anxious to go to the War, but my father was unwilling, feeling that I ought to stay at home and study.

As far back as I can remember, my father was a Whig, and during the contest between Douglas, Breckenridge and Lincoln, in which Lincoln was elected, he was for Bell and Everett. Although not of age, I took sides with the Republicans and did what I could to help elect Lincoln. The feeling was intensely bitter. It was very marked among the students at Harvard who came from the South, they being strongly in favor of slavery and the doctrine of State's Rights. After the attack on Fort Sumter the feeling at the Somerset Club was intense against any man who took command of a negro regiment. Nothing compared to this in intensity of feeling has existed at any other time in my life, and it is hard for any one nowadays to understand the bitterness which existed then. My father during the War was a strong Republican and did all he could to further the cause of the North. The Northerners who sympathized with the South were called "copperheads" and the feeling against them was more bitter, if possible, than against the Southerners.

While in the Law School, I had a room on Brattle Street, Cambridge, with Dr. John G. Perry.

The following pages from my diary give perhaps a better account of my start in the army than anything which I could now write. I have adhered closely to the wording of my diary as I then wrote it, and have not endeavored to improve the language or construction, as I think it will give a much better idea of what I really

was as a boy and a young man. At intervals I have inserted notes written subsequent to the war, but have placed them between brackets, so that the diary may be read as it was written, uncontaminated by any after-thoughts or after-knowledge. I have also added, in their proper places, many of the letters that I wrote home.

I ought to mention that I belonged to the Independent First Corps of Cadets in Boston, and got my first military training under Colonel Holmes, a man whom we all loved and admired. After the War I was temporarily in command, for a season, of the Cadets, a position I accepted with a great deal of pleasure as I was delighted to be able to do anything to help the old corps.

## CHAPTER II

BEGINNING OF THE DIARY — ANNAPOLIS IN 1861 — FORTRESS MONROE — THE HILTON HEAD EXPEDITION — ON GENERAL WRIGHT'S STAFF

*Sunday, October 6, 1861.* — While I was spending Sunday at home, I learned that Uncle Oliver Eldridge<sup>1</sup> was going to sail in command of the steamer Atlantic on General Sherman's secret expedition to some southern port. I immediately asked Father to let me go with him as captain's clerk, or in some other capacity. He was unwilling, but finally consented to ask Uncle Oliver if he could take me. Father said that there was no room for me, and I therefore gave up all idea of going, to my great disappointment.

In the afternoon Horace Howland<sup>2</sup> came out to our house and wanted me to go in town and dine with him. We dined at Parker's and then went to the Lothrops' to take tea. We left there in time to take the nine o'clock 'bus for Cambridge. When we reached Cambridge, I found a letter for me from Father, saying that I might go with Uncle Oliver, and that I must start at eight o'clock the next morning. I packed my trunk in a few minutes, and went into Boston and spent the night at Parker's. I took the 8.30 train for New York in the morning, and reached New York at 5. I went directly to the Astor House, and found that Uncle O. had not started, much to

<sup>1</sup> Married to my step-mother's sister, Miss Almira Hallett; he was a sea-captain, and a fine man.

<sup>2</sup> My classmate.

my relief, as I was afraid he might have gone. I saw him in the evening, and he introduced me to Captain Hascall, U. S. Q. M., who said he would give me a place as one of his clerks. I went down to Collins's wharf the next morning, and was there introduced to Saxton and Marsh, both Captain Hascall's clerks.

I spent a week here, at times quite busy, loading ship, etc. I called on the Howlands and also went to Horace's apartments, which he has with Ned Wetmore<sup>1</sup> and Fowler. I enjoyed myself very much, being reminded of old college times. While in New York I saw Wilson's regiment<sup>2</sup> pass through, and felt proud of Massachusetts when I heard the cheers and praises so bountifully bestowed upon them. I saw Tom Sherwin<sup>3</sup> and Charley Griswold<sup>4</sup> with the regiment.

*October 14.* — I paid my bill at the Astor House to-day, and went on board the Baltic, Captain Comstock. The Baltic was anchored in the stream, and we were taken out to her in a small tug-boat. I was introduced to the steward, Mr. Godsell, who offered me a drink, which I declined, as I shall not drink or smoke while away. I found it pretty hard to give up smoking, but leaving off drinking is no hardship for me. We spent the night on board the ship. Weather pleasant.

*Tuesday, October 15.* — Captain John Eldridge came on board this morning. He was a welcome visitor for two reasons. First, he brought me several letters from home; and secondly, the sight of such a jolly old gentleman was enough to drive away any blue devils which a fellow might have. He is my idea of Falstaff, and a most perfect one, too. I hope to enjoy his company on the voy-

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Wetmore, my classmate.

<sup>2</sup> The 22d Mass., Col. Henry Wilson, United States Senator.

<sup>3</sup> My classmate and college chum.

<sup>4</sup> Afterwards Colonel of the 56th Mass.

age, and shall not be disappointed. He said Father was in New York, and would come to see me. He did come about ten o'clock, and reported all well at home. When he left the ship he would not bid me good-by, but departed in a hurry.

Captain Comstock came on board about 11 o'clock, and we started about 12 M. We left our pilot at Sandy Hook, and waited there for our ship, the Ocean Express, which we are to tow. The sail down the harbor was quite pleasant, and I looked with feelings of pleasure and satisfaction on Fort Lafayette in particular, and also at Forts Hamilton, Richmond, etc., which are situated at the Narrows. The sea was calm, the weather pleasant, and everything foretold a pleasant voyage. It was good at last to feel we were really off, bound the Lord knows where, for I am sure no one on the ship knew.

While steaming down the harbor, I struck up an acquaintance with one of the ship's officers, the surgeon, Dr. Bangs, a man who kept us in good spirits all the time he was with us. A true wit, for he has a most wonderful power of language, which he makes the best use of in telling stories and yarns the most improbable and impossible man ever heard of, and at the same time preserving a gravity of countenance which greatly enhances the fun we have in hearing him talk. He is, I find out, a lawyer in New York, but having once studied medicine he took this opportunity of going on this expedition. And really, I believe he is as good a doctor as half those who have an M.D. stuck on to their names. This, however, is not saying much for his knowledge as a doctor.

We also had two young men on board named Hubbell and Grant, both nice fellows, and acting as mates merely for the sake of a passage to our place of destination. Our purser is a jolly, fat, red-faced gentleman, a

Pole by birth, an American by naturalization, and a tobacconist by trade. His name, be it known, is Julian Allen, — of a somewhat quick temper, although meaning to do right always. Then as assistant engineer we have a man fearfully and wonderfully made, the light of the nineteenth century, and in addition a — fool, Marvin by name, and bound on a pleasure trip; not a pleasure trip to his companions did he make it. My chum is Saxton the chief clerk, a smart fellow, but somewhat given to exaggeration. His story told in the smoking-room about two negroes eating strawberries on a bet, and one devouring one hundred baskets, and another one hundred and twenty-five, which one hundred and twenty-fifth basket caused the aforesaid negro to burst and die, which fact he vouched for, and declared he saw take place in the market-place, rather knocked me. I think I had him though when I told him I was there and saw a strawberry-bed spring up from the poor nigger's body, from which bed I plucked and devoured many pints of the red berry. We have a pilot also, who is easily excited, and who bagged more plunder at Port Royal than any other two men in the fleet.

To return, however, to the ship and the voyage. We fastened on to our ship at 6 P.M., and started off at the rate of eight knots an hour, bound at first for Fortress Monroe. We broke our tiller-rope during the evening, but this was soon repaired, and we went gaily on our way.

*Wednesday, October 16.* — Nothing of any interest happened to-day. The morning was pleasant, and the afternoon cloudy. We stopped our engines at 6 P.M. and drifted, being about twenty miles from the Capes.

*Thursday, October 17.* — We passed the Capes about 10 A.M., running within two miles and a half of Cape Henry. This cape is composed of sand-hills shelving down

to the beach, with nothing but a lighthouse and two small houses to be seen anywhere in the vicinity. The point is in possession of the rebels. We passed the gunboat Daylight keeping the blockade, and guarding the lightship. We saw a great many duck flying about us. About 12 we came in sight of the Rip Raps, and soon after of Fortress Monroe. The Rip Raps, a few miles off, look like a mass of stones dumped down in a heap, and on coming nearer to them, one finds that the opinion he formed of them at first sight was correct. They embrace perhaps an acre and a half to two acres, and are formed entirely of granite rocks dropped in utter disorder and confusion into the middle of Hampton Roads, and at about a mile and a half from Fortress Monroe. There are one or two small houses on it for laborers, but a more desolate hole I cannot imagine. The fortress itself cannot be seen until you are quite near it, on account of the shore being so low. We could see only two sides of it from the sea, the houses and trees on the shore hiding the rest of it. I saw the famous Sewall's Point for the first time. The batteries are not visible, being on the other side of the point. The masts of our ships at Newport News could also be seen, some 8 miles distant. We left our ship, the Ocean Express, here, and turned round and started for Annapolis, where we were to take our troops on board. We steamed up the Chesapeake to within about 40 miles of Annapolis, and then anchored on account of the fog. We passed the mouth of the Potomac, and also those celebrated Points —

P'int Lookout, and P'int Lookin,  
P'int no p'int, and p'int agin.

*Friday, October 18.* — We reached Annapolis about 11 o'clock in the morning, and had to anchor in the stream about 4 miles from the city. I went ashore in



the afternoon, and took a look at the city. We landed at the Naval School, and found the grounds full of troops, etc. The 21st Massachusetts, Colonel Morse, is stationed here, but I had no chance to see any of the officers. The grounds of the Naval School are quite spacious, and face the Chesapeake on one side, and the river Severn on the other. The buildings are of brick and quite substantial, though by no means handsome. Right on the water is a round building with guns mounted, which was used for the middies to practice in. On the right of this battery a long pier runs out into the river, and at the end of it, the Constitution was anchored. Uncle Oliver told me that when he came here last April, the rebels were erecting a battery on the other side of the river, and about an eighth of a mile distant, to destroy the Constitution. His timely arrival, however, put an end to their villainous schemes, by taking the ship and school away. The professors' houses were built in a row on the right side of the ground.

Having procured a pass, we got outside the grounds, and into the city, the capital of Maryland. The streets were in a terrible state from the rain, which made a horrible clayey sort of mud, much to the detriment of our shoes, which were soon covered with a good coat of this Maryland blacking. We finally came out on a street which was roughly paved and which led us to the post-office and the hotel. I inquired for letters, but found none, and was consequently much disappointed. The next place I visited was the State House. It stands on a hill, the highest one in the town, and has a green around it. From this green the streets all diverge, making a sort of cobweb. On entering the State House, I was saluted by a young boy about ten years old, who was smoking a cigar, and who seemed to think himself the owner of the place. Accepting his services as an escort, we were shown

into the Senate and House of Representatives. They were both of them ordinary-looking rooms with very common-looking pine chairs and desks. On first entering the House, the visitor sees the arms of the State staring him in the face, and the motto, "Crescite et multiplicamini," written under them. The city, however, belies the motto as far as I could see, for it looks as if it had not increased for a century, but had stood still, and as if all its inhabitants and buildings had been enjoying a century's rest. From the cupola I had a most magnificent view, and one which well repaid me for the trouble I had in getting ashore. Close around me was the town, with its quaint, old-fashioned houses, with gables and overhanging roofs, many covered with moss, and, in some cases, plants growing from the eaves. It was more like a view of an old-fashioned English town which one often sees painted on canvas in stage-scenery. Then beyond the town were fertile fields, with crops ready for gathering, and every little way, a beautiful hillock rising up, with splendid trees growing there, and the river winding among them, now sparkling like a silver cord, and now hidden from the sight. Then again, the white tents of the soldiers would peep out from the dark green of the trees, and what at first sight seemed a long fence, but on closer inspection proved to be the troops going through their dress-parade, would meet one's view. The sight was a most beautiful one, and one which I cannot describe. The rivers on both sides of the city, with their steep banks thickly wooded, and winding so prettily among the hills, were in themselves a sufficient compensation for the climb up to the cupola. Then looking out on the Chesapeake and seeing over twenty steamers, in addition to a large number of small craft quietly at anchor in the bay, and the long blue shore of Virginia opposite,

made one wish to stay forever almost, and enjoy the beautiful sight. I could hardly tear myself away; but as I had little time to waste, I soon descended.

I saw here a cannon which Lord Baltimore brought over in 1624, and which had fallen into the river and had lately been fished up. I saw Captain Eldridge and went on board the *Baltic* with him.

*Saturday, October 19.* — Nothing of any interest occurred to-day. We expected our regiment to come on board and waited all day in vain. Finally, about eight o'clock P.M. they came, and to my disappointment I found they were the 4th New Hampshire regiment, as I hoped to see some Massachusetts troops. Church, the reporter of the *New York Sun*, and Green of the *Boston Journal* came on board.

*Sunday, October 20.* — This day passed like any other, except perhaps it was a more busy one. The baggage of the regiment was put on board, and we started on our way for Fortress Monroe at noon. We steamed down the Chesapeake, and came in sight of the Capes, when we had to anchor owing to a fog and a storm. I received a letter from John Perry, much to my delight, as he is the only one I have heard from.

*Monday, October 21.* — We again started this morning for Fortress Monroe, and as we proceeded had a calmer sea. When I got up this morning, I had my first taste of seasickness, owing to the closeness of my state-room. My chum refuses to have the window open, and the consequence is we have more foul air in the room than is pleasant for me. I was soon well, however, after getting on deck, although I carefully and secretly looked over the railing into the sea, and gave Davy Jones a scanty offering. It was amusing to see the soldiers sick and vomiting, especially after I was well. We arrived at the fort about 10 A.M.,

and anchored near the Atlantic. As nothing particularly interesting happened while we were here, I shall just jot down a few events interesting to myself only. I went ashore and walked all over the fortress, and all around the walls. There is a ditch all around the fort, and on some sides a water battery on the outside of it. There is one tier of guns in casemates, and one *en barbette*. On the sea side, outside of the walls, is the Floyd gun mounted, and the Union gun ready to mount, both of them remarkable only on account of their size. The fort is connected with the mainland by two sandy necks of land, between which is a large body of water which has access to the ocean by a channel running through one of these necks, and over which a new bridge has lately been built. This last-named neck is the one by which they go to Hampton and the mainland. The interior of the fort is quite pretty, trees growing there, and walks being laid out very much like a park. There are several houses here, and also a church. A man might make himself very comfortable here, in my opinion.

I walked over to the place where most of our troops are encamped, which lies between Hampton and the fort, and which is approached by the neck before referred to. I went to the camp of the 16th Massachusetts, and saw Waldo Merriam, the adjutant, and Bill Amory of Jamaica Plain. I had a very pleasant time, and was delighted to see old faces again. I saw a very good dress-parade, and returned to the fort again, passing through the camp of the Naval Brigade, Colonel Wardrop. I spent the night at the Hygeia Hotel, most of which is used as a hospital for our troops. Just as I had gone to sleep I was waked up by the most fearful succession of screams I ever heard in my life. It turned out to be a sick soldier in the hospital who was having his wounds





CHESAPEAKE BAY

# MAP OF FORTRESS MONROE AND SURROUNDINGS

PUBLISHED BY C. BOHN,  
568 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.



Cape Charles

Cape Henry

RAIK RIVER

Big Bethel

HAMPTON

Ten Colleges

FORTRESS MONROE

Old Point Comfort

Rap Knaps

Wiltoughby's Point

WILLOWKEYS BAY

HAMPTON ROADS

Newport

JAMES RIVER

Batteries

Batteries

Tamier's Pt

Land

ELIZABETH RIVER

NORFOLK

PORTSMOUTH

NAVY YARD





dressed. The next morning I met Harry Fisher, captain's clerk on board the Minnesota, and went with him on board of her. I was well paid, too, for a more beautiful and clean-looking ship I never saw. The decks looked clean enough to eat one's meal off of, and the long line of guns on each side, all polished and in perfect order, seemed eager to bestow a few compliments on any rebel or enemy who might make his appearance. Hubbell went with me, and was also much pleased with the ship. I saw Captain Van Brunt<sup>1</sup> on board, looking as well as ever.

We waited here at Hampton Roads for a week, anxiously expecting orders to sail, and growing at times despondent and gloomy about the success of the expedition. Then, to make us still more gloomy, reports were flying about of the desertion of the commodore's private secretary, with important papers, containing the secret naval signals, our place of destination, etc. To crown the whole, and plunge us still deeper into despair, we heard of the battle of Ball's Bluff, and of the defeat of our forces. The news of Putnam's death, of Holmes<sup>2</sup> being wounded, etc., made me feel the reality of the war, which is a hard thing to bring home to one's self until one loses a friend, or meets with some such mishap. However, as the ships began to get up steam, and as various other little matters showed that we were going to start soon, our fears and despondent feelings began to give way to a more cheerful state of mind, and when we were actually under way every one felt buoyant and hopeful. While waiting here, one of the 7th Connecticut soldiers was drowned by jumping overboard for a plate which we had dropped. Major Pangborn, formerly

<sup>1</sup> Captain, afterwards Commodore, Jeffrey G. Van Brunt.

<sup>2</sup> Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

editor of the Boston *Bee*, came on board. He is paymaster for our brigade.

*Tuesday, October 29.* — Off at last. Last night we steamed out towards the sea about four miles, and then anchored. This morning I was waked up about 6 o'clock by the moving of the paddle-wheels. By the time I was up and dressed, which was about 8 o'clock, I found that we had at last fastened our tow-line to the Ocean Express, and about ten we started slowly on our way, with the most delightful weather imaginable, the air being warmer than it had been for some days previous, and the sea being moderately calm. When we passed Cape Henry we could see the lighthouse standing up boldly on a barren sand-hill, and no signs of civilization visible except two small huts, situated at the foot of the lighthouse. To make the place seem still more desolate than nature had made it, a wrecked schooner could be plainly seen about half a mile from the lighthouse, a monument of the wickedness of these rebels who destroy lighthouses as well as try to destroy their government. The cape is a barren, desolate spot, with high sand-hills rising up in the background, and gradually decreasing in size until they terminate in a narrow sand-spit. We passed within two miles, and might easily have been disabled by a battery placed there. The sight of so many vessels leaving the port at once, with different-colored flags on their masts as signals or to denote their names, was a most beautiful one. When we had passed the cape, our tow-line parted, repairing which delayed us about an hour. We finally got off at two o'clock, proceeding as slowly as possible all the afternoon, in order to keep with the rest of the fleet.

The sea was pretty rough all the day, but most of the ships stood it well except the ferry-boats. In the evening different signals were displayed from the war-ships, of

red, white, blue, and green lights, which looked very prettily, flashing up as they did on all sides of us. I spoke to Captain Hascall about getting me a place on General Wright's <sup>1</sup> staff as volunteer aide. A society was formed for the "confusion of useless knowledge" the other evening, and we had a meeting this evening.

*Wednesday, October 30.* — The day was beautiful and pleasant. The air was soft and balmy, as we had just struck the Gulf Stream, and the temperature of the water was 74 degrees. We had to go as slowly as possible, as we did yesterday, in order to keep with the rest of the fleet. The fleet kept nearer each other, and in better order than yesterday. According to the pilot we were off Cape Hatteras at 2 P.M. We found out however, as events showed, that we did not take sufficient account of our slow rate of speed, and of the Gulf Stream. Nothing of any particular interest occurred during the day. I saw nothing of the ferry-boats. It was so rough that some of them must have gone in nearer to the shore.

*Thursday, October 31.* — This morning about 2.30 o'clock I was waked up by the ship's shaking, jarring, groaning, and screeching generally. I at first thought we had been struck by a heavy sea, but a second shock, following soon after the first, convinced me that I was wrong. At the second shock I called Saxton and asked him what the matter was, and we both jumped out of bed, I running into the saloon to see what had happened, and Saxton lighting the candle. The saloon was full of people, excited and running around, but still not noisy. I found out from the hospital steward that the ship was aground. All the while we were bumping heavily, causing the ship to groan and creak in every timber. I must confess that a dreadful shudder ran through me at the

<sup>1</sup> General Horatio G. Wright.

idea of being drowned, for so it seemed to me must be the fate of every one on board, as the night was dark and the sea rough. I thought, however, that it would do no good to be frightened, so I put on my trousers, shoes, and coat, then took my watch and ring from under my pillow, and finally took the cork life-preserver from under the bed, and fixed it so that I could slip it on at a minute's notice. I then left it on my bed, and went up on deck to see how we were getting on. When I reached the deck, the bumping had ceased, and the ship had backed off safely. The pumps were sounded, and everything found snug and tight, much to my delight as well as that of others.

When we struck, the concussion was so severe as to throw several people out of their berths, and those on deck were thrown several feet. We sent up rockets as signals of distress, and as a warning to other vessels of the fleet. Pretty soon the Coatzacoalcos came along, and asked us if we wanted any assistance. We told her we were all right, and she then informed us that the Illinois had also grounded, but had got off without injury. She had been obliged to cut loose the ship which she was towing, which we also had to do, our ship barely grazing our starboard wheelhouse. We backed for some distance, and then steered due East. I went to bed at four and slept till six, when I got up and dressed myself. I saw our ship, the Ocean Express, on our port bow, and about ten o'clock we fastened our tow line to her.

In regard to the behavior of the passengers of the ship, I think it should be praised as a general thing. Most of them were calm and quiet, although some of them made fools of themselves. Captain Comstock says we had a very narrow escape indeed, one of the most wonderful on record. The wind luckily had subsided, and the sea

was, compared with the evening before, quite calm. No one seemed to know what shoal we struck, although it afterwards turned out to be the Outer Hatteras Shoal. There must have been some gross negligence, to say the least, in our getting on the shoal, and from all I can learn, the Wabash was to blame, as she at ten last evening gave us the course to steer, which we followed strictly, and consequently ran aground. Hubbell and the second mate, Hallet, saw breakers ahead about three minutes before we struck and told the captain of it. He said it was impossible, and was just going forward when she struck. The captain says the waves were as high as the yards, and that the shoal must have been steep and precipitous on its sides as otherwise we should have struck amidships, and been "hogged." Lieutenant Richardson, the officer of the day, behaved nobly. He told all the sentinels to do their duty, and stick the first man who came up, while he stood at the head of the stairs with a loaded pistol, and told them he would shoot the first man who tried to pass him. The captain was thus enabled to work the ship easily, which would have been impossible with all the soldiers on deck.

We saw the Illinois with one smoke-stack broken off by her ship running into her, but she has now repaired it. The fleet is either all scattered or else we are away from it, and the latter proves to be the case. I should think that more than two vessels must have struck the shoal. The war-steamer Bienville, blockading off Hatteras Inlet, chased us this morning to ask if we had seen the Wabash. The Bienville also said she went ashore last night on the same shoal. In the afternoon the Atlantic spoke us, steaming back to hurry up the rest of the fleet. She said the Wabash was ahead of us, much to our gratification as we were afraid that a great part of the fleet had been lost

on the shoal. A soldier who died of brain fever was buried this evening, and services were held on deck.

*Friday, November 1.* — There was a rainbow early this morning, and the old adage that “a rainbow in the morning is the sailor’s warning” was well carried out; for about ten o’clock it clouded up, and in an hour we had a strong breeze blowing, which soon turned into a gale. It blew hard all night, and I surely thought we were going to the bottom. One sea which broke over the ship killed one of Captain Hascall’s horses. I did not go below during the whole night. I am afraid the Governor and some other vessels are lost. We parted with our tow this evening. I never passed such a horrible night in my life. I had fully made up my mind to be drowned, but suspense was dreadful. The wind would blow and shriek through the rigging till it seemed as if it could blow no harder; and when I thought it was at its height, it would scream and whistle more than ever. There was something terrible to me in the waves, which were enormously high, and only rendered visible by the phosphorescent light on the tops of them. At times it would rain so that one could not see, and the gangways would be full of water dashing hither and thither with the motion of the ship, until it seemed as if we were full of water and were going to sink immediately. The drum-major of the regiment exhibited such cowardice that it was disgusting to see him. I was glad to see daylight as the sea grew calmer. We were in Long.  $77^{\circ} 53'$  and Lat.  $33^{\circ} 01'$  at noon.

*Saturday, November 2.* — The storm continued all day, but it reached its height last night between 12 and 3, so that to-day towards evening it moderated a little. Many of the people were seasick, and I myself barely escaped being so. In the afternoon we steered west, in the direction of Brunswick, Georgia. We lay to most of the night.

We left the Gulf Stream to-day, and the change from the warm air to the colder was very marked. The fleet is all scattered, and but four are now in sight. Our sealed orders were opened to-day.

*Sunday, November 3.* — We started at four o'clock this morning, and headed due west. We came in sight of land at about nine o'clock. I think it must have been Tybee Island at the entrance of Savannah River. The pilot will not say where we are. There is an island on the extreme right with what looks like a lighthouse on it. We had a very good sermon from the chaplain this morning, and afterwards the colonel addressed the soldiers in regard to their sending home their pay. The chaplain in his sermon hit the drum-major very well. He told the men to avoid snivellers and cowards, etc. Our ship was the first one to get here, followed by the Daniel Webster, and now five are in sight. It is a clear, cool day. I think from what the pilot says that the land we saw this morning must have been off Port Royal Sound, which leads to Beaufort. We saw 19 vessels in all this afternoon, none of them war vessels, however. We are now drifting along at the rate of half a mile an hour, and are within 20 miles of land. They say that the ship was on fire last Friday night, and I am inclined to think it was so.

*Monday, November 4.* — A beautiful calm day. We sailed in a southerly direction, and came in sight of about 30 of the fleet at anchor about 10 miles off Port Royal. Several of the gunboats were engaged in sounding the channel, making reconnoissances, etc. I went on board the Oriental and Atlantic. We had orders to start for the Ocean Express and find her, as she had all the powder and ammunition on board. Just as we were under weigh, we heard cannon firing, and saw our gunboats firing at what we suppose were three rebel gunboats. I could not see

anything very distinctly. It was very provoking to go off just as we supposed the fight was to begin, but such were our orders, and we had to obey them. It would have been a beautiful day to land troops, as the sea was as calm as a mill-pond. We struck one of our coal schooners in the evening, but did not hurt her any. Saw nothing of the Ocean Express.

*Tuesday, November 5.* — We came back to the Sound again without finding the Ocean Express. On our way back we were spoken by the sloop-of-war Dale, which is blockading here. She had her guns double-shotted and would have fired at us if we had not stopped. We reached our old place at 2 P.M. and found that all the fleet had gone over the bar, and were five miles nearer shore than before. We saw the Ericsson fast on the bar. We waited here until 6 P.M., and as no message came for us in regard to the channel, we had to put to sea again. We were passed by the R. B. Forbes this afternoon, going to join the fleet. The day was pleasant and calm, but about 9 P.M. a strong west breeze sprang up.

*Wednesday, November 6.* — Came to our anchorage again, the night having been pretty rough; but towards morning the sea was calmer, and we had a pleasant day. The Ericsson got off the bar without any injury. The R. B. Forbes towed the Dale in nearer to us. The Great Republic is outside the bar and has set signals of distress for want of water. It will be bad as she has 500 horses on board. A boat came to us from the Ericsson, and said that the fight on Monday was with the shore batteries, and was simply a reconnoissance. In the evening we had music from the band and dancing on the deck. Sea calm.

*Thursday, November 7.* — Mark this day with a white mark for we have been victorious in battle. We took a pilot from the R. B. Forbes, and one from the Vixen, and



started off at 9.30 o'clock for the anchorage of the other ships. We had to proceed slowly and cautiously, for we drew 22 feet of water, and at low tide there is not more than three fathoms according to the chart. Just as we started we saw the Wabash and the gunboats getting under weigh, and heading for the Sound. It was a most exciting moment for every one, as we expected to see the smoke from the rebel cannon every second, announcing that the fight which we had so longed for and on the success of which so much depended, had begun in reality.

When we were about six miles from the land, we saw the white smoke curling up in the air from a point on the left of the sound called Hilton Head. This was followed by the heavy "boom" of the report, and by several more cannon fired from two batteries on the opposite side and from rebel gunboats in the Sound. We, of course, were very much excited and watched the proceedings with great earnestness. The Wabash soon gave the rebels a broadside, to which they responded briskly. Finally we dropped our anchor about two miles and a half from shore, and just out of the reach of their batteries. Here we could get a fine view of the whole fight, our ship being the nearest one of the transports.

During the first of the fight the rebel batteries on both points fired quite vigorously, but the one in Bay Point soon ceased firing except at intervals, either because our ships were out of range, or because they were disabled. It was probably from the first reason, as our ships during the whole fight paid more attention to the Hilton Head battery than to any other. The ships would go round in an ellipse, firing at each battery as they passed it. At first they went within 800 yards of Hilton Head, but the second time round they approached within 600 yards. The scene was a truly magnificent one. The Wabash

would lead off with a perfect storm of shot and shell, followed closely by the gunboats and the *Susquehannah*. The rebels seemed to like the *Wabash* better than any other ship, as she was a much larger mark, and whenever she came round they would make a spurt, and man their guns quite well. During the whole of the fight I could see shot strike the water, sending a fountain up in the air some 15 or 20 feet high. They would drop on all sides of some of the vessels, but not many seemed to hit. The second time the *Wabash* came round was well worth travelling a thousand miles to see. She looked like a cloud of smoke and flame, so incessant a fire did she keep up. Then, at the same time, the gunboats increased the rapidity of their fire, so that the fort was pretty well rained upon. From the water's edge, where some of the shot struck, to the woods two miles back of the fort, the air was filled with rings of smoke, and with dust and dirt. Around the fort it was terrific. I counted over 50 shells bursting at once in and close around it. So thick was the air with dust and smoke from the shells, that frequently the fort would be hidden from sight. This would continue for about 15 or 20 minutes, when the *Wabash* would haul off, and go on her rounds to the other battery, letting fly a few shot at it. The woods behind the fort were well shelled, and if any rebels were there, they must have suffered severely.

By the time the *Wabash* left on her second round, four of our gunboats had taken up a position where they could enfilade the rebel batteries, which they did in a handsome manner. When the *Wabash* went at her work for the third time, a little steam-tug, the *Mercury*, with a 20-pound Parrott rifled gun, ran right up to the battery, and got in so near they could not hit her. Then she backed round with her stern towards the fort and let drive her one



Head Quarters 3<sup>d</sup> Brigade Sherman's Division  
Steamer "Baller". H. B. Royal. South Carolina  
November 7<sup>th</sup> 1861

General Orders 3  
No. 14 3

Mrs. Mrs. Charles Comstock, C. A.  
Haskell and Stephen W. Alder, having tendered  
their services as Volunteer Aids-de-camp, are  
announced as such upon the Brigade Staff,  
and will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

By command of J. G.

Brig. Gen. J. G. Wright

Sam. S. P.

*Apt. Adpt. Genl.*

*Sub. Field*



gun. It was the best thing done during the whole action, and was loudly cheered from all the transports. The last broadside of the Wabash frightened the rebels, and at about 2 o'clock the marines from the Wabash landed, and took possession of the island.<sup>1</sup>

At 12 M. General Wright came on board, and I spoke to him about my commission on his staff, which he had made out. He told me to get ready instantly, which I did, appearing in a good deal of borrowed plumage. At 3 o'clock the general and his staff got into a boat and shoved off from the Baltic, and went to the Illinois, where we found the 7th Connecticut embarking in boats. Soon the Winfield Scott took about 50 of these boats in tow, carrying them as near the shore as she could go. By 5.30 o'clock we were on South Carolina soil, and we instantly went up to the fort. We found all the marines jolly drunk on whiskey which they had found in the canteens, and in a house there. They were sent on board ship as soon as possible, and the place handed over to the military authorities.

The fort was a very strong one, and not much damaged by our fire. It mounts 22 guns besides a small battery, outside, of one gun and two mortars. Its name is Fort Walker, and it was built by an engineer named Lee, as we found out from a plan in what used to be a hospital and General Drayton's headquarters combined. Here I found an envelope on the floor with \$291.31 marked on the outside. The envelope was torn open and most of the money taken out, but on opening it still more, I found two shin-plasters, a 20- and a 10-cent one. I also got a one-dollar bill on the Bank of the State of South Carolina, from

<sup>1</sup> It turned out that this fight had for its object the capture of Port Royal, in which we succeeded, as these two forts controlled the entrance to the bay on which Port Royal is situated.

Captain Goodrich. I found in Dr. Buist's trunk, the rebel surgeon, a wreath for the hat, which I appropriated.

After we had been on shore about half an hour, General Wright sent me to order boats to the Cahawba, and as one had to wade some 20 or 30 feet in the water in order to get near a boat, it was not so pleasant as it might have been. The scene on the beach when the soldiers were landing, surpasses description. Guns going off, some fired by drunken marines and others by disorderly soldiers; men screaming, yelling, and rushing about in perfect disorder, made altogether a perfect pandemonium of the place. It could hardly be avoided though, owing to the manner in which the soldiers were landed: they being in small boats and easily getting scattered, it was a work of much difficulty getting them together again. General Wright soon got his brigade together, and immediately garrisoned the fort and stationed pickets, and posted all the regiments, making them sleep on their arms, ready at a minute's notice. He took me with him at about two o'clock in the morning, and went the rounds. I got about an hour's sleep in the headquarters, and was glad enough to get it. I was so busy most of the time that I had no chance to get any plunder, and then too the general was going round, stopping the men from plundering, and of course under such circumstances I did not wish to do it. Many of the marines got swords, pistols, guns, watches, etc., from the tents. It was quite a pretty sight in the evening, when the moon had gone down, to see over a hundred fires burning in every direction, and groups of soldiers round them, talking, smoking, and joking as if safe at home. The rebels left one of the guns in the fort all loaded and ready to fire, and from many such signs it would seem as if they must have left in quite a hurry.



*Friday, November 8.* — I went back into the island, and saw a dead rebel on the way, killed by one of our shells. I passed cotton fields, sugar-cane, and sweet potato fields in any quantity, and finally came to a house about two miles and a half into the island, where there were four rebels, three mortally and one severely wounded. One of them had just died under an operation (cutting his leg off), and those horrible turkey buzzards could be seen hovering in air over the house, smelling even so soon the dead man. It was a horrible sight, and made one feel what war was. I found a rebel knapsack, which I took home with me. The road was strewn with them for two miles back in the woods, showing that there had been a rebel Bull Run. I went into the fort and saw near one of the dismounted cannon, a piece of a man's head, and a large pool of blood. There were three men killed here. This morning when going to the ship I saw an explosion at the battery on the other side, which I since learn was a mine. Our forces took possession of the fort, called Beauregard, early this morning, it having been evacuated by the rebels last night.

*Saturday, November 16.* — I have nothing to tell except an account of my expedition to Scull Creek. We started Tuesday, November 12, and came back Wednesday. We went on the steamer Parkersburg, to get corn from Seabrook's plantation, and any other things which might fall in our way. We had 25 soldiers to help us. We found Seabrook's plantation did not amount to much in its buildings. May the Lord preserve me from living in any such house! A miserable white-washed concern, set up on piles, which no white man would live in up North. Everything had been plundered by the negroes and soldiers, and not much remained but corn, which we set to work to get as fast as we could. I thought I would walk

up to Pope's plantation about three miles from here. This was the best house I saw, but everything was taken away, or smashed up. I took a piece of a clock as a memento, and went to the negro quarters, where a great many of them were living. I picked a bunch of castor-oil beans here, which I shall take home as a curiosity. I found some very good springs of water on this side of the island, which were quite agreeable to me as I had not had any good water for some days. I saw any number of palmetto trees, and did not think them a very handsome tree. They look like a cabbage stuck on a pole. We returned to the steamer Parkersburg and spent the night on board. The next day we went up Scull Creek in a row-boat to try and dig out a sloop which was on the beach. While we were endeavoring to get her out, a boat came from the Ottawa and took possession of her. I only hope they had a good time digging her out. In the afternoon we went over to Pinckney Island, where we found a bale of cotton which we appropriated and took on board the steamer. This was the first bale to reach New York. I also bought some peanuts of the negroes. I saw a great quantity of meadow larks on this island.

*[The first part of my diary ends here.]*

### CHAPTER III

ON GENERAL FITZ JOHN PORTER'S STAFF — IN CAMP AT HALL'S HILL, NEAR WASHINGTON — THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN — JEB STUART'S RAID — GAINES'S MILL — IN LIBBY PRISON — SECOND BATTLE OF BULL RUN — ANTIETAM — THE COURT-MARTIAL AND FINAL VINDICATION OF GENERAL PORTER

[I CAME home from the Port Royal expedition and begged my father to let me go to the War. He wrote to Fitz John Porter, who had been one of his pupils at his school, and asked him if he could take me on his staff. General Porter was very kind and said that it would be necessary for me to get a commission first in some of the Massachusetts regiments. This my father succeeded in doing for me, and I was commissioned as second lieutenant in the 18th Massachusetts on January 24, 1862, under Colonel James Barnes, an able and accomplished officer. I at once started for Washington, and then, on February 1, I began again to keep a diary. The first entry therein is preceded here by two letters which I wrote immediately after my arrival in Washington.]

WILLARD'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON, *Jan. 30, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I reached here safely this morning and am now waiting for the arrival of James.<sup>1</sup> I am afraid from what I hear about the time it takes to transport freight, that he will not be here for some two or three days yet.

<sup>1</sup> James Cowan, my servant.

I spent Tuesday night in New York and called on the Howlands. Mr. H. is quite sick, but all the rest of the family were well and Miss Helen and Miss Cornelia wished to be remembered to Hannah. I stayed at the Brevoort House, and on Wednesday morning, just before I started for Philadelphia, I met Mr. George Minot and bid him good-bye. I arrived at Philadelphia at about 2 o'clock and went immediately to the Furnesses', where I dined and took supper. They were very glad to see me, and Mr. Furness spoke quite kindly about you in connection with his son Charles. I took the 11 P.M. train from Philadelphia for Washington, and feel quite sleepy this morning.

The weather here is damp and foggy, and at times a drizzling rain falls, making the streets quite dirty and muddy. There is no snow to be seen around here, but mud can be had in any quantity. I am going to look round the city to-day, and think I shall start for camp to-morrow, if James does not come to-day. . . .

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Jan. 31, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I am lodging at a house on 14th St., just opposite Willard's, and taking my meals at Willard's. Perkins<sup>1</sup> is in the same room with me, and in case you come on here at any time and cannot get in at Willard's, you will find it a good place to get a room at this house, Mrs. Dull's. . . .

James arrived here this evening and says the horse is all right, with the exception of a cold which he caught coming on last night in an open car. I shall buy a rubber blanket for the animal, and think he will be all right then.

I started with Perkins to go out to camp this morning, but we broke down on the way out, and had to return,

<sup>1</sup> William E. Perkins, of Harvard 1860, my classmate.



SECOND LIEUT. STEPHEN M. WELD JR. JAN. 1862



not getting back in time to start again to-day. It is just as well, as I shall have to go to-morrow morning with all my baggage, etc., and report to General Porter. I have had to wait for James, or else I should have gone immediately to camp.

The roads are in a most horrible condition, the mud being the worst I have ever seen. I shall be glad to reach camp and get settled down as I am tired of waiting here in Washington. If it had not been for Perkins I should have been very unpleasantly off indeed.

I saw Sowdon<sup>1</sup> a few minutes after my arrival here Thursday. He was just starting for home, not having obtained his commission.

I am perfectly well and in good health, and received your medicines safely. . . .

*February 1, 1862.* — Day was rainy, but towards evening the clouds cleared away somewhat and I started for General Porter's headquarters with all my bags and baggage. Such mud I never saw before. Up to, and over at times, the hubs of the wheels, came the nasty fluid, completely hiding all the holes into which our unfortunate carriage slumped. However, I finally surmounted all my troubles and reached General Porter's quarters at Hall's Hill. The general was not in, but his Assistant Adjutant-General, Captain [Frederick T.] Locke, was very kind to me, and invited me to stay and dine with him, saying that they were not quite ready to receive me as my tent had not come, which he had sent for. I then went over to my regiment, the 18th, and reported to Colonel [James] Barnes. He was in his tent and seemed quite pleasant and gentlemanly. He introduced me to Lieutenant Colonel [Timothy] Ingraham, and to Surgeon Holbrook.

<sup>1</sup> Arthur J. C. Sowdon, Harvard 1857.

He then sent for my captain, [Stephen] Thomas, of Roxbury, who used to be connected with the iron foundry near the Hogg's Bridge. The colonel remarked that he was somewhat inclined to be fat, in which remark I entirely coincided when I saw him. He seemed as if he might be a very smart officer, however, notwithstanding his size. I found him a regular specimen of a smart, good-natured Yankee, somewhat illiterate to be sure, as one could tell from his conversation, and also I should judge from his writing, if the specimens I heard of it were correct. Stockings, according to his dialect, is spelled "storkings," shoes, "shues." However, he can make himself understood, I suppose, and that is the main thing. Captain Thomas introduced me to my lieutenant [Woolbridge R.], Howes, a boat-builder from New Bedford, and a polite, well-educated man. I took up my quarters in his tent, and put my servant, James, in there too. I borrowed a bedstead from one of the officers, and prepared to make myself comfortable. We also had the fifer of our company (D) in the same tent. The tents of the regiment are a gloomy sort of concern, being the French bell-tent, with no floors. I got on first-rate though, and passed a very comfortable night.

I left home January 29, and reached Washington, January 30. I met Bill Perkins here, and set out with him on January 31, to go to camp, but broke down on the way.

*Sunday, February 2.* — Nothing to do to-day. Sun was out, the first time during 28 days. Dined with Captain Locke.

*Monday, February 3.* — Received my order to report to General Porter. Slept in Lieutenant [George] Monteith's tent, as mine was not ready. Stormy again.



HALL'S HILL, *Feb. 3, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have been detached from my regiment, and am now at General Porter's headquarters on the above-mentioned hill. I am occupying for a day or two Lieutenant Monteith's tent, he being absent in Washington, and am not quite settled yet. I shall make preparations to stay here for a fortnight at least, as we cannot advance before that time, and hardly under a month's time. General Porter has not yet returned, but will be here to-morrow evening. All his staff whom I have seen are pleasant fellows and are quite kind to me. The Assistant Adjutant-General, Captain Locke from New York, is a very polite, gentlemanly fellow, and is a smart business man. Lieutenant Batchelder is quite pleasant, and Lieutenant McQuade seems to be the same, although I have not seen much of him.

My tent was pitched this afternoon in the midst of a driving snow-storm, and I shall not occupy it till I receive some boards to make a floor, and a stove, both of which I must beg in Washington. It will be quite a comfortable tent when I shall have fixed it up a little. I have not discovered any superfluous article yet which I have brought out here. I am only sorry I did not buy me a bedstead and cork mattress, which I shall have to get. My buffalo robe is the best thing I have. I could not have got along without it, and I thank my stars every night that I have such a comfortable robe.

General Porter every one says is extremely simple in his way of living, etc., which I am glad to find out, as it will save me a great deal of expense. Hautville, who is on Banks's staff, told me that it would cost me from \$45 to \$50 a month to live, but I hope to find that he is mistaken.

James gets on quite well, although somewhat slow in

his ways. In a week or two I shall have him in good trim, and shall make him quite a good servant. He is somewhat inclined to grumble, but not much so, and this too I shall stop. He seems to take good care of my horse, and on the whole I like him quite well. If he does not suit me I shall discharge him and send on for Tom.

The weather is stormy again, and no prospect of clearing off. Sunday was the first day the sun had made its appearance for 18 days. We had a regular New England snow-storm to-day, but now it seems inclined to change to sleet.

When Colonel Barnes handed me my order to report here, he said he would like me to come over and drill with his regiment whenever I could, and I shall do so, as I think it will be a good thing for me. He was very kind and pleasant to me all the time I was there. I am in first-rate health and have no doubt but that I shall continue so.

*Tuesday, February 4.* — I have been busy all day fixing my tent, and am quite comfortable now. Went to ride over the country, and caught 7 men stealing fences. Tom Sherwin<sup>1</sup> was with me. Had quite a pleasant time.

*Wednesday, February 5.* — I tried my hand at aide-de-camp duty for the first time, to-day. General Martindale<sup>2</sup> had a brigade drill, at which I was present as aide to the general. The day was a glorious one, and the ground, having been frozen during the night, was in pretty fair condition. As it was the first time I had tried my horse, I felt somewhat nervous about riding, expecting to be thrown from him. I got along very well, however, although the horse seemed inclined to shy at anything he

<sup>1</sup> My college classmate and chum; afterward general.

<sup>2</sup> General John H. Martindale.



Lieut. Chas. J. Mills Adj. of 56th  
Mass. Vol., afterwards on  
Gen. Stevenson's Staff & Gen. Humphrey's  
Staff. Killed in the last battle  
before Petersburg. A class mate  
& dear friend.



saw. He stood the firing very well, not moving an inch. The troops went through the various evolutions very well, and as it was the first time I had ever seen a brigade drill, I was very much interested in it. The drill lasted about two hours, beginning at 11. I met Charles J. Mills<sup>1</sup> on the parade ground, much to my astonishment. He came from Washington. We drove over to see Tom Sherwin, and from there went to the 18th Massachusetts, my regiment. Charles dined with me, and started for Washington as soon as dinner was over. I really enjoyed his visit very much, it is so pleasant to see an old familiar face out here. I have not yet had any feelings of homesickness, and find camp life quite pleasant. I spoke to the brigade quartermaster to-day about getting me some flooring, etc.

HALL'S HILL, *Feb. 5, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have now got my tent all fixed except the floor, which will be put down as soon as I can get the lumber. The mud inside having mostly dried up, I have placed pine twigs on the ground and am getting on quite comfortably. I have just bought me a camp-stove, my former one being a borrowed article, and have fixed me a table, hat-tree (so-called at home), and a place to put my saddle. Of course these articles of furniture are somewhat rudely constructed and would not bear comparison with any of your tenant's manufacture, but still they answer my purpose as well as any mahogany articles would. My hat-tree is a young savin tree, with the branches cut off short, and the tree fastened to one of my tent-poles. The table is made of the top of my saddle-box placed upon three sticks driven into the ground and crossed so as to form an inverted tripod. It is somewhat

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards adjutant in my regiment; my classmate, and one of my dearest friends.

shaky as the top is not yet fastened on, it being convenient at times to remove it to make more room. It is wonderful how many conveniences one can always find about him, if he only has to do so. I find no difficulty in keeping my tent warm, except at night, when it gets somewhat chilly after the fire has gone out.

I suppose it will interest you to learn how I spend my time. We are quite fashionable in our hours. Breakfast is upon the table about 9 o'clock. There is nothing to be done before that time. Then on a pleasant day there is some brigade drill, which begins at 10 and lasts till about one. After that I ride round to the different camps and see my friends. Then we dine at 4.30, having only two meals a day. For breakfast we have some kind of meat and bread, coffee and tea. For dinner, meat, at times soup, and at times pudding, and always coffee. To-day General Martindale had a brigade drill, and I went with him to learn my duties as far as possible. They consist in carrying orders to the different colonels. The day was a splendid one overhead and pretty fair under foot, as the ground was frozen last night. The drill was quite a success as far as the infantry and artillery were concerned, but I cannot say as much for the cavalry, though the squadron we had was quite an inferior one. The infantry were all in line, with pieces of artillery (Martin's) between the regiments. The cavalry were ordered to charge down the line, and such a sight I never saw before. No two men were in line, and the ridiculous appearance these small bands of stragglers made excited every one's laughter. I was within twenty feet of the cannon when they were fired, and was surprised to find that my horse did not move an inch. The musketry fire did not seem to disturb him either, and so far I am entirely pleased with him, except that he interferes behind. I

have him shod differently, and hope it will remedy the trouble. If it does not, I shall have to get him an interfering strap. This drill is the first I have been to, and when General Porter returns I suppose he will assign me some other duties beside attending drills.

My time has been well taken up fixing my tent, and will be for a day or two. In the evening I write letters or read the newspapers which we receive every morning. I get a New York paper here the morning after it is published. They are brought here by boys from Washington who have regular passes allowing them to come. . . .

General Porter will not be here till to-morrow morning. . . .

I find camp life agrees with me and I with it. I like it very much indeed. . . .

*Thursday, February 6.* — Stormy again to-day. General Porter came out here from Washington, and was quite kind and pleasant to me when I was introduced to him. He is quite a good-looking man, and I should judge a very pleasant one. My tent gradually begins to assume the comfortable look which some of the other tents have. All I need to make it perfectly comfortable is a floor, and this I hope to have by to-morrow night.

*Friday, February 7.* — Day cloudy. A fair sample of most of our weather when not actually stormy. I rode over to the 22d Massachusetts, and saw Tom [Sherwin] and Dr. Prince. In the afternoon rode over to Miner's Hill with the general and staff. [Nathan] Appleton and Shattuck were here to-day. Tom Sherwin came over in the evening.

*Saturday, February 8.* — Wrote an account of a court-martial for Captain Locke. Morning, snowed slightly, cloudy the remainder of the day. Nothing of interest

happened. Captain McHarg, brigade quartermaster, said that General Porter would not allow him to get me any flooring. I can't conceive why he should do so, but I suppose for some good reason.

HALL'S HILL, VA., *Feb. 8, 1862.*

DEAR MOTHER, — I am now safely fixed in my tent on this hill. The tent is as warm as our parlor and can if necessary be heated to a much higher temperature. I have kept a good fire going all the time in order to dry the ground and get the dampness out. It is now comparatively dry, considering what it was when the tent was first pitched. The ground then was a perfect mud hole, but now is quite decent. For a flooring I have savin boughs, and I intended to have a plank, or rather board flooring put down, but General Porter would not allow me to get one, saying that we should be here so little while that it would not be worth while to get one. By the way, please tell Father of this remark that General Porter made at dinner to-day. After reading the account of the taking of Fort Henry he said that now, unless some terrible blunder was made, we were sure of beating them, i.e. rebels, everywhere we met them. He is not a man who talks much, and reminds me of Uncle Oliver in that respect. One can rely on what General Porter says. He is very kind and pleasant to me and every one, but I should not like to do anything he did not like, for I guess any one who did so would catch a blessing. He is not quick-tempered or anything of that kind, but he has an eye that shows some determination. He is a very handsome man, and reminds me of Tutor Gurney, but without Gurney's projecting under jaw, and with dark-colored beard and whiskers pretty closely cut. . . .

The country round here is pretty desolate looking. As



fast as the army advances down go the trees, and soon they disappear in the stoves of the different camps.

There is any amount of quail and rabbits out here, and when I get a good opportunity I shall shoot some of them.

General Porter asked me about my brothers and sisters the other day. He asked me if I was the eldest, as he said there was a baby there when he left, about two or three months old.

Please tell Aunt Eliza that as far as I can find out the soldiers are well provided with everything and do not need any more mittens. Stockings are always welcome, as they wear out easily owing to the feet slipping so in the mud. In regard to the stockings being ribbed or not, it does not make much difference. I delivered the mittens and socks to the men in my company which is now fully provided. Tell her that her socks are a great comfort to me, being so soft.

There is not much war news here. Our pickets captured 14 rebels the other day and one 4-horse wagon. It is really impossible to realize that we are so near the enemy. In fact, one never can realize it, unless he gets into a skirmish or fight with them.

We have some fine bands here, and it is quite pleasant to hear them play, it being almost the only amusement our soldiers have. The men are all drilling in target practice now and the best shots receive prizes.

*Sunday, February 9.* — Nothing of any special interest happened. Received a letter from George Weld enclosing draft.

*Monday, February 10.* — Nothing of any special interest happened. Went to Washington and drew draft, etc. Saw Judge Washburn.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hon. Emory Washburn, afterwards governor of Massachusetts.

*Tuesday, February 11.* — Stormy and snowing. Telegraphed to Judge Washburn that I should be happy to see him out here to-morrow.

*Thursday, February 13.* — Judge Washburn and lady came out here to-day, and met with a very kind reception from the general and staff. They took lunch here, and seemed to enjoy themselves very much. Generals Martindale and Butterfield<sup>1</sup> were present, and also Judge Davis of New York. We had quite a jolly time. Saw Dr. Prince of the 22d Massachusetts this evening. Sent a valentine to Edith.<sup>2</sup>

*Friday, February 14.* — St. Valentine's Day, I believe. Nary val. for the "poor soldier." Such is life. The day was a beautiful one, and reminded one of spring. Towards evening, however, it began to grow cold and chilly. A large force under General [George W.] Morell made a reconnoissance beyond Vienna, and as far as Hunter's Mill. No enemy was seen except a few pickets. It was made because intelligence was brought that a regiment of cavalry had been seen around there for a day or two.

*Saturday, February 15.* — Snowy to-day. General Butterfield gave a dinner-party to all the generals in the division and to the French and Russian Ministers, etc. I had a short visit this afternoon from Tom Sherwin and Cousins. I received a pleasant note from Bill Perkins. I read up on skirmishing this morning.

*Sunday, February 16.* — Snow-storm. Went down to the 22d this evening with Tom Sherwin, who dined with us to-day.

*Monday, February 17.* — A most delightful day in some respects, although cloudy and rainy. We received the cheering news from Tennessee of our success there.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> General Daniel Butterfield.

<sup>2</sup> Edith Weld, my sister.

<sup>3</sup> The capture of Forts Henry and Donelson.

The general instantly dispatched messengers, or rather orderlies, to the different brigadiers under his command, and ordered them to call out their respective brigades, and read them the "glorious news." The order was obeyed, and such cheers I never heard before. The men were delighted, and received in honor of the event a ration of whiskey. General Porter was extremely pleased, and had several colonels in his tent, to whom he gave whiskey, etc. I unfortunately could not drink, but I made up for it in wishing. We also heard that Savannah had been taken, but whether this was true or not, I am unable to say. We had Captain Allen of the 5th Massachusetts Battery here to dinner, and as far as I could judge he was a very gentlemanly person. I received a letter from Alice<sup>1</sup> to-day, extremely well written both as to the handwriting and mental part. Her letters will bear reading twice.

HALL'S HILL, VA., *Feb. 17, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — At noon to-day we received a telegram from Washington telling us of the glorious news in Tennessee, and the capture of so many troops as prisoners. General Porter immediately sent word to all the brigadier generals under his command to have their brigades out, and inform them of our success. The order was immediately obeyed, and such cheering was never heard before. All the batteries fired salutes and the bands played, and altogether a more exciting scene could not be imagined. General Porter is delighted, of course, and immediately informed the different colonels that they might, if they wished, issue a ration of whiskey to the men. I was in his tent with several officers, and heard some very interesting conversation. The general said that we should be in Richmond within six weeks, unless the rebels laid down

<sup>1</sup> My sister, Alice B. Weld.

their arms before that time. He also said that McClellan meant that Burnside, Buell, and Halleck should all strike at once, and that the delay to Burnside's expedition was providential, as Buell was delayed by the state of the roads, and Halleck by various matters. But the delay of Burnside caused them all to act together, though of course there was no communication held between these different commanders, and their acting in concert was in the end purely accidental. General Porter thinks that now Columbus must fall. He also thinks that the rebels will not give up until they are whipped at Manassas, so you see, I am glad to say, that we stand a fair chance of having a battle before the war is over. It would be too provoking not to have any fighting at all, and the only thing which would make our soldiers cheer louder than they did to-day would be an order to advance.

My horse seems to be getting on rather better than he did at first. He is in better spirits than when we first came here, and will I dare say turn out quite a good animal after he has recovered from the effects of his journey and gets well acclimated. James makes a very good servant and I am entirely satisfied with him.

It is now raining heavily here, and is decidedly unpleasant, but I am as comfortable in my tent as in my room at home. I keep a good fire going all the time, and so manage to keep the ground dry as a floor. I made James split some logs and make a floor to put my bed on, and the rest of my tent floor is composed of small savin boughs. My saddle-box I have made into a washstand and bureau, and a borrowed box furnishes me with a table. These things, together with two camp stools, complete the furniture of my establishment.

I am perfectly well out here and enjoy the life very much. All the staff are gentlemen and are very kind to

me. General Porter also is kind to me, and lets me do anything I wish to do. I am careful of course not to abuse the privileges I have and hope soon to make myself as perfect as possible in all my duties I may have to perform.

I am trying to get a possum to send home as a present to Henry and some day you may see one coming. . . .

*Tuesday, February 18.* — Rode over to Miner's Hill with the general and saw some target practice by Griffin and Weeden's batteries. Morning cloudy, but cleared at noon, and cloudy again at night. Received a long letter from Hannah,<sup>1</sup> and answered it.

HALL'S HILL, VA., *Feb. 18, 1862.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . I went with General Porter to Miner's Hill to-day, and saw and I must say also heard, some cannon firing. One gun from Griffin's Battery, Regular Army, and one from Weeden's Battery (R. I.) came out to practise before the general. The firing was quite successful. My horse was a little uneasy, but no more so than any of the others. You ought to hear those shells scream when they fly through the air. I feel certain I should bob my head if I heard one coming towards me. You have no idea what a fiendish noise they make. It is just like a locomotive going by one like a lightning flash, screaming with its shrillest whistle all the time.

I am going to a staff supper to-morrow night, or rather to a supper given by General Martindale's staff to our staff. I anticipate a very pleasant time and will give you a report of it soon.

I was just speaking to you about Griffin's Battery. You know he was at Bull Run and lost his battery,

<sup>1</sup> Hannah M. Weld, my sister.

through the want of military knowledge of other parties, who ordered him within musket range of the enemy without supporting him by sufficient infantry. The battle was in a great measure lost to us by General Barry, who rode up to Griffin, who had his guns loaded with grape, and told him not to fire upon some regiments which were marching in front of him, saying that they were our side. Griffin knew better and could have cut them all to pieces, if it had not been for this order of General Barry, whom he was obliged to obey. It turned out afterwards that these troops were Johnston's just arrived from Winchester. Griffin would have driven them from the field if it had not been for General Barry.

In regard to these things which I have written home about any military matters or opinions, of course you all understand that they must not go too far from home, for I might get myself into trouble if they did. . . .

General Porter said (that's the formula I begin all military news with) the other day that Colonel Gorman, — I think that is his name, — who took command after Stone<sup>1</sup> left, did not think Stone guilty. When General Porter heard of Stone's arrest he felt pretty badly, but did not say much, evidently being afraid that some of the charges were true. I have heard him express no opinion about the matter lately.

We are enjoying a beautiful serenade now, and you can imagine me writing amid the most beautiful strains of music, and enjoying it very much, I can tell you.

I give you below a sketch of the inside of my tent, taken by Darley. Tent supposed to be transparent.

1. Lieut. Weld at his table
2. Saddle

<sup>1</sup> Charles P. Stone, who afterwards held high military office under the Egyptian government.

3. Bedstead
4. Stove and wood piled round it
5. Trunk
6. Wash-stand
7. Pole used as a hat-tree, with various things hung upon it, — coat, holsters, towel, clothes-brush. The other things hanging there represent sticks with a crook, instead of nails.

I think Darley sketches pretty well, don't you?

I was sorry to hear from General — this evening that General Grant in Tennessee is not to be depended upon. He is a man of great energy and a laborious worker, but the general says that he cannot be depended upon. He is just as likely to be drunk in the gutter as to be sober. I am therefore sorry that he is to be made a major general. If it were not for Buell, the general says that he would be licked in Tennessee. Let me caution you all again not to let anything I write go too far, as it is not meant to be spread around and might get me into trouble if it does get around. . . .

*Wednesday, February 19.* — A stormy day. In the evening we went to a supper given by General Martindale's staff. It was really a very fine supper, especially for a camp one. They had a handsome bill of fare, with gilt, etc., and quite a handsome-looking table. The chandelier for the occasion was made of bayonets fastened on to a wooden circle, and in the end of the bayonet where it fastens onto the gun, were placed the candles. There were two of these circles, one above the other, producing a gay-and-festive-looking object. The festivities were kept up until twelve. Speeches and toasts were given and responded to with much enthusiasm, and songs, etc., made the evening pass quite pleasantly.

*Thursday, February 20.* — I went to Washington to-

day in an ambulance, with Sam and Michael and one of the telegraph operators. We went on the corduroy road, and such riding I never felt in my life before, the wagon creaking and shaking in every joint, and I myself feeling as if I were doing the same. Up two or three feet in the air at one moment, and down again the next. Driving in the mud compared with it is like the difference between riding in a carriage and in a tip-cart. I went in to get some things for Captain Norton,<sup>1</sup> and to have my photograph taken. I think I have a very good proof, but shall not get it till Monday. The day was chilly, and a blanket thrown over my knees was a welcome protection. When I came out here I found that General McClellan and staff had been here, and in fact were here, for I reached camp just in time to see them mount and ride off. I am sorry I was not here, as I should have liked to be introduced to McClellan. I had a small tent placed before mine as an entrance. Quite an improvement.

*Friday, February 21.* — Nothing new to-day. Pleasant weather. My tent is much improved by having the saddle put in the outer tent, and my table put in the corner. It gives me twice as much room as before.

*Saturday, February 22.* — Washington's Birthday was appropriately celebrated by firing salutes, and by the parade of the different regiments, and the reading of Washington's Farewell Address before them. The day was not favorable for any extensive preparations, it being rainy most of the time. I walked out into the woods about half a mile from the camps, and practised with my pistol, making some pretty fair shots considering the little practice I have had. I am reviewing Hardee and last night got as far as "School of the Battalion." I find,

<sup>1</sup> Our division quartermaster.



however, that reading *The Cloister and the Hearth* is much more entertaining.

*Sunday, February 23.* — Day cloudy and misty as usual. This morning I found that my horse had the scratches. I am sorry for it, as I shall not be able to use him for some days. Captain Allen and Lieutenant Phillips<sup>1</sup> were here this evening to visit me. I bet a box of cigars with Martindale that we should not leave here within a week from to-day.

*Monday, February 24.* — We had a very strong wind to-day, at times amounting to a hurricane, blowing over trees and tents promiscuously. My tent luckily did not blow over. My horse narrowly escaped being crushed to death in his stall by the falling of the stable. Almost all the tents in the regiments around here were blown down. General Porter went away.

*Tuesday, February 25.* — Wind moderated, and day pleasant. Went up to General Morell's to see a flag-presentation, but got tired waiting and so rode home with Tom Sherwin. Got our new cook to-day.

*Wednesday, February 26.* — Morning and most of the afternoon pleasant, but just as I came in from brigade drill under General Martindale, it began to rain. Found the general at home, and busy writing orders for our starting. If it does not rain too much we shall start to-morrow, I think. I am getting my things ready. Received some of my photographs from Washington to-day. They are the best I ever had taken.

*Thursday, February 27.* — We were waiting in anxious expectation all day for our orders to march, but no such orders came. We heard that Banks had crossed the Potomac below Harper's Ferry, and I found that if we marched, we were to go to Washington, from there up the

<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Phillips, my classmate.

river as far as possible by rail, and then march to Winchester. Our sick were all taken to Washington. John Ropes<sup>1</sup> was out here to see me, and brought me a small package of medicine from Uncle Doctor.<sup>2</sup> I was glad to see him, and went with him to the 83d Pennsylvania, 22d Massachusetts, and 18th Massachusetts.

*Friday, February 28.* — Our orders to be ready to march were countermanded to-day. Nothing new.

*Saturday, March 1.* — Mr. Foote, a brother-in-law of the general's, came out to-day to spend a few days. We had a very pleasant day, and very like spring.

*Sunday, March 2.* — I went with the general and Mr. Foote to Stockton's regiment, where we saw them inspected. We then went to Colonel Averell's,<sup>3</sup> where we had a lunch; then to Forts Woodbury and De Kalb, and from there home. A little while before we started for home, it began to snow furiously, and by the time we reached there, the snow was some two inches deep.

*Monday, March 3.* — I rode into Washington with the general, and General Butterfield. I drew my pay for a month, amounting to \$102.50. We stopped at McClellan's headquarters, where I found that all the generals of division of the Army of the Potomac were assembled. I left the general, and came out here on a full gallop to test my horse's powers of endurance, and I was well pleased with them. I paid Monteith \$14.86 for my mess-bill, and my servant James \$17.56 for wages up to March 1.

HALL'S HILL, VA., *March 3, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I infer from your last letter, in which you say that I have not written you how I was received

<sup>1</sup> John C. Ropes, Harvard 1857.

<sup>2</sup> My uncle, Christopher Minot Weld.

<sup>3</sup> William W. Averell, of the cavalry, afterwards brevet major general.

by General Porter, that you have not received all my letters. In letters written to Hannah and others of the family, I have mentioned several times that I liked General P. very much, and that he received me very kindly, etc. You know that when I came here first the general was not here, and he did not return for some days. When he did come I was introduced to him by Captain Locke, and was warmly welcomed by him. I gave him your letter, which he read. He asked how you were, and has since told me that he had been meaning to send you a photograph of his. He also wished me to remember him to you. He advised me to drill with my regiment whenever it was practicable, and to go out with General Martindale on his brigade drills. My regiment have had no battalion drills since I have been out here, on account of the mud. They have had bayonet drills under sergeants, and target practice, at neither of which I could attend as an officer. I have been over there some five or six times, and when I go, always stop and see my captain and lieutenant and some other officers. My captain's name is Thomas, a regular Yankee, with the nasal twang, sharp and smart, and a very pleasant man, although not remarkably well educated. He is from Roxbury, and used to be connected with the iron foundry in R. just by the tannery, and where our old man Michael used to work. My first lieutenant is named Howes, and is from New Bedford, where he was a boat-builder. I should say that he and Captain Thomas were about 45 years old. Lieutenant Howes is a smart officer and an agreeable man. I don't know any of my privates, but hope to soon. My company is D, and is one of the best in the regiment. It has the right of the line. . . .

I see Tom Sherwin two or three times a week, and often ride with him. I can't ride as often as I would like, as my

horse has the scratches and the mud increases them and makes them worse. You ask about one other person, beginning with C., but I can't make out the rest of the name. I see Colonel Griswold quite often, and am quite intimate with him and Tom Sherwin. I also know Lieutenant Martindale quite well, a son of the general's and one of his aides.

I have hardly made up my mind about the horse yet. I have had no chance to try him fairly. I think, however, he has good powers of endurance and will stand hardships well. I believe I can stick on him as long as he can run. I took him out yesterday to go with the general to the different camps to inspection. He had not been out for some days, and so thought he could have it all his own way. He raced round the field through bogs and ditches, and brambles, etc., kicking and rearing, etc., but all to no purpose. I clung on and ran him round until he got tired of the business. To-day I went to Washington with the general, and rode him (horse, not general) very fast all the way. When I got in there we went to General McClellan's headquarters and I left him out in the rain and mud for three or four hours, not knowing the general would stay so long, or else I should have put him in a stable. I then galloped him almost all the way out here through mud-holes and mud-ponds, etc., and on arriving here found that he was not tired or blowing at all. I think it is a pretty good test for him.

Look out for news soon. All the division commanders of the Army of the Potomac were at headquarters to-day, and it was to meet them that General Porter came in town. There were some twelve generals there. General McClellan was not there, being, I think, with Banks's column. I should judge that we were going to advance down from Harper's Ferry from some such indications.

I hear that the Regulars are all under marching orders. I left General Porter in Washington, he saying that this meeting would keep him till midnight. The generals had a large quantity of maps, etc., spread out on a table, and were all figuring over them. I got the general some of his photographs, drew a check for him, and then started for camp.

Yesterday I went with the general to see Stockton's Michigan regiment reviewed, and from there went down to the cavalry camps, where we lunched, and then went over Forts Woodbury and De Kalb, both of them small earthworks. It began to snow just as we started for home, and by the time we reached here the snow was some two inches deep. A heavy rain has set in to-day, however, and I hope soon to find it all gone and the roads in good condition. Our orders to be ready at any minute to march were countermanded a day or two ago, probably because Banks had no opposition offered him. . . .

We are to have a son of Colonel Barnes here as volunteer aide with rank of captain. He is a good-looking gentlemanly fellow, a lawyer by profession in New York, and will be quite an acquisition to the staff.

I received an invitation to Miss Chase's<sup>1</sup> reception to-morrow from 1 till 4, through General Butterfield, who was kind enough to send it to me. I think I shall make my "debut" in Washington society, as General Porter is going and kindly offered to have me go with him.

Tell the girls I have cut off my magnificent moustache and beard because they did not grow fast enough. How do you like my last photographs?

I forgot to mention that General Martindale's headquarters are within 30 feet of General Porter's, so that

<sup>1</sup> Miss Kate Chase, daughter of Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase; afterwards famous as the wife of Senator William Sprague of Rhode Island.

I should see as much as ever of my present staff. General M. is one of P.'s brigadier generals. . . .

*Tuesday, March 4.* — I found that my horse had cast a shoe yesterday, so that I was obliged to have one put on this morning by the farrier at Martin's Battery. General Porter returned this morning from Washington. I received an invitation from General Butterfield yesterday to attend Miss Chase's reception, but as General Porter did not go, I thought it hardly worth the while. James went to Washington to-day, and bought himself a pair of boots, etc.

HALL'S HILL, VA., *March 9, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — We start certainly to-morrow at six A.M., and advance directly to Centreville. Our division proceeds to Fairfax Court House by the "dirt road." Colonel Averell with a regiment of infantry and two of cavalry pushes a reconnoissance beyond Centreville, supported by McDowell and Heintzelman in reserve. I shall let you know the result of any encounter which may take place as soon as possible. All the rest of the divisions move on by different routes into Virginia. I have just copied the order of the routes for the different divisions and so speak from what I know to be true.

Theodore Colburn is here from Cambridge. He will spend the night here and can probably give you an account of our departure. . . .

P.S. We shall have no fighting at Manassas, so I hear. The rebels are evacuating it.

*McCl. is a failure.* Don't say a word about this to any one as it would bring me into trouble, but still I know it to be a fact.

FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE, *March 10, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — Safe in the former headquarters of General Beauregard in the house of Dr. Gunnell, once a physician here but now a surgeon in the rebel army. The house, now General Porter's headquarters, is one of the best in this town, being built of brick and being two and a half stories in height. It stands back from the road some 300 feet, and has a straight avenue leading to it, with medium-sized trees planted on each side. Still it has the true Southern look about it, viz., the air of neglect, of something wanting to complete the estate, as if the owner had begun with the idea of making a fine place and had been stopped short for want of funds. The fences round the place are of the most common kind, such as we see in our pastures. What adds to the air of shiftlessness is a sow with a litter of a dozen pigs rooting around the trees and in what used to be a garden. She threatened to bite me to-day when I went too near her young ones, and worked upon my fears so much that I put my hand on my pistol to shoot her, but she fortunately retreated. She was a fierce and ugly creature. I offered James a quarter to catch me one of the young ones, as I wanted to see the sow run at him, but he thought it was safer to let them alone. I tried to get General Porter to let me have one killed for dinner, but he would not. You can tell when you arrive in a Southern city by seeing pigs and cattle running round in the streets. I have found it so in Washington and Georgetown.

I got about three hours' sleep last night, being occupied in packing, and writing for the general most of the time. We had breakfast at 5 and started about 8 o'clock on our advance. We reached here about 12, having a pouring rain most of the way, from which I was well protected by my rubber coat, and cap-cover which you bought me,

and which I now prize highly. I did not get a particle of my clothing damp or moist. My horse I think a great deal of. He has great powers of endurance, and was not in the slightest degree tired when we reached here, although I carried more on his back than any of the other officers. I begin to think that it was a good plan having him shaved. A few minutes after the rain was over he was as dry as when he started, while the other horses were wet and steaming. Nothing of any importance happened on the way, no rebels being seen, as they evacuated the place yesterday. Colonel Averell we found here on our arrival, he having started early in the morning. He left soon after with McDowell's division for Centreville, which place he has reached without finding any enemy, and he is now pushing on to Manassas, which he will reach to-night. The enemy have evacuated that place too, and where they have gone no one knows. I think that McClellan had a hint from Lincoln that unless he did something within a few days his course would come to an end, and hence his speedy advance. We (P.'s division) shall probably remain here a day or two. McClellan has taken up his headquarters at this place, a few houses distant from us.

My room here is a large pleasant one, with a big open fireplace, in which I have some enormous logs burning, casting a very pleasant light over the apartment. It is occupied by Batchelder, McQuade and myself. I have my buffalo-robe blanket, and canvas bag filled with changes of clothing, etc., with me, and can get along quite comfortably with my present conveniences for three or four weeks. My trunk I left at camp in charge of one of the clerks who stays there with the guard.

As we approached Fairfax we found slight earthworks which had been hastily thrown up by the rebels some



time ago, commanding all the country round the town, for some distance. They don't amount to anything and were probably occupied by the rebel pickets some time ago. On entering the town we struck the turnpike, which is quite a decent road, and which forms the principal street of the town. The Court House is situated on it and is an old-fashioned brick building with a portico in front. We should call this a small village in Massachusetts, but here it is quite a city in the estimation of the F. F. V.'s.

I copied a report for Hendricks of the New York *Herald* this afternoon which you will probably see in to-morrow morning's N. Y. H. It was amusing to hear him "get off" the usual stereotyped phrases about the enthusiasm, alacrity, etc., of the soldiers, and then hear him say "big lie," etc., to each phrase. For instance, when he wrote about there being very few stragglers, I said I did n't agree with him as I thought there were a good many. "Oh, I know it," said he, "still I must write it so." That is just the way these newspaper reporters do. All the stories about fine drill, discipline, etc., we know to be untrue half of the time. Still, on this morning's march the soldiers did very well, as the roads were muddy and the travelling very heavy.

The troops are all bivouacked to-night and some regiments have what are called shelter tents, — small low tents, accommodating three men, and equally distributed among the three men on a march, each one carrying his share.

I am so sleepy that I must end and ask you to excuse any deficiencies in the letter on account of my being so tired.

FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE, *March 13, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . The President's Proclamation<sup>1</sup> is liked very much by all the officers I have seen.

I have got the box here, and daily tickle the palates of myself and brother officers with the different things you were kind enough to send me. I will see that the stockings go to the soldiers, etc.

Coming in from Hall's Hill yesterday I was struck with the picturesque scene which I saw in the village. It was about half an hour from sundown, the air soft and balmy as could be, and resembling some of our delightful autumn or spring days. It was just the hour when the camps are busiest, and present their most lively appearance. First we came to a cavalry regiment with their horses fastened to a long rope stretched along parallel with the road, and eating their supper, neighing, biting and snapping at each other. On my right was an undulating space cleared of all trees and with some slight breastworks put up by the enemy. This large plain was covered with camps full of life and activity, soldiers marching to a review by McClellan, with bands playing and their colors flying, and a hum arising from those not yet in ranks. All this was delightful to me, but to one who is accustomed to it it loses its beauty in a great degree. Following this road till I came to the turnpike, I turned to the right, and came on a scene which I thought must resemble some European city. Here were all these old-fashioned houses, with queer windows and porches, guards before many of the doors, and soldiers in many cases sitting in the porches talking with the women of the house. The street was full of soldiers in every imaginable attitude, and in performance of all sorts of duty. Here was the provost guard clearing the stragglers from the street, there a man with

<sup>1</sup> The special message urging "gradual emancipation" of the slaves.



my true friend  
Genl Wm R. Miller  
his father

Signed at my request by  
Genl McClellan before  
Yorktown 1862



two oxen who would go in opposite directions and he in despair, for no sooner would he get them straight than some band of soldiers would on their march come across his path, to the infinite delight of the by-standers. Then again all the soldiers would be talking in groups, which seemed quite picturesque from the variety of uniforms. Sutlers' wagons, ambulances, baggage trains and a large corral of cattle also appeared. I never was so well pleased with any such sight and would have given a great deal if I had been able to sketch it.

What I wrote you about McClellan the other day was this. A cabinet meeting was held, so I heard, and an angry discussion took place, most of them at first being in favor of turning McClellan out altogether and putting McDowell in his place (in the Army of the Potomac), but on second thoughts they determined to confine McClellan's command to the Army of the Potomac. The President then told McClellan that he would be turned out if he did not advance, and hence this advance was made. This came from a source hostile to McClellan and I have good reason to think is exaggerated. The President I know ordered the advance, but I doubt if the whole of the story is correct. McClellan's plan was, I think, to go to Richmond by water, a much more practicable, less expensive and quicker method of doing the business. It may be done so yet as there is no enemy to fight here, and to advance on Richmond with our large army will be an immense and tedious operation as all the bridges are destroyed and we shall have to wait for them to be rebuilt as we must depend on the railroad for all such things.

I heard a curious story from Stedman, the *World* correspondent, to-day. Last summer, just after Bull Run, he dined at Centreville with a Dr. Grimsley. In reply to the

doctor's question as to when he would be there again, he said in the course of a year. The doctor laughed at the idea and told him that it was nonsense, and it ended by their betting a supper on the result of the question. When Stedman entered the doctor's house at Centreville, which he did Tuesday, he found a note addressed to him, saying that he would find a dinner ready for him and four servants to wait on him. The doctor said he had retired to the interior of the State. Sure enough, there was a dinner spread out for him, of turkey, sweet potatoes, etc., and four niggers to wait on him. They told him their master had cleared off and left directions for them to wait for Stedman and wait upon him. It's strange what queer things turn up sometimes. I think we shall be here some days. . . .

*Friday, March 14.* — We started for here last Monday morning, and have been here ever since.

[This is as far as my diary goes at this time. We went from Alexandria to Fortress Monroe, and disembarked there and began the so-called Peninsular Campaign, beginning with the attack on Yorktown. It was originally intended to approach Richmond by way of James River, but the presence of the rebel ram *Merri- mac* at Norfolk Navy Yard forced us to change our base to the York River. To get there we first had to capture Yorktown. As this was strongly defended, we had to lay siege to it, and just before the attack was made, General Magruder vacated it and our troops followed him up and fought a battle at Williamsburg. Then the base of supplies was transferred to White House on the York River. We marched from here up to Gaines's Mill and had our headquarters for some time at Dr. Gaines's house. While

here our corps went up and had a battle at Hanover Court House. I was just out of the hospital and did not go with the force, but was left in charge of the camp.

While at Gaines's Mill we had regular daily routine, picket-drilling, looking after the men, and getting them into shape. The battle of Fair Oaks, in which our corps did not take part, was fought on the other side of the Chickahominy. We took turns in running the mess. The week it was my turn I went out with the headquarters wagon, with a negro driver and four horses, went to Old Church, left the main road there, and took a circuit which struck the main road again two or three miles farther on. On this circuit I went to various farmhouses and bought butter and eggs and chickens. With my wagon loaded with supplies, as I was driving towards the main road, on a curve, I saw an enormous amount of dust on the main road into which my road ran. I stopped the driver and told him to wait. I listened, then jumped out and crept along the wall by the side of the road and peeked through the crevices of the wall. To my horror, close to me I saw an immense body of rebel cavalry going full tilt towards our army. I crept back to the wagon, turned around and drove back, meaning to enter the main road ahead of the Confederates, as I hoped, and from there get back to camp. About half a mile ahead of where the road ran into the main road, I saw a battle going on, tents burning, and pretty lively times. I drove into the wood and fastened my horses to the trees and waited.

At night things quieted down and I started across country, and with the negro driver tramped until daylight, when I ran into one of our pickets. He halted me and I said who I was. He called the officer of the guard, and up came my classmate, Harry Winsor, of Rush's Lancers, a Pennsylvania regiment. I borrowed a horse of him and

got home, much to General Porter's delight, as he supposed I had been taken prisoner. The men I saw were General Stuart's<sup>1</sup> Confederate cavalry, making the celebrated raid around our army. This was the second time I had met my classmate Winsor. Once before, when I was out foraging, I was driving up to a substantial looking house where I afterwards found a Mrs. Brockenborough lived. A company of our cavalry was riding out of the avenue with a sheep at the head of every horse, and a bundle of corn-shucks behind each rider, turkeys and chickens, pigs and everything else, hanging from the saddles. Harry Winsor was commanding the squadron. He told me I would not find much left in the house, he thought. I went up to the house and there was Mrs. Brockenborough, and a madder lady I never saw in my life. I tried to buy some supplies, but she said nothing had been left her.

I remember going with a message to General McClellan, while before Yorktown, and asking him to give me his autograph on one of his photographs, which he very kindly did. He was a charming man, and after knowing him, one could well understand why our troops had such immense confidence in him. Indeed I think he inspired more confidence than any general that ever came after him, although many who succeeded him undoubtedly had more push and go in them than he had.

One of the most interesting things that happened while we were besieging Yorktown was an experience of General Porter's. He got up early one morning, at about half-past five or six, and went up in a balloon which was used by the army and was under the charge, I believe, of the aeronaut, Mr. Low. The balloon was held down by ropes, and our generals would go up a thousand feet or more and

<sup>1</sup> General J. E. B. ("Jeb") Stuart.



reconnoitre. Low had some trouble with his employees, and to revenge themselves they put acid on the rope. General Porter, all unconscious of what had been done, got into the balloon and went up to the extent of the length of the rope, when it parted where the acid had eaten it. I was not yet dressed when my orderly ran in and said, "General Porter's balloon has broken loose and he is sailing over us." I rushed out, and there, about a mile up in the sky, saw the balloon, with of course, as we all knew, General Porter in it. It sailed away over our heads, then off toward the enemies' tents as one current took it, then, as it entered another current, came back over our camp, where it rapidly descended. As General Porter afterwards told me, when he found the balloon had broken loose, he looked around for the ropes to pull the valve to let out the gas. He found to his dismay that they were tied six or eight feet up in the netting, away from the car. So all he could do was to climb up, while a mile up in the air, into this netting, get hold of the ropes, climb down into the car again, and then, when a current of wind took him over our camp, open the valves and pull on the ropes. This he did with all his vigor, and he came down, landing on a shelter tent, without being hurt or hurting any one else. He was a little overcome by the fumes of the gas, but that was all.

I remember how gingerly we went into Yorktown the morning of the evacuation. There were several mines laid there, some of which exploded by contact. I was in momentary expectation of being blown up, but luckily no such bad luck befell me.

Soon after the battle of Hanover Court House the army was in camp before Richmond, with half the force on one side of the Chickahominy and half on the other. Stonewall Jackson attempted to come down and turn our right.

Meanwhile, the Merrimac having been destroyed by the Monitor, General McClellan thought it best to change his base from White House to the James River, at Harrison's Landing, and the memorable Seven Days' fight took place. On the second day of the fight, at Gaines's Mill, General Porter sent me out with eight or ten cavalymen to find General Meade, who was then in charge of the Pennsylvania Bucktails, and to ask him to report as soon as possible with his command. On the way out I came to the old camp at Gaines's Mill, where we had been for some time and which he had just left that morning.

As I was crossing the bridge at the mill, I met Lieutenant Hayden,<sup>1</sup> commanding a company of artillery in the regular service, who asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to try to find General Meade, and he said, "You won't find him on that road; all our forces are withdrawn."

"Well," I said, "I was told to come out here and find him, and I am going to try to do it."

I got out to the road leading to Gaines's house, just where our tents had been, and in a wood just about a couple of hundred yards away, I heard heavy firing. I posted my escort along the apple trees in the avenue, and went ahead to reconnoitre myself, a foolish and unnecessary proceeding. I got to the edge of the woods, and found them so thick that I had to dismount and fasten my horse. I came out of the thicket where I tied him, and twenty yards in front of me was a line of rebel skirmishers. I had on a cap without any U. S. on it, and I saw in a second that if I hesitated I would be shot, so I marched straight ahead<sup>2</sup> and asked a Confederate private where

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant H. J. Hayden was my classmate in College and a dear friend.

<sup>2</sup> As soon as they saw me, they threw up their guns to shoot; but I marched right straight on as if nothing was the matter.

General Whiting was, General Whiting being a rebel general who, we had heard from rebel prisoners captured the night before, commanded some of the troops in our front.

He said, "You will find him in the rear."

I marched right through the line of skirmishers, making up my mind that if I could get twenty or thirty yards away from them I would then scoot off to the right and get into the road where there was a stone wall, behind which I hoped to turn my back on them and get back to our lines. I had gone only a few feet before one of the officers stopped me, saying, "Hold on, I think you had better come and see our major."

I went up to him and said, "It is no use, I am a Union officer."

He then took me along with him on the skirmishing line, until Hayden began shelling us; soon a shell burst right over our heads. I told the major I did not care about being killed by our own men. He then sent me to the rear, to Stonewall Jackson. Jackson asked me some questions which it was perfectly proper for me to answer, and then sent me to the rear, and I was taken, I think, to Bethesda Church, and during the day heard the most tremendous firing going on between Stonewall Jackson's forces and ourselves. Prisoners of ours kept coming in during the whole day, and it was not until the end of the day that Jackson was successful. General Porter always took the ground, and I think he was right, that if he could have been supported then with one or two more divisions, he would have won a victory.

From there I was sent to Richmond and put in the celebrated Libby Prison. I was kept here for about six weeks, about two hundred of us being confined in a room perhaps 150 feet long by 50 feet wide. I was then exchanged and

taken down to the James River with other officers, where I took a steamer and joined General Porter at Harrison's Landing. From there in a few days we took transports and went to Alexandria. The air was full of rumors about McClellan being superseded, etc. His forces, as fast as they reached Washington or Alexandria, were forwarded towards Manassas to join General Pope. We were landed at Aquia Creek and from there marched up to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, via Bealeton Station, to Manassas, to join General Pope.

This campaign, which resulted in Porter's trial by court-martial and in his conviction of disobedience to orders and dismissal from the army, was most disastrous. Porter did all in his power to make the campaign a success and to aid Pope. General Pope was completely at a loss. He did not know where his men were, or where Jackson was; he was completely out-generalled from beginning to end. Without going into this controversy too much in detail, as the matter has already been settled by much more competent military authorities than I am, I will merely say here that throughout the whole of this campaign I never saw Porter more vigilant, or more determined to do his duty, or trying harder to bring success to our armies, than during this period. Lieutenant Monteith and I were the only aides he had, and therefore had unusual opportunities of seeing what was going on, and of knowing his feelings and what he was trying to do. As I have said, all this was amply confirmed by the second court, which convened some years afterwards, several of us having meanwhile made unceasing efforts to that end, and which I shall refer to later on.

On the morning of August 30 we marched, by Pope's orders, from the vicinity of Manassas Junction, to join his army at Bull Run. On arriving there we reported to

General Pope, and I remember General Kearny, General Heintzelman, and the other officers, talking together in the most disheartened state of mind, owing to the fact that General Pope seemed wholly at a loss what to do and what to think. He (Pope) said that he did not know where his own men were, or where Jackson was. General Porter later sent him one of our own men, who had been made a prisoner by the Confederates and escaped, who said the enemy were in full retreat. General Porter said he did not believe the man's story, but thought he ought to send him to Pope with all the information he had. General Pope sent back word that he believed the man's story, and that we were to attack at once and press the enemy with vigor, — which is a matter of history.

We went into the woods where Sigel had been the day before disastrously defeated, going over the ground covered with dead bodies, and attempted to attack the enemy in a cut which had been excavated for a railroad which was to have been built but never had been finished. Here we met with a repulse, and on retreating we were attacked on our flank by Longstreet. He had followed us from the extreme left, taking the very course we had taken that morning. Where the road that we came on and that Longstreet came on joined the Centreville Pike, the fight was very hot towards dusk. General McDowell rode up to General Porter and said, "Porter, you ought to put in the Regulars here." — "I will do so," said Porter, "if you order me to." — "No," said McDowell, "I will not take the responsibility." Porter then said he would do it anyway. He put in the Regulars and checked Longstreet's advance. He was within two or three hundred yards of the Pike, and if he had gained that, it would have meant a disastrous rout for our whole army.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the midst of the battle I was riding across an open field, with a few

That night and the next day we marched towards Washington and received news that General McClellan had been put in command again. The effect was like magic on the whole army. Men who had been straggling along, blue and dispirited, fell into place in their ranks with new vigor and new life, and with renewed determination and courage.

From Centreville we went to Washington, and then marched up to the Antietam. At the battle of Antietam Porter's forces were held in reserve, and a large portion of them detached to various portions of the field, where their services were most needed during the day. I had the best chance to see a battle that I ever had in my life. On the right Hooker and Sumner would charge up through the corn-fields near Dunkirk Church, and you could see the black line of troops advance, and black dots dropping, dropping, dropping, until they got by the Church; then they would be driven back, then advance again, like the waves of the sea. The firing was terrific. Burnside was ordered in the early part of the day by McClellan to cross the Antietam and take the Confederates on their right flank, the idea being to get there before Jackson got up from Harper's Ferry. He did not succeed in getting across until Jackson had arrived, and too late to do any good.<sup>1</sup>

bushes in it, the shot and shell falling around me thick and fast, when I heard a squealing and quite a racket in a bush by my side. I looked, and there was a poor little rabbit, frightened most to death. He was screaming the way a hare does when it is wounded.

This was the only battle in which I ever saw a cannon-ball coming towards me. It was a round shot, and I could see it coming through the air, strike the earth forty or fifty yards away from me, then bound along the ground and roll close by me. The horse I was riding was shot in the foot, so that later on he had to be killed.

<sup>1</sup> The day after, I think it was, the enemy retreated across the Potomac. We followed through Sharpsburg. On getting to the banks of the Potomac, which were much higher than on the Virginia side, we saw a Confederate

Within a day or two a flag of truce came over, with a Confederate surgeon, to look after their wounded. He told us a curious story about General Toombs. He said that on the night of the battle of Antietam, General Toombs and his staff were sitting around a fire, when two cavalry men rode up and asked some questions, which were answered; then, suddenly drawing their pistols, they fired right into the crowd, shooting Toombs through the hand or the wrist. They then wheeled their horses and cleared out. The surgeon said they never captured them and never could find out who they were.

We waited at Antietam to recruit and get clothing and things for the troops. While there I went up once in a balloon attached to a rope. I went up about a thousand feet, and it was a most disagreeable sensation.

One day President Lincoln came up to consult with McClellan and dined at our headquarters.<sup>1</sup> That day I happened to be sent across the river on a flag of truce. I met General "Rooney" Lee<sup>2</sup> on the other side of the Potomac, and delivered my letter, and while awaiting an answer, I talked with one of the aides, Captain Brockenborough. He told me how near he came to capturing me at the time Stuart made his raid around the army.<sup>3</sup>

I got back to headquarters with my answer, the purport of which and the purport of my message I never knew. From here we crossed the Potomac and marched down through Virginia to near Warrenton, where General

battery go into camp right under our noses. We quickly put a battery in position and shelled them out.

<sup>1</sup> President Lincoln told a story at our mess-table, which was very funny, but too broad to repeat here.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. F. Lee, General R. E. Lee's second son.

<sup>3</sup> He said he tried to get permission from General Stuart to take a squadron and go around on this road on which I was with my wagon, but that Stuart said it was too dangerous and there was not time to delay. If they had gone, they would have captured me.

McClellan was relieved again, and General Porter was summoned to Washington and relieved of his command and court-martialed. I staid with him until the court-martial was over, and then reported, in accordance with orders from the War Department,<sup>1</sup> to Boston to await orders. There I waited for some time until I heard from General Butterfield that I was reported as absent without leave. He wrote me a friendly letter, saying I would get into trouble, as I was reported as absent without leave, if I did not return. I said I was only too anxious to return but was awaiting orders in accordance with instructions. I then tried to get on General John F. Reynolds's staff as an aide, and had the letter from him which is reproduced opposite.

Finding that I could not get a position with him, I applied to General Henry W. Benham and was assigned to duty with him.

I have alluded in a previous page to the effort made by several of us to get a rehearing for General Fitz John Porter. It occurs to me here that a brief account of the history of the case might be interesting reading. When trying to get a rehearing, of course we did all we could to enlist our senators and representatives in behalf of General Porter. Senator Hoar of Massachusetts was appealed to. General Grant who, when he was President, had refused to give Porter a rehearing, after his term of office had expired looked into the matter and found that he had been wrong, and he then took sides very strongly in Porter's favor. Senator Hoar, in answer to our importunities, sent on and asked that some officer who was well acquainted with Porter's case be sent to Washington to talk the matter over with him. As I had been on General Porter's staff, I was selected to go on and have an inter-

<sup>1</sup> Facsimile opposite p. 156.



W. H. & Mary (Mrs.)

Camp near Belle Plaine Va

Feb: 13<sup>th</sup> 1863

My dear Wife:

Your note has just been recd. & one from Peter came yesterday asking the diff. on your behalf. I ought to say that I have no vacancy, having filled up my staff some time ago & have one extra horse & camp. It would give me great pleasure to hear you visit me at any time and should any plan become vacant will remember you.

Believe me

Yours truly,  
John H. Reynolds.



view with Senator Hoar. I went to his house at twelve o'clock noon, and talked with him until twelve at night, and I felt in despair when I left him. Like a good lawyer he had brought up everything he could against Porter, to see how I could answer it, and I thought that he was prejudiced against Porter and that I had made no impression.

In desperation I cudgelled my brains to see what to do. I remembered seeing in the paper that General Grant was staying with General Beal in Washington, and I made up my mind to see what I could do there. I asked Senator Hoar whether he would be willing to see General Grant if I could arrange an interview. He said he would; so, early in the morning, about eight o'clock, I took a carriage, drove up to General Beal's house, sent in my card, on which I wrote that I was an aide of General Porter's during the War and that he, General Grant, could aid Porter very much if he would give me a brief interview. He sent for me at once. He was taking breakfast alone in General Beal's library, drinking a cup of coffee and eating a boiled egg and some toast. I told him that I had been sent to talk with Senator Hoar, and that I thought if he would see Senator Hoar he might do General Porter a great deal of good. He said, "Bring him right around here."

I drove around to Senator Hoar's house, got him, and drove back to General Beal's and saw General Grant. Senator Hoar asked several questions, which General Grant answered very strongly in Porter's favor. We left the general, and drove towards the Capitol. Senator Hoar turned towards me and, said, "Weld, I have made up my mind to vote for Porter, and furthermore I am going to make a speech in his favor to-day." He added, "I am up now for reelection before the Massachusetts

General Court, and I suppose my action is going to cost me my election, but I can't help it, it is the right thing to do and I am going to do it, and I don't care much if I do go home and take hold of the practice of law with my son."

I said nothing, but I made up my mind that if I could do anything to help his reelection he should have all the aid I could give him. I asked him if I could go in and hear his speech. He said no, not unless he appointed me his private secretary, as it was against the rules of the Senate. "But," he said, "I will do that. I will make you my secretary."

He did so. He appointed me his private secretary, and I went in and heard his plea on Porter's behalf. It was most eloquent and convincing. I remember how angry the Republican senators were. Senator Logan came up and shook his fist in the old man's face. But the old man stood firm and reiterated his belief in Porter's innocence and gave his reasons for so doing. At the end of his speech he was congratulated by some of his most bitter political enemies, some of the Southern senators, who said it was one of the grandest things they had ever known a man to do — to take a stand against all his political friends and incur their hostility, by doing what he considered to be right. The bill passed, Porter got his rehearing, and was not only acquitted, but praised for everything he had done, by a board of officers composed of Generals Schofield, Terry and Getty. It was a perfect vindication.

On returning home I went to a friend of mine who had held a command under Porter, and who had once promised me to do what he could to help him. I said to him, "Colonel —, I know you control fifteen or twenty votes in the legislature. You promised me once you would do anything you could to help Porter. I want you to throw

SPECIAL ORDERS }  
No. 78. }

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, April 12, 1878.

The following order has been received from the War Department :

An appeal has been made to the President as follows :

“ NEW YORK, March 9, 1878.

“ To His Excellency RUTHERFORD B. HAYES,

“ *President of the United States.*

“ SIR : I most respectfully, but most urgently, renew my oft repeated appeal to have you review my case. I ask it as a matter of long delayed justice to myself. I renew it upon the ground, heretofore stated, that public justice cannot be satisfied so long as my appeal remains unheard. My sentence is a *continuing sentence*, and made to tollow my daily life. For this reason, if for no other, my case is ever within the reach of executive as well as legislative interference.

“ I beg to present copies of papers heretofore presented, bearing upon my case, and trust that you will deem it a proper one for your prompt and favorable consideration.

“ If I do not make it plain that I have been wronged, I, alone, am the sufferer. If I do make it plain that great injustice has been done me, then I am sure that you, and all others who love truth and justice, will be glad that the opportunity for my vindication has not been denied.

“ Very respectfully, yours,

“ FITZ-JOHN PORTER.”

In order that the President may be fully informed of the facts of the case of FITZ-JOHN PORTER, late Major General of Volunteers, and be enabled to act advisably upon his application for relief in said case, a Board is hereby convened, by order of the President, to examine, in connection with the record of the trial by Court-Martial of Major General PORTER, such new evidence relating to the merits of said case as is now on file in the War Department, together with such other evidence as may be presented to said Board, and to report, with the reasons for their conclusion, what action, if any, in their opinion, justice requires should be taken on said application by the President.

*Detail for the Board.*

Major General J. M. SCHOFIELD.

Brigadier General A. H. TERRY.

Colonel G. W. GETTY, 3d Artillery.

Major ASA B. GARDNER, Judge Advocate, Recorder.

The Board will convene at West Point, New York, on the 20th day of June, 1878, and is authorized to adjourn from time to time, and to sit in such place as may be deemed expedient.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL SHERMAN :

E. D. TOWNSEND,

*Adjutant General.*

Official :

L. H. PELOUZE,

*Assistant Adjutant General.*



those votes for Hoar. It is only fair to him after what he has done."

He said, "Weld, I would do it with the greatest pleasure, but I am on So-and-so's staff; he is running against Senator Hoar, and it would be impossible."

I said, "I cannot help it: you have promised me to do it and you must."

After thinking a minute he said, "Well, I will"; and he did, and the votes that he turned secured Senator Hoar's reëlection. I was always extremely pleased at the little I was able to do in helping Senator Hoar, and I was doubly glad to see a man rewarded for doing right and for acting, as a good many would say, against his party, because he thought it was right. I always after this had the greatest respect and love for Senator Hoar, and while I did not agree with him in all his views, I felt that they were those of an honest man, and held always because he thought they were right.

The following letters were written during the months that I kept no diary.]

## CHAPTER IV

LETTERS HOME, MARCH, 1862, TO MARCH, 1863

FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE, *March 14.*

DEAR FATHER, — We start again to-morrow at 6 A.M. for Fortress Monroe, or rather Cloud's Mills,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Alexandria. We spend the night at Cloud's Mills. We then go to Alexandria, where we take steamers for Fortress Monroe. Where we go from there I don't know, but I suppose it is to Richmond by water.

All the soldiers are in good spirits and glad to march.

You must not expect to hear from me for some time, as I may not have a chance to send any letters.

CLOUD'S MILLS, *March 18, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I think we are going up Pocosin [Poquoson?] River, a small river just behind Fort Monroe. This is confidential.

CLOUD'S MILLS, *March 20, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I received your two letters containing the two photographs one of which I gave to General Porter, he asking for it first. I liked the full face better than the other, which General Porter took.

I saw Professor Low the aeronaut the other day. He is a very good-looking man and still enthusiastic about the balloon's crossing the ocean.

Our staff gave General Porter quite a handsome sword last evening. Curiously enough it was the anniversary of his wedding, which together with this sword presentation were, he said, the two pleasantest occasions of his life.



I attended a review of General Franklin's division with General Porter yesterday. The troops made a fine show, being well drilled and disciplined. Porter's (Mass.) Battery is in this division. General McClellan was there and rode, of course, at the head of the reviewing column, which consisted of any amount of generals and their staffs. Generals Franklin, Porter, McDowell, Slocum, Heintzelman, who commands our *corps d'armée*, Kearny, Barry and numerous others were there. The soldiers cheered McClellan heartily as he rode up and down the lines, followed by about fifty officers.

I think I was mistaken in what I wrote you about McClellan. It came from one of his enemies and I am confident was wrong. If you notice what Burnside says in his report of the battle at Newberne you will see what he says about following out the minute orders given him by McClellan. That will rather knock the N. Y. *Tribune*, which has been abusing McClellan abominably. I hope you never take the paper.

The whole force of the Army under McClellan is 257,000 men, including Burnside and Sherman, I suppose.

I hear that Sherman is to be superseded by General Hunter. The administration are not satisfied with him, and with good reason.

We are waiting here for our transports, which have already taken some troops, and landed them, and are on the way back for more. I don't see how we can start before Monday. We shall probably go to the place I wrote you about, in a short note. Don't speak of it until you hear we are there. . . .

STEAMER DANIEL WEBSTER, *March 21, 1862.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We are at anchor off Alexandria, having embarked on this fast steamer this afternoon.

We shall go to the dock to-morrow morning to take General Porter and horse on board, and I intend taking that opportunity to send this letter. I am forced to use red ink, as my inkstand is packed up. I feel pretty well used up, as I have been walking around carrying dispatches, my horse being on board ship. My foot has troubled me to-day, the first time for a long while. You know my toes have an unfortunate habit of getting out of joint and paining me excessively. I had it down at Port Royal. The next pair of boots I have made I shall have fixed in some peculiar way so as to remedy this if I can.

We shall probably start to-morrow morning, and reach our destination in 24 hours.

I am very tired and cannot write you a long letter. I am very sorry indeed to hear that Bill Horton is probably mortally wounded. How dreadfully his family must feel.

Please write the same as before and let me hear from you often. I don't know how soon you will hear from me again. It may be some time before I have a chance to send you another letter. . . .

Camp at NEW MARKET BRIDGE, *March 26, 1862.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We shall probably start to-morrow morning for Big Bethel, which we shall occupy and I think without a battle. A reconnoissance was made to-day, but very few of the enemy were seen. We arrived here yesterday, and are encamped about 6 miles from Fortress Monroe, and 3 miles from Newport News. The country is very level and sandy, pines growing in great abundance. We selected a very pleasant place before a burnt house, on a grass plot, and pitched our tents there. Our pickets were thrown forward about quarter of a mile along the banks of a stream, which branches out from Back River. I wish you could see some of the scenes

of camp life. There are so many of them queer, and at the same time beautiful, that I know you would be pleased with them. To-night I was struck by one in particular. We have a large fire kept burning outside our tents all the time, around which we all of us frequently gather. To-night about 7 o'clock we were all around the fire in various attitudes, some sitting, others standing, etc., generals, colonels, etc., in fact all grades down to privates were represented. A guard brought in two negroes from Yorktown, they having made their way up to our lines. As soon as they had been questioned by the general, some one gave them some crackers, and down they dumped themselves on a pile of wood close by the blazing fire. It was a scene worth witnessing. The officers and servants, some mounted and some not, scattered around in every way imaginable, and these two contrabands, the picture of perfect contentment, notwithstanding the sufferings they had just gone through. Footsore, famished, and their clothes in tatters, they had escaped from Yorktown where they had been working on fortifications, with a band of seven others. Two were shot by the rebels and one wounded. Two are now wandering in the woods, and two have arrived here.

If the Merrimac comes out again she will never return. We have a plan to capture her, which I believe is as follows: Five large steamers are selected, to run her down all at once, and sink her. They say she cannot possibly stand the shock, and will be stove in. I hope so at any rate. It will be an expensive operation, but those who ought to be well informed about her, do not seem to be at all alarmed about her.

We have quite warm weather here, although it is damp in our tents, because we have no fires. I am careful, however, and get on first rate. I have had no letters from

home for some days, and shall not have any for some time to come, I imagine. You had better direct all letters to Fortress Monroe, Gen. F. J. Porter's headquarters. I shall get them much sooner that way. . . .

Camp near NEW MARKET BRIDGE, *March 29, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I suppose you have not heard anything about our moving here from the newspapers. All of them are forbidden to publish any news whatever of our movements. Day before yesterday a reconnoissance was made towards Big Bethel. I wrote Hannah a day or two ago that we were all going to advance. It turned out that it was to be a reconnoissance only. They saw a few of the enemy and killed one. We advanced beyond Big Bethel to within 6 miles of Yorktown. I had to stay here in camp to see that things went straight. I did not lose much, however. The rebels had been working on the fortifications at B. Bethel the very morning our troops advanced, but when they reached there, the rebels had run off with their cannon. They had captured two of our men, outside of our picket lines, where they were expressly forbidden to go, in the morning, and so had notice of our advance. Our pickets have orders to shoot any man they see outside the lines, whether on our side or not. This will have a good effect on stragglers.

I wish I could send you home some of the holly trees I have seen down here. They grow in great abundance and of all sizes from a small bush up to a large-sized tree. They look very prettily with their dark green leaves and red berries. I have decorated my tent with a branch. The apricots down here are in full blossom, and the weather is warm and delightful, everything showing that spring is here.

We shall probably advance in a day or two, very likely

to-morrow. General McClellan will be here to-morrow, and his coming will be the signal for our advance. I heard General Porter tell one of the commodores at Fortress Monroe that we should have 130,000 men and 300 pieces of artillery with us on our advance. The commodore said that the rebels were making great preparations to meet us, and would give us a severe battle between West Point and Richmond. W. P. is on the York River, I think. I do not know why we did not land at the Pocasin [Poquoson?] River. I think it was the plan to do so. I have received no letters from home for a week, but expect them now daily.

I enclose a hyacinth root dug up right behind the place we are now encamped. Please give it to Hannah. I broke off the leaves so as to keep the life in the bulb. . . .

There are 24 correspondents of newspapers at Fort Monroe. They will be kept in the rear, as far as is possible, and will not learn much about movements planned, but not yet executed. If there is any battle government will let it be known instantly, so you need not be afraid of any fight being concealed. . . .

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S DIVISION, *April 6, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are now encamped about 2 miles from their batteries at Yorktown. I stood under my first fire yesterday, and don't think it is the pleasantest feeling in the world. Day before yesterday we advanced from New Market Bridge and went some 15 miles to Howard's Creek which is 4 miles from Big Bethel. About one mile from H.'s Creek we discovered some earthworks, and some rebel horsemen there, and two guns of Wilson's Battery. Our skirmishers opened on them, and were responded to by 4 shots from their guns, which did not reach far enough. Allen's Battery soon put them to

flight and we crossed over the creek about an hour after they had gone. Yesterday we marched on towards Yorktown, and when within about two miles or one and a half miles from the place, we discovered the presence of their batteries by a shell screeching over our heads, followed by another one, on our side, about 20 feet off, and by another about 30 feet in front and above us, which last one burst there. It was an unpleasant feeling. I am well, and to-morrow probably the batteries will be taken.

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S DIV., 3D ARMY CORPS,  
Camp No. 5, *April 16, 1862.*

DEAR HANNAH, — The bombardment proper of Yorktown will not begin probably till 5 or 6 days from now, although there are scrimmages taking place every day, either between our gunboats and the rebel batteries or between our artillery and their batteries. To-day we have had both kinds, our artillery in Hamilton's division having fired continually from early this morning, and being as warmly replied to by the rebels. From a dead or leafless tree behind the general's tent, a ladder some 75 feet in length has been built, and this we use as a look-out. From this ladder I saw our gunboats and the rebels' batteries fire at each other, but without any injury to either side. Our fuses were all too short, the shell bursting in the air a mile off from the rebel battery. They fired from a large 105-pound pivot gun, and fired very well, too. The shot, many of them, struck within a few feet of the gunboat.

We came quite a dodge on the rebels a few nights ago. General Porter, who by the way is terribly anxious to get at the rebels, ordered out all our batteries at 2 o'clock A.M., and ordered them to open fire on the encampments of the enemy, which they did with a good will. Just imagine

being waked up at that time of night by shot and shell falling into your tent. I only hope they will not open on us from their big pivot gun, for we are just in range of it. Our encampment is quite pretty. We have planted pine trees all around it, and so manage to protect ourselves very well from the heat of the sun which is getting to be quite oppressive. It is the pleasantest and prettiest place of any of the encampments I have seen.

The firing is quite lively now in Hamilton's division. They are firing at the fort which Martin's battery attacked on the day of our arrival, and where the 22d Massachusetts Volunteers lost ten men killed and wounded. There are frequently twenty guns fired in a minute, the reports of which we can hear quite plainly as we are only about a mile and a half from them.

I had a fine view of Yorktown and Gloucester Point yesterday. I crossed over a bridge over — Creek, which bridge we have just built, and then went out to a point which projects into the river. I was about three quarters of a mile from Yorktown, and could see the rebels at work very plainly; they have two strong water batteries, and above these still stronger ones. The banks are very steep and precipitous here, and afford a fine opportunity to place works. At Gloucester Point on the opposite side, they also have strong batteries, and we could see their men all run when they saw the smoke from one of our gunboats. The shells burst near them, and made them skedaddle some.

General Porter is in very good spirits, although annoyed at the slowness of the engineers. He gets all the ox-hides, ropes, etc., which he can pick up, using them for coverings to the fascines. The general is confident of success, and I think he is right in being so. Our division is in the front and will distinguish itself, I have no doubt. The exact

number of our guns is 295, 100 of which are siege guns and mortars, and the rest light artillery. . . .

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S DIV., 3D ARMY CORPS,  
Camp No. 5, *April 18, 1862.*

DEAR MOTHER, — The siege of Yorktown has not yet begun, and will not I am afraid for a week to come. We have skirmishes almost every night, some of their forces rushing out and firing a few rounds, and then running back again as fast as they can. Cannonading goes on from one morning to another without ceasing. It does not come from our whole line at once, but is kept up on any of their working parties we see, and by them upon our gunboats and barges. It seems strange to hear the reports of heavy guns, and the whistling of shot all the time, but one soon gets used to it. At times, as last night, the firing becomes pretty rapid, and then we are all routed out, to go to bed again in a few minutes. The enemy made an attack last night upon our pickets, but withdrew as quickly as they came out, but making us all leave our beds to repel them. The place is a perfect Paradise for fleas and wood-ticks. They abound in every place, and are the bane of one's existence. The country is very level and swampy, the ground near the river being much broken up by deep ravines, which are not visible until one comes within a few feet of them. I am very careful about the dampness, and have boards all over the floor of my tent. The nights are a little chilly, but not nearly as bad and damp as I expected them to be. There is a delightful breeze to-day which cools the air, and makes it feel soft and balmy. It is a pleasant change from the last few days, which have been extremely hot. . . .

I have a request, Mother, to make of you, and one which I depend on you to have carried out. Don't let



any of the girls or female relatives come on to take care of me, in case I am wounded. Nothing would be more unpleasant to me or make me feel so anxious as the idea that Father should allow any such thing. This is no place at all for women, — a thing which many of them cannot realize. I mention this because Hannah has frequently spoken of the Hortons staying at home, as being very strange. They are perfectly right. A woman in a place like this would be a source of trouble and anxiety to a wounded soldier. James will be able to take care of me in case of any such necessity, which I hope will not exist.

We must have over 100,000 men here now, and 295 cannon. One hundred guns compose the siege train, and among them are some of the heaviest guns and mortars used in the service. The remaining 195 guns are light artillery. Our corps under the command of Heintzelman consists of 34,810 men. Of these our division has 13,400. We have 64 guns, and about 2000 cavalry in the corps.

The 1st Massachusetts is in our corps, and also the 11th Massachusetts. I am going over to see Sergeant Brazier, and Rice, in a day or two.

My man was going in bathing in the river yesterday when a round shot flew over him close to his head. It stopped his bathing for the day. General Porter sent him to dig it up, which he did, and on weighing it, it turned out to be a 64-pounder. It was fired from Yorktown at some of our boats in the river. . . .

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S DIVISION, 3D ARMY CORPS,  
Camp Winfield Scott, *April 21, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — By orders from headquarters the name of this camp has changed to Camp Winfield Scott. Ever since we landed at Fort Monroe our camps have been called by number in regular order. Our first camp at

Hampton was No. 1, etc. This camp, properly No. 5, has been called as above, and McClellan means to honor the camp and the general whose name we have adopted for it, by winning a splendid victory.

Guns are being taken by the camp this evening to be mounted on our earthworks. It will still take some few days to get everything in readiness. The roads are in a terrible state from the rain, and hence additional labor is entailed on the men and horses, and necessitates still further delay. New sites for batteries are constantly being selected by General Porter, and when we do get ready, the rebels will have to "keep their eyes peeled." We can see them mounting additional guns every day, and strengthening their works. In the end I suppose it will result in giving us a few more cannon to add to the list of prizes taken.

Last night, for the first time I believe since we have been here, I was not waked up by any firing. The enemy kept themselves quietly within their works.

The men in this division have a great deal of fatigue duty to perform, such as mounting guns, making roads through the woods and digging earthworks. It is *really fatigue duty*, especially in this storm. They seem to stand it very well, however.

There is nothing especially new going on. . . .

Some of our men crept up so close to the rebel pickets last night that their relief guard passed within ten feet of them. They also heard some of their conversation. One man crept along the bank of the river until he heard the sound of oars. He waited until the boat touched the shore, when an officer jumped out and was met by another officer who came out of the bushes, and spoke to the first one, about crossing by the mill with some horses. The wind blew so that he could hear no more of their

conversation. I don't know what the conversation referred to.

General Porter is General McClellan's favorite general, and McClellan often calls for him to go out and reconnoitre, etc., with him. The night I carried those dispatches to McClellan, he said, "My God! if I can't depend on Fitz John's division, I don't know what I can depend on." He showed very plainly how highly he thought of General Porter and his division by his conversation. He was very pleasant to me indeed. I saw Captain Mason<sup>1</sup> on his staff the other day. He is from Boston, you know. . . .

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S DIVISION, 3D ARMY CORPS,  
Camp Winfield Scott, *April 25.*

DEAR FATHER, — Last night about ten o'clock we received a dispatch from the headquarters of the corps, telling us to change the countersign, and the position of our guards and pickets, as a high officer had deserted to the enemy. The changes were made, and every preparation made for meeting an attack from the rebels, but none occurred. The officer, I hear, was Colonel —, and it is not known whether he was captured or whether he deserted.

I had a letter from you last night in which you asked me what I did every day. My duties for the last week or two have been very light, consisting in getting out the countersign, which, together with day and night signals, is written on pieces of paper, sealed, and sent out to the different commanders in the division. I have also been to ride with the general to the different batteries, and also have gone every other day to General Heintzelman's for any dispatches which might be there. General H.'s head-

<sup>1</sup> W. Powell Mason, Harvard 1856.

quarters are about a mile from here near the saw-mill. Grant Johnson from Boston is on General H.'s staff. This saw-mill is on the Yorktown road, about a mile and three quarters from their batteries, and was left uninjured by the rebels when they retreated. They had used it for sawing wood to make barracks, and timber to mount their cannon on. I can't imagine why they left it whole, unless it was that we came upon them unawares. Indeed, one of their men said that they did not expect us for a week, and when we advanced thought that we only meant to make a reconnoissance, as we did once before when we advanced to Big Bethel from Hampton.

I have to take messages to the different brigade or regimental commanders when an attack is anticipated or when the message is too important to be trusted to an orderly. Then when any order has to be got out in a hurry I have to help write it. When General Porter goes out nowadays he usually goes with McClellan, and as he has to pass an exposed place he never takes more than one aide, and then the senior one, Monteith. I went with him and General McClellan the other day to the batteries. I get up in the morning at 6.30 and have my breakfast at 7.30. We all mess together, and my seat is on the general's right. He is always kind and pleasant to me and I like him very much. At 4 o'clock we dine, thus having only two meals a day, and that is plenty. We live better than any one yet that I have seen in camp, and at a cheaper rate. We have oysters in plenty, and cooked in every style. They are very good-sized ones, but hardly have the flavor of a New York or Boston oyster. They are transplanted from here in great quantities to New York and Philadelphia.

I have plenty of spare time on my hands, which I spend

in reading, when I can get hold of anything to read. Books are rather scarce out here now. Whenever you get an opportunity to send me any books, they will be very welcome. I go to bed by nine o'clock, and always get a good night's sleep. Whenever the fight begins, there will be plenty of work to be done, and no time to read. My opinion is that we shall not open fire on them until they open on us. We shall dig our trenches, and make the parallels until we are troubled by them, and then our batteries will open on them. The nearer we get to them the better it is for us, and so it would be folly to provoke their fire by opening on them, when by keeping still our men can get nearer to their works. I think our men began to work on the trenches last night. The whole affair will be conducted on scientific principles applied by skilful engineers, and with a man at the head whose forte is in this kind of warfare, namely General McClellan. My idea is that he will take the place with the least possible sacrifice of life, and in order to do this, he must have sufficient time to carry out all his plans thoroughly, and employ the men in trenches, etc., until we get within a reasonable distance to storm their works, if such a course be necessary to drive them out. The enemy have made a fatal mistake in not cutting down the woods to a greater distance from their works. They have just left a belt of woods, which forms a splendid line for us to build batteries and form a base for our operations, and which also affords a shelter to our encampments. The last few days have been unusually quiet, very few skirmishes taking place. We have one battery on our extreme right, on a promontory in the York River, close to a Colonel Flarinlecoult's house, which mounts 6 guns, 5 100-pounder Parrott guns, and one 200-pound gun. This Colonel F. is in the rebel army.

I have just heard that Frank Bartlett<sup>1</sup> of the Massachusetts 20th, acting lieutenant colonel, has had his leg amputated. He was shot through the knee by a musket ball while on picket.

In regard to my drinking, which you seem to feel some anxiety about, I wish to say that I have not touched a drop of anything but water and coffee since leaving home. I only want the brandy for a medicine in case I should need it. In regard to giving my friends liquor, I have not a friend here whom I care enough about to give him liquor, and have not bought any since I have been here. All my friends are in regiments away from this division. I have formed no intimate friendships out here, although I am on very friendly terms with all my brother officers. They, however, have no interests in common with me, except, of course, the ordinary civilities of everyday life. There is one fellow whom I may except. He is a signal officer named Johnson, a graduate of Yale in '60, and is a first-rate fellow. He was on our staff, but has recently been promoted to General Heintzelman's staff. I don't care about forming any intimate friendships with any one I meet, and I have enough now. Of course I am careful to be polite to every one, and on good terms with my companions. Tom Sherwin I see quite often, and wish, of course, to except him from the general class of officers I meet with. Griswold, too, I like very much. He is lieutenant colonel of the 22d Mass. Then I know the lieutenant colonel of the 83d Penn., Strong Vincent, a graduate of Harvard in '59, and a very nice fellow. I am in the same tent with McQuade, one of the aides, and a very pleasant person, and one easy to get along with. I don't wish you to think from what I have been writing that I am squeamish, and overnice in my friendships.

<sup>1</sup> William Francis Bartlett, Harvard 1862, afterwards major general.

I try to be friendly with every one, but reserve my intimate acquaintance for those whom I know well and especially esteem. Of course it won't do to set one's self up as being particularly good or too refined to associate with every one, in this world. We have to take people as we find them, and adapt ourselves to the circumstances in which we are placed. This I do, as far as is in my power. I get on very well, and am very happy, and like my life very much.

Our gunboats fire at long range, and so far with little success, as their fuses have not been long enough. When the fight begins they will approach much nearer and will then do some damage. I imagine that one of our iron gunboats will run by the water batteries here at the proper time, and will give them a good dressing in their rear.

I am astonished to find the season so backward here. I imagined that it was some six weeks ahead of our season, but find that I am mistaken. We have had two or three hot days, but most of the time we have been here a fire has been almost a necessity. The leaves have just burst through their buds. I imagine the change is more sudden up North from winter to spring, while here it is more gradual. For instance, we have had no snow since the first of March, while you have had plenty of it, yet I don't think we are more than a week, or possibly two weeks ahead of you as regards the season. . . .

I heard from pretty good authority that the Secretary of War handed in his resignation to the President because the President ordered Franklin's division to reinforce McClellan, contrary to Stanton's wish. I only hope that it will be accepted and that these men who are trying to advance McDowell by the ruin of McClellan will be made to answer for it.

My horse is in good condition and spirits. He likes to jump around some, when he has not been used much, but I soon take that out of him. If I ever get him home safely, he will make a fine carriage horse. He is turning bay color now as he sheds his old coat. . . .

I hope if you come as far as Washington you will please try to come on here, or I hope to Richmond.

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S DIVISION, 3D ARMY CORPS,  
Camp Winfield Scott, May 1, 1862.

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . We are still *in statu quo* and shall probably remain so until the middle of next week. I begin to see into the cause of our delay, or rather the cause of our waiting to storm Yorktown. McClellan has not enough men, since McDowell is taken away from him. If he and his corps had been here, the works 'at Yorktown would have been stormed immediately on our arrival. As it is, every man is considered of great account, and as *the battle* will come off at Williamsburg, McClellan cannot spare the loss of so many men, which would necessarily ensue from storming the works here, and so weaken his force before the time came for the attack at Williamsburg. Yorktown once in our possession, the York River is ours, and with it, more suitable landing-places for goods, etc. Even should the enemy leave Yorktown without a battle, which I think is barely possible, the gain will be on our side, notwithstanding the immense time and labor spent on our works. You see how much harm has been done by some one, in detaching McDowell. It has caused a delay of some weeks, and all for the purpose of injuring McClellan by McDowell's gain. I believe our generals do not expect the enemy to make a very decided stand at Yorktown against our batteries. Yesterday our battery (No. 1) of hundred-pounders opened on the



enemy and kept up quite a lively little duel with them, although with somewhat larger weapons than are commonly used in such fashionable pastimes. No injury was done us, and we learned this morning from a deserter that one of our shells burst and killed 2 and wounded 11 of the rebels. We heaved a good many of these small tokens into their works, and I have no doubt that many more must have been killed. When any of these shells do not take the groove of a gun, they make a noise like an engine going at full speed. One of their shells burst, and we found that the shell was of English manufacture, and probably thrown from a 100-pound Armstrong gun.

I frequently go to mortar battery No. 4. This is situated on Wormsley Creek, and is on made land, a notch having been dug right in the side of the steep bank, and the dirt thrown into the water. In the notch they are mounting ten 13-inch mortars, each one weighing 17,180 pounds. It took 48 horses to haul one along the road the other day.

General McClellan spoke in terms of highest praise of General P.'s division and did not mean that sentence in the way you took it. General McC. resembles his photographs in the features, but his moustache is a light brown, and his complexion sandy, or rather colorless. . . .

CAMP WINFIELD SCOTT, *May 5.*

DEAR HANNAH, — Yorktown was deserted yesterday by the enemy and our troops took possession. We are fighting them at Williamsburg now. None of our men were killed except a few wounded by torpedoes. I have no time to write any more at present.

Don't be alarmed if my letters are long coming. The mails are very irregular. I am all serene.

Our division is still here held in reserve, and will probably not be called upon.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROVISIONAL CORPS,  
Camp 5 miles from WHITE HOUSE, *May 20, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — General Porter has been placed in command of a corps which consists of his old division now commanded by General Morell, and Sykes's brigade of Regulars. It is called a provisional corps, I imagine, because it is of McClellan's making, and is not firmly established. It will, however, be a permanent thing, I suppose. We moved yesterday from our camp at White House to this place, called from the name of the railroad station, Tunstall. The White House farm belongs to a man named "Rooney" Lee,<sup>1</sup> who was in '58, and was in College with me about two years. He left some six months before his class graduated, to enter the army, and at the breaking out of the Rebellion he left our army and joined the rebels. While in College he was a "fast man," like most Southerners, and was quite popular with his classmates. He little thought then that his wheat fields would be trodden down by a hostile army from the North, many of whom were his classmates.

I started for the camp the day after you went, and reached there safely the same day. I am quite well now, and shall be able to stand the march to Richmond.

We shall start again to-morrow and move on. I don't know how far we shall go.

The country around here is quite pretty. The trees clothed in their new leaves look fresh and beautiful, and the aspect of the country itself, varied by thickly wooded hills, and fertile plains, presents a very agreeable view to the eye. The bridges over all the small streams and

<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 83.

brooks are all burned, so that fast marching is difficult, as we have to wait for the bridges to be repaired before our wagon trains can move.

I meet John Hayden quite often now, he being attached to Sykes's brigade. It is quite a pleasure to me to see any of my classmates out here, and especially Hayden, who is one of my best friends. He is attached to Captain Edwards's battery.

The water here is very disagreeable to me, for it is strongly impregnated with sulphur, which I do not like at all. It comes especially hard to me, who do not like tea and coffee, and who am obliged to make water my sole beverage.

I hear that Colonel Lee<sup>1</sup> is very anxious to be made military governor of Richmond. I wish they would gratify him, and place him in that position. How mad it would make some of the Richmond people, and what a triumph it would be for him.

How did you and Mother spend your time after you left me, and did you enjoy the end of your journey as much as the beginning? . . .

Opinions vary as to whether we shall have a fight or not before reaching Richmond. My opinion is that we shall have a fight, although our corps may be held in the reserve. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROV. ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near NEW BRIDGE, *June 1, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — We have been ready all day to start out, and join in the fight which has been going on,<sup>2</sup> but unfortunately the Chickahominy has been overflowed by the recent heavy rains, so that it is a swamp on both sides of the stream, making it impassable for artillery. We shall have to delay our advance,— that is, the advance

<sup>1</sup> William Raymond Lee, 20th Mass.

<sup>2</sup> Battle of Fair Oaks.

of our corps, until the water subsides. The day has been hot and sultry, and I therefore hope that by to-morrow we shall be able to cross over the stream at New Bridge. So far we have been successful, Heintzelman having driven them to-day a mile and a quarter at the point of the bayonet. Yesterday afternoon they attacked us, driving back Casey's division, and then being driven back by Kearny's division. The fighting lasted till 8 o'clock in the evening, the firing, in the general's language, being terrific. It sounded so to us certainly, who were about three miles distant, and what must it have been for those who were in the fight. We could hear whole vollies of musketry, but the firing most of the time was by file, the guns keeping up a continual *pop pop*, for several minutes at a time. Then the artillery firing at times would be very severe. This morning the firing began at 5 o'clock and continued pretty lively till 10 o'clock, since which time it has been pretty quiet. The men in the balloon say that they could see the roads from Richmond full of soldiers, coming out to reinforce their men. We have captured to-day two generals and several field officers. Among the captured yesterday was Lieutenant Washington (I think it must be the one who left College a year ago. John Bushrod Washington is the lieutenant's name), an aide of General Johnston's, who came into our lines by mistake. The name of one of the generals taken is Pettigrew. The other one refuses to give his name. . . .

I am wholly well now, my cough having left me, and my strength having returned. I feel fully prepared for a summer's campaign and think that with care I shall get along very well. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROV. ARMY CORPS,  
Camp  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from NEW BRIDGE [about *June 1*].

DEAR FATHER, — We moved this morning from Cold Harbor to this point, from a half to a quarter of a mile from New Bridge. The distance was short, being only two miles. To-morrow, if what I can gather be correct, we shall advance upon Richmond, and then I think we shall have one of the bloodiest battles of the war. *We* shall probably have a tough time of it, as the rebels are massing their troops right in front of us, they knowing that Porter's corps is here, and being in dread of it, I hope with good reason. I know that all our generals expect a severe fight, and that General Porter said we should have a bloody battle. I should not write you all this if I did not think that the result of the battle would be known before this reaches you. I have great confidence in General Porter and McClellan, and have no doubt but that we shall soon be in Richmond.

We hear rumors to-day that Banks has been defeated. I am afraid that is true, but hope not.<sup>1</sup> . . .

I started for camp the day after you left, and found that I had rather overestimated my strength, for the next day I was very weak, and feared a relapse. I luckily got over it safely, and am now as well as ever. We are encamped in a field next to Dr. Gaines's house, which General Smith occupied as his headquarters. It is a beautiful place with some splendid oaks in front of the house which it would do you good to see. They are perfect in shape, and with their new and fresh foliage on, look really splendid. There is an air of neatness about the place which resembles New England more than any place I have seen. Guinea fowl abound, and James wants me to send you a pair. I had a plate of strawberries this morn-

<sup>1</sup> He had been defeated by Jackson at Front Royal, on May 26.

ing which tasted very pleasantly. They were a present to General Porter.

The chief annoyances of our camp life here are bad water and insects. General Butterfield had nine ticks on him the other day. Decidedly disagreeable. The water troubles me more than anything. I don't like tea or coffee, and I do like to drink water.

There are rumors, and merely rumors, that General Porter will be made governor of Richmond in case of our taking it. Counting one's chickens, etc. Some even go so far as to say that he will be governor of Virginia. This of course would not be, as some politician would have that place. Please don't mention these rumors, as I think they all take their rise from the staff, who would like some such arrangement.

In case of a fight you need not expect to hear from me for some four days, as I can't get at the telegraph, and letters take a long while to go now. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROV. ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near NEW BRIDGE, *June 4, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — Here we are still and here we shall probably stay for a few days, until the rain has exhausted itself, and the banks of the Chickahominy have peeped above the surrounding waters. I begin to think we shall have to get an ark built if the rain continues. Every night regularly we have terrible thunder-storms, which last the whole night, and at morning it clears up again. This has happened for four successive nights, and last night it culminated in an easterly storm, which bids fair to last some time. My tent resembles Fortress Monroe in one respect. It has a deep ditch of water all around it, which has lately been pretty full. In one respect this rain is peculiarly unfortunate. It delays our advance to Rich-

mond, where we should have been two days ago, were it not for this dirty little stream of a Chickahominy which the rain swells up so as to make it impassable. The roads to the river are streams of mud and water which no corduroying can remedy, and which dry weather and the sun can alone make passable. In some places the roads to the bridges are covered with water four or five feet deep, with a nice mud bottom. All we can do is to wait patiently. The general says that it seems almost as if Providence connived at the escape of the rebels, for we should have bagged a good lot of them if we could have crossed the other day.

General McClellan has issued an address which I send to you, and which I want to be kept. It has the true ring to it, and was greeted by many and loud cheers from the soldiers, to whom it was read yesterday on dress-parade.

The roads here are in a shocking condition. I went out yesterday in a light wagon, foraging, and rode some twelve miles. In many places the horses were up to their bellies in mud, and at times down we would go in the quicksand or in some deceptive hole, covered with water. I got, however, some fresh butter, chickens, strawberries, cherries, onions, lettuce, and eggs. We manage to get on very well in the eating line.

That Stanton is a bitter old rascal. He suppressed some dispatches of the Associated Press agent containing an account of the battle of Hanover C. House, and only allowed a meagre telegram to appear. It was meant as a hit at General McClellan and General Porter, who have some personal enemies in Washington. I think that General McClellan has shown his greatness in the way he has borne all his ill-treatment. Not a word of complaint has he uttered. Stanton has prolonged the war by his meddling and interference, and has shown himself a bitter

and unfair man. He has prevented McClellan from receiving reinforcements, and delayed him in every way possible. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROV. ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near NEW BRIDGE, June 5, 1862.

DEAR FATHER, — . . . As an instance of the advanced state of civilization and refinement in these regions, and to show the progress the F. F. V.'s make in the treatment of insane people, let me tell you the following *true* story. Captain Locke and some others of our staff went off to ride on one of the numerous side roads which abound in this country, the other day, and in the course of their ride stopped at a house by the way. Here they found a crazy man, the son of the man who owned the place, who was confined in a small out-house or den separate from the house. Here he was chained naked, and with no furniture but a small quantity of straw to lie on. His food was conveyed to him on the end of a stick which was thrust through the window. Just imagine a human being chained like a wild beast in a cage, and this in the middle of the nineteenth century. They said his howls and shrieks were terrible, and made them shudder to hear them. A fair sample of most of the poor whites and farmers. Ignorant, and as superstitious as the people of a hundred years ago. No idea in their head, but that of secession, and this slowly dawning on them as a humbug, and meaning ruin to them and advancement to the rich.

I am glad to hear you say that you have confidence in McClellan. You may think him slow, but remember, he is sure. He is hampered by Stanton, whose orders and commands have delayed, worried and retarded McClellan, and lengthened this war. McClellan had the whole campaign arranged in a most perfect manner. He would have had a large force in New Mexico, threatening Texas, and



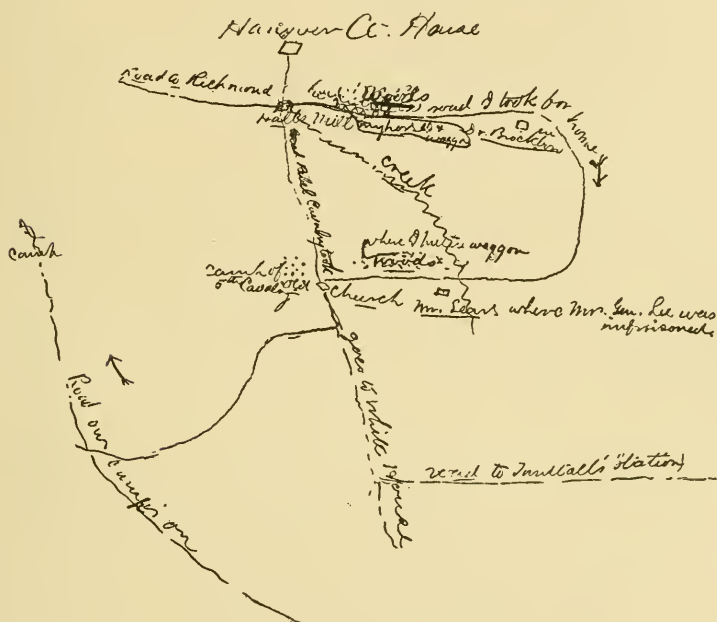
keeping the rebels from carrying on a protracted warfare there, which they threaten to do, if he had been let alone. Richmond also would have been ours some time ago. But hampered by the want of troops, he is compelled to advance cautiously and slowly. General Porter thinks now, however, that the rebels are on their last legs, and that the rebellion will be speedily closed. With the exception of ——'s division, which ran in the most disgraceful manner, our troops behaved splendidly and have given our generals great confidence in the result of the impending battle. I feel sure that we shall whip them, and that thoroughly. Casey lost ten guns in the fight, but we licked them well afterwards, and drove them at the point of the bayonet. The prisoners say that they expected to bag 30,000 of our men, who had no bridges to cross the Chickahominy, but that after the fight they thought we had 200,000 men and plenty of bridges. General Porter is as brave a soldier and as good a general as any in the army. He is modest, but will make his mark in this war. He has made himself many enemies on account of his sticking by McClellan, and this prevented his confirmation by the Senate until near the end of the Yorktown siege.

Camp near NEW BRIDGE, *June 15.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have had a pretty narrow squeak from being sent to Richmond in advance of our army. The circumstances under which I came near being taken were as follows. I went out Friday, June 13, with a light wagon and four horses and a negro driver named Sam. I am caterer for our mess now, and was going out to get some butter and eggs, etc. I went out to Hall's Mill some six miles from camp, and the place where our outpost pickets are stationed. From here, I took a road to the right, which led me to Mrs. Brockenborough's, the wife

of a doctor in the rebel army. I bought 36 pounds of butter and a few onions, and turned round to come home. I should have told you before that Hall's Mill is situated at a point where four roads meet. One, the road I came on, which goes on to Hanover Court House. Another goes to Richmond, and on the prolongation of this latter road away from Richmond, I was getting my butter, etc. When I passed our pickets at Hall's Mill, they said that it was safe for me to go to Mrs. Brockenborough's as our pickets were there. As I said, I got my things all safely and turned round to go back to H.'s Mill, and from there home. When within 200 or 300 feet of the mill, I saw cavalry proceeding at a rapid rate towards Old Church, coming from the road to Hanover. At first I thought that it was all right, as the pickets had told me that our scouting parties had gone out in that direction. I thought, though, that their uniform looked rather light and so told my driver to stop while I crept up nearer them. I went into some woods on the right of the road and crept along the fence till I came within 50 or 60 feet of the rascals, and could plainly see that they were Secesh. At first, indeed, I could hardly believe that they were rebels, but thought they must be some regiment of our cavalry dressed in gray, but I remembered that we had none dressed that way. I could see and distinguish the officers by a broad gold stripe which they had on the pants and caps. The men were dressed in all kinds of clothes. Some had gray clothes, some the bluish gray, some white shirts, some red, and in fact almost all the colors of the rainbow were there. The coverings for their heads were of all sorts. Some had caps and others slouched hats, etc. A bend in the road I was on concealed the wagon from them while passing the mill, but when they had passed by the mill a few rods, there was nothing

to conceal us from them. Luckily they were riding away from us, and so happened not to see us. I waited nearly an hour for them to get past us, and then turned the wagon round. I was afraid to do it before, because I thought it would attract their attention to move while they were so near. In order to turn, my man had to drive still nearer the mill where the road was broader, and this



took him beyond the bend, so that he came in sight of some of them feeding their horses. They saw him, too, but made no effort to catch him. The only reason I can assign is that they took our wagon for one of the farmers' wagons belonging in the vicinity. There must have been two thousand cavalry in all, and after them three pieces of artillery. As soon as I had the wagon turned, I set

the horses off on a good smart trot, expecting to see the cavalry pursuing me every moment. No one came, however, and I thought that I was all safe. I luckily knew the way to Old Church, and followed it as quickly as I could.

I was going in the direction in which the horses are faced, when I first came in sight of the cavalry. I then turned round and went in the direction of the arrow, and thought myself safe, thinking of course that the enemy would never dare come as far as Old Church. When about a quarter of a mile from Old C. I saw the rascals burning the camp of the 5th Cavalry, and the main body drawn up in line along the side of the road. I was thus cut off from our camps, as there was no other road I could take to get back. I instantly drove my horses and wagon into the woods on the right of the road, hid there in the bushes, and covered over the tracks of the wheels. I then went to the road where I could watch the rebels and not be seen. Pretty soon the main body started and went on to White House. Stragglers and pickets stayed behind, however, making it impossible for me to leave the woods. Besides, I did not know but what they might have infantry with them, and intended to occupy the place. As it turned out they went on to Garlick's Landing two miles from White House and from there to Tunstall's Station and then across the Chickahominy at Charles City. It was a bold and brilliant dash, well executed. The enemy had all the information they wanted in regard to the position and number of our troops, from the inhabitants around there, one of whom we have arrested, he having been seen the morning the rebels came, at H. Ct. House. He will swing for it, I suppose. We had only three companies of cavalry (5th U. S.) to oppose all the rebels, and of course they could make very slight resistance to 2000 men. The camp of two companies of

the 5th Cavalry, on picket at Old Church, was burned amidst loud cheers from the rebels, which I arrived in time to hear. After being in the woods some little while, three men from the 5th Cavalry came in, they having been in the fight which the three companies of the 5th had with the rebels. Two of them had lost their horses. I got a negro who was by the roadside to let me know if any rebels came along, and I myself stood where I could look down the road. Soon I came where I could see a company of rebels, as I thought, coming towards me, and the negro motioned me back into the woods. These cavalry were in their shirt-sleeves and in the dust looked just like the rebels. I went back into the swamp a little way and waited there. A horse belonging to one of the 5th Cavalry neighed and drew the whole body of cavalry into the road to the wagon. I heard them talking there for more than an hour, and as it was getting pretty dark I started for home, walking through the woods. There was a private from the 5th Cavalry and my driver with me. I wandered through the woods, losing my way and expecting to meet with the enemies' pickets every minute. At about 10 o'clock in the morning I saw some of our pickets and called to them. I was in as much danger of getting shot by our own pickets as by theirs, for they are not apt to challenge when they know the enemy are near. I saw them first, and called to them, and found out the way to camp. At three o'clock, after tramping along through forests and woods, and mud knee deep, I came to a church where I met a Lieutenant Winsor, who was in my class for a year. He very kindly lent me a horse which I rode home to camp. I never was more grateful for any favor than I was for the loan of this horse, for I was worn out mentally from constant watchfulness for the enemy and for pickets, and the cords of my legs were sore enough from tugging

through the mud, swamps and woods, besides not having eaten anything since morning. I got back to camp a little past four and glad enough I was to see it. The general and staff had all given me up and expected that I was a prisoner in Richmond. They all were very glad to see me.

The next day I went out with some cavalry and found the wagon and brought it home. The horses and contents of the wagon were gone. I am quite confident now that they were our own men who were there, and expect to get the horses in a few days. From seeing them in white shirts and from the negro's warning I thought they were Secesh. I shall be mighty careful how I go again foraging.

The enemy burned some schooners and stores at Tunstall's Station and captured some of our wagons. It is a shame that they escaped so easily. There was nothing to prevent them from going to White House and burning up everything there, and then we should have been in a nice fix. I was not afraid when I saw them as I should expect myself to be, for I had a sort of feeling that I should get off. I could have taken to the woods by Hall's Mill and gone where cavalry could not have followed. I was excited enough though, and the feeling, combined with the feeling I was not going to be caught, was rather pleasant than otherwise. . . .

We shall not advance until we receive reinforcements, and those may not come for some time. McClellan won't move, in my opinion, until he is certain to whip, and to be certain of doing that we need reinforcements. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROV. ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near NEW BRIDGE, *June 19, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . I do not have as much to do as I did before the two new aides came, but still General Porter gives me things to do. Yesterday he heard

that the enemy had left the vicinity of New Bridge, and sent me down with an order to the battery there to fire 12 rounds at a work the enemy had erected in the woods opposite the bridge, and to see if they could not wake them (the enemy) up. We had erected a small earthwork there to protect our guns, and there I went. We fired about three rounds, when bang went one of their guns, and a shot flew whizzing over our heads. The officers told us to lie down in the trench, whenever we saw a gun fired, and kept a man on the watch, who called out "fire" when he saw a gun go off, and down we would all go. They fired splendidly at us, planting the shell in the battery and all around it. My horse was tied to a tree behind the battery, and I thought his chance of escaping was pretty small. I had to stay till the 12 shots were fired, to tell the general the result, and was glad when they were all fired. Our firing was indifferent. I waited till the enemy had fired two shots in succession, and then made a rush for my horse with a lieutenant from Weeden's Battery whom I met there. It did not take us long to get out of range. The enemy were 1000 yards distant.

I had a narrower escape the other day than I thought for. The enemy's infantry were near Mrs. Brockenborough's house, and a body of their cavalry followed down soon after I went down that road, by Mrs. B.'s house. Then, too, I should have been shot by our own cavalry had they seen me in the woods, for they had orders to shoot any one they saw in the woods, no matter who he was. This was necessary as they were the outpost picket. I refer to the party I mistook for rebels.

Captain Mason is a very pleasant fellow, and I like him very much. He is always kind and polite to me.

I hope General McClellan will receive all the troops he wants. General McCall's division has arrived, and is on

this side of the river. It is under General Porter for the present. He and all his staff came near being captured by the rebel raid the other day.

General Franklin's corps has passed over the river, and now we are the only corps on this side. . . .

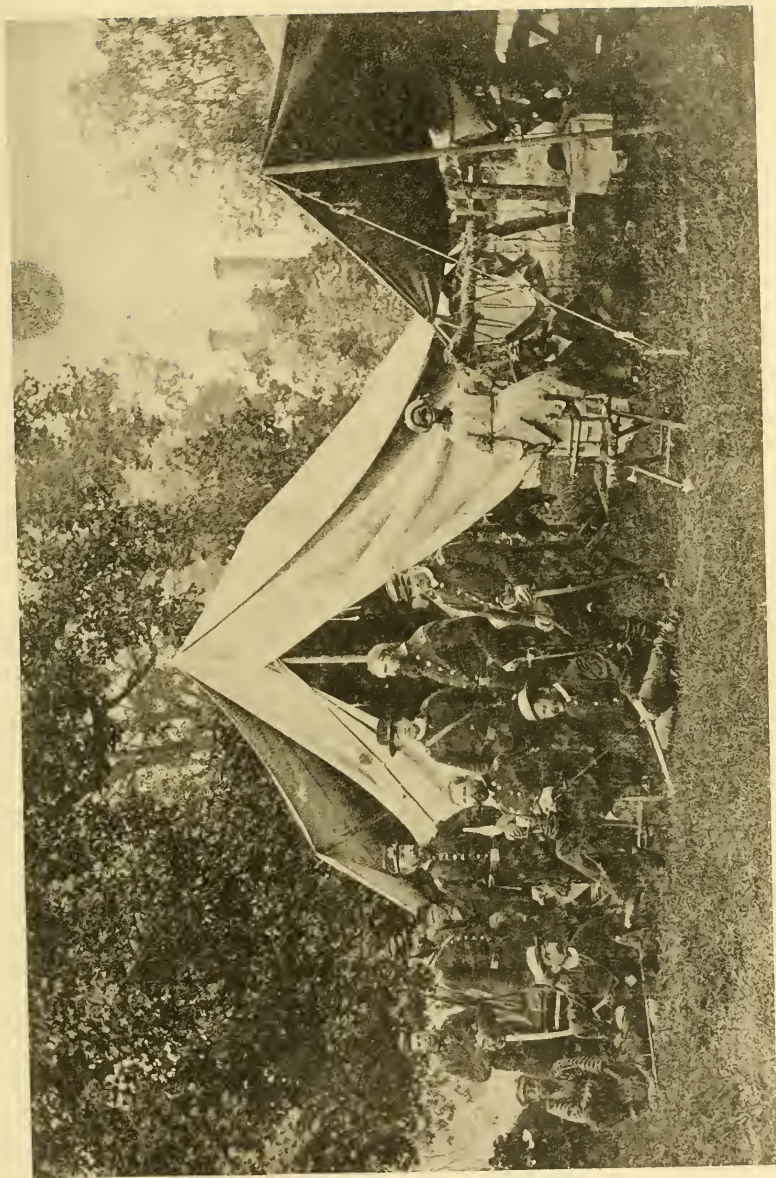
All reports confirm the scarcity of food at Richmond. A darkey who came in this evening said that the rebels were conveying all their specie to Danville, N. C. They seem, however, afraid to trust it all in one place, and are pretty anxious about it.

Don't place any confidence in newspaper reporters. They are all rascals.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH PROV. ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near NEW BRIDGE, *June 22, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — Why don't they send us reinforcements? From present appearances, we shall stay here all summer sweltering under this powerful sun, our ranks daily decreasing from sickness and exposure, all from want of reinforcements. Unless we are attacked by the enemy, or unless General McClellan gets some very favorable chance to attack them, there will be no fighting for some time, and in case of a battle the result, to say the least, is extremely doubtful. They greatly outnumber us, and are daily throwing up trenches and batteries right opposite our army. In the face of all these facts, and notwithstanding McClellan's frequent and earnest appeals for more troops, the Government at Washington refuses us any reinforcements. The Abolitionists in Congress have a great deal to do with this, and are *purposely* protracting the war in order to render emancipation necessary, and are so endangering our existence as a nation united and whole. It is decidedly disagreeable to sit down here and see things go on so, and feel that we are liable to be





GEN. FITZ JOHN PORTER AND STAFF, WESTOVER, VA. JULY 16, 1862

Requiem on right  
Montell  
Dr. McMillan  
Mcquade  
Loche  
I was at Richmond  
8/12. W. J.

Sitting down on left  
No. 496.

BRADY'S ALBUM GALLERY.

Whitland  
Genl. Fitz John Porter and Staff,  
New Fort  
At Headquarters, Westover, Westover Landing, Va.  
July 16, 1862.

Walter

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regress Mrs. Davis for the cost

whipped at any time, when victory could be made certain for us. McDowell holds back as long as he can, and would be glad to see McClellan defeated. If he were anything of a general he could defend Washington or the Rappahannock, with 20,000 men and let the rest come here. At the end of the war, I think that a history of these facts will come out, which will fully vindicate McClellan, and show up Stanton and Co. in their true light. By the way, I heard of a remark he made when coming into office. "McClellan organizing the army? It is the Democratic party he is organizing. *I'll* clip his comb for him." Now General McC. would not accept of the Presidency if it were offered him, according to the most positive assertions of his friends. He has a complete copy of all telegrams, etc., received from Stanton, which his friends will let out at the proper time. All this, of course, is to be kept for yourself and no one else.

I called on Colonel Barnes the other day and had a very kind reception from him. I also saw my captain. I don't think there will be any chance for my promotion unless it comes in the regular order from vacancies arising in my regiment which will push me along.

I have got some things which I am going to send home. One is a club which I got from Sayres's house where Mrs. General Lee was imprisoned. The family have all left, leaving the place in charge of negroes. One of the women, who let me in the house, said the club was one which belonged to John Brown, and which was taken from him at Harper's Ferry. Then I have some fossils, etc., which I took from a pretty collection there called the Marlborne collection. Also a book which I found in the house, everything except the cabinet being taken away. Also a shell which the rebels fired at us a day or two ago from the other side of the Chickahominy. . . .

[I was taken prisoner on June 27, as already described on pages 78 and 79.]

RICHMOND, *June 30, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I am perfectly well and unhurt. We are all treated as well and kindly as is possible. I send you a list of Massachusetts officers injured in the fight, and made prisoners.

*22d Massachusetts*

Col. Gove, killed.

Capt. Dunning, killed, Boston.

Capt. Whorf, E. Cambridge, wounded in arm, prisoner.

Lieut. Stearns of Brookline, wounded in leg, prisoner.

Lieut. Washburn, Taunton, wounded and prisoner.

Lieut. Styles, wounded and prisoner.

Capt. Conant, prisoner.

Lieut. Crane, from Woburn, ditto.

Dr. Prince, ditto.

Major Tilton, wounded in shoulder and prisoner.

Dr. Milner, prisoner.

Lt. Col. Varney of 2d Maine is also a prisoner.

Sherwin I think is safe and not a prisoner.

Lieut. E. W. Whittemore of 17th Reg., and from Cambridge, is not a prisoner.

*9th Massachusetts*

Col. Cass, wounded and not a prisoner.

First Lieut. P. W. Black, prisoner.

Lieut. O'Hara, ditto.

Please let friends of prisoners know.

LIBBY'S PRISON, *July 1, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I was taken by the skirmishers of the 13th Virginia regiment on the morning of last Friday.

I got right in their midst while looking for General Reynolds's brigade. I am well treated and in good health. There are about 100 of us officers in a room about 70 by 50 feet. Colonels Corcoran and Ely were confined here at one time.

You need not feel at all anxious about me. If you get a good chance, send me \$50 in *gold* and *silver*, half of each. I have but three cents left, having but a dollar on me when taken.

RICHMOND, *July 31, 1862.* Prison on 18th St.

DEAR FATHER, — Time goes rather slowly here, as we expect to be released soon, and find the waiting for the lucky day tedious. However, we manage to do pretty well, and with the help of books and cards, make the hours pass more quickly than they would if we did not have the above-mentioned articles.

In the evening we have lectures delivered by some of the officers here, which are very interesting. Morning and evening religious exercises are held.

We have the papers every day, and find quotations from Northern papers, which give us some information of what is going on in the world.

I received a letter from General Porter in which he very kindly offered to send me money or clothing. He relieved my mind very much by telling me that all were well at home, and free from anxiety on my account. I am perfectly well. Love to all.

*(To Brig. Gen. F. J. Porter)*

RICHMOND, *July 31, 1862.* Prison on 18th St.

GEN. F. J. PORTER,

Dear Sir, — I received your kind note of July 21, and am much obliged to you for your kind offer of money, etc.

I am in hopes, however, that we shall be released in a few days, and if so, I can get along very well without funds.

Will you be kind enough to forward the enclosed note to Father. Will you please have my baggage kept at camp.

*Endorsed on back*: — “Sent him on Friday last \$25.50, so that he will not suffer. I expect him to be free by end of this week.

F. J. P.”

HEADQUARTERS PORTER'S CORPS,  
Camp near HARRISON'S LANDING [Aug., '62].

DEAR FATHER, — Here I am, thank Heaven, under the Stars and Stripes again, ready and willing to go at my duty. I reached here this morning at 7.30 o'clock, having left Aiken's Landing on the James River at 4 o'clock A.M., coming down on board the steamer Ariel.

After many disappointments and delays we left the Libby Prison at Richmond yesterday at 12 o'clock. Though the sun was at its hottest heat, and pouring down its literally burning rays, and although we had to march fifteen miles on foot, I doubt if there was one officer among the one hundred and fifty who was not glad and willing to start at that precise moment in preference to any other, and undergo the fatigue and labor of the march for the sake of getting away from that vile prison. We started off at a smart pace, too much so indeed, but every one was anxious to get away as soon as possible. We marched steadily for three miles and then made a halt at a bridge. Almost every one was tired out by that time, and several were even in danger of being sun-struck. After going a quarter of a mile farther, the officer in charge found it necessary to halt at a house surrounded by trees, the officers being completely used up. He determined luckily to wait until five o'clock before starting



Col Cooke  
a.D.C.  
Maj Kimball  
a.D.C.

Maj Mitchell  
a.D.C.  
Gen Porter

2nd Lt. Hudson  
Surgeon

Capt. H. Wade  
a.D.C.

Col. Norton  
a.D.C.  
Capt. Mason  
a.D.C.

Mrs. Fairport  
Chf. Cook &  
Bottle washer

Head Quarters Fifth Army Corps

Arizona's Landings James River Bay

Aug 1 " 1862

New York - Mr. Hill  
Prints the Report

October 10 1842

Wm. John Hill



again, by which time the sun would be less powerful. The field officers and the sick, who were in wagons, soon caught up with us, and got out to enjoy the shade. We waited till 3.30, when the sun became clouded, and the air cooler. I was completely used up, the skin being worn off my foot by the chafing of my boot. I got into one of the wagons and off we started again. Soon a strong wind came up, completely enveloping us in a cloud of dust, of a thicker and dirtier nature than I have ever known before. Soon, however, rain came, and made the travelling quite pleasant. We went by the Drewry's Bluff road, and passed by some dozen works on that road alone, besides seeing as many more on the other side of the river. Our route lay along the river part of the way, although we were led some four miles away from our course, in order that we might not see some new works they were making. The country was rich and fertile, and was planted entirely with corn, which was in very good condition. By eight o'clock we reached Aiken's Landing, and were transferred to the steamer without giving any parole, and without any conditions. Our exchange is complete at 12 o'clock to-day. We slept on board the steamer and started early this morning. I walked up to headquarters and was very kindly welcomed by the general and staff. The general has been very kind to me, having written me that you were all well, and relieved of all anxiety for me. He also sent me \$25.50, which was very acceptable. \$12.50 was in gold, worth about \$25.00 in Confederate notes.

In regard to my treatment in Richmond, I met with very kind treatment from the officer in charge, Lieutenant Trabue. The first officer who had charge of us, Captain William Read, was as conceited a puppy as ever lived. He was impudent to the officers, and was consequently removed. Trabue then had charge of us and was

very kind and obliging. He was removed, however, on account of the escape of five officers, three of whom made good their escape, and two were recaptured. We then were more strictly guarded and the privilege of getting spring water refused us, although this was partially restored to us again. Most of the officers who had anything to do with us, treated us personally in a very kind manner, but their government treated us quite harshly. The only food furnished us was sour bread, meat, and salt, and at times a little vinegar. The meat was made into greasy soup, entirely unfit for a human being's stomach. If we had not had some money, we should have starved. I had only one dollar when I reached Richmond, but I met with an officer who lent me twenty-two dollars, and when that was used up, I sold my rubber coat, which cost me \$6, for \$15. Then I also received \$25 from the general, \$9.50 of which I gave to Harry Russell,<sup>1</sup> who was taken prisoner by Ewell or Jackson last Saturday. All Pope's officers, 30 in number, taken on Saturday, were treated shamefully. They live in a room with the privates and are allowed nothing but bread and meat, and are not permitted to buy anything outside. No blankets are given them, but when I went away I sent Harry Russell my bed and blanket. I was not allowed to see him, but received a short note from him, in which he said he was well, and I also heard that he was well and uninjured from officers who saw him. I shall write Mr. Shaw about his being captured. Harry R. said in his note to me that Major Savage was wounded in arm and leg and taken prisoner. When I went away I sent Russell all the money I had. I will enclose the note, which I received from him. His order on Mr. Shaw was his own idea, of course, and not

<sup>1</sup> The late Col. Henry S. Russell, for many years Fire Commissioner of Boston.

mine. I shall write Mr. Shaw and let him know that Harry is well.

I send you a list of the prices of articles of food in Richmond. Butter, \$1 per lb. Apples, \$.50 to \$1.00 a doz. Eggs, \$1.00 per doz. Molasses, \$.75 per pint. Sugar, \$.75 per lb. Cherries, 50 cts. per quart. Potatoes, 30 cts. per quart. Coffee, \$2.50 per lb.; and rye coffee, \$.75 per lb. Tea, \$16.00 per lb.

On my way from Richmond I saw Merrimac No. 2, lying at the Rockets just below. She must be very nearly finished. She was covered like the roof of a house and will be a formidable antagonist if she ever succeeds in getting out. We were kept in the Libby Prison for a week, and were then moved to a building on 18th St., where there were splendid opportunities for escaping. I bought me a Secesh uniform and should have tried it if we had not received the news of the exchange. There were five or six Union families within a stone's throw of our prison, and we used to converse with them by the dumb alphabet and by writing on boards, etc. The officers frequently went out nights through a hole made in a fence separating another building from ours, and came back again after walking about the city. I will give you an account of my imprisonment at greater length, in a few days.

General Porter has been away all the day and will not return till morning. Even if he should offer me a furlough I should not take it while there was any chance of a move. I think we shall move in a few days, but I think it will be towards Fortress Monroe. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at NEWPORT NEWS, *August 19.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I have had no chance to write since my first letter to Father as the army has been in motion

since that time. We left Harrison's Landing on Thursday, 8 P.M., and reached Barrett's Ford on the Chickahominy, a distance of twenty miles, by 7 o'clock the next morning. We crossed the Chickahominy on the pontoon bridge just constructed, 2000 feet in length, and camped on this side. Saturday at 4 A.M. we started for Williamsburg, about 12 miles distant, and made our headquarters in the President's house at William and Mary's College. Williamsburg is an old-fashioned city of 4000 inhabitants, although now mostly deserted. Sunday at 6 P.M. we started for Yorktown, 14 miles off, and from there pushed on to Newport News, 28 miles, reaching here at 8 o'clock yesterday morning. The whole army is now across the Chickahominy and the bridge taken up. I am somewhat tired, but in other respects perfectly well.

Prison life did not leave any bad effects upon me, except the natural one of weakness. I was well all the time, with the exception of some slight eruption, which broke out on my body, probably a mild form of scurvy. My chief annoyance was from the lice. Every morning for over six weeks I looked over my clothes carefully, and as regularly found two or three of the disgusting old fellows, besides any amount of nits and young ones. The building was full of them and whenever any one hammered on the floor above, down came the lice. I have always had a great horror of them, and found them rather hard to bear. All the officers were in the same condition. Our life was the same from one day's end to another. Our mess (No. 2) took breakfast at 7.30. We had sour bread, coffee made from rye and bought (75 cts. lb.) by ourselves. Then we would read or play cards or go to sleep during the forenoon until 1 o'clock, when we dined on bread and greasy soup. The afternoon was spent in much the same way as the morning. Supper we took at 6, and at 9 went to bed.

I don't want Father to send my horse on. I shall buy one on here. As soon as I can get a chance I shall have my things sent on to me, but at present I don't know where to have them sent to. I think we shall go to Aquia Creek. We probably go on board to-night.

I have not heard from home yet and do not know why letters do not come. I hope you are all well. I was very anxious while in prison until I heard from the general that Father was well and relieved of all anxiety about me. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *Aug. 23.*

DEAREST FAMILY, FATHER, MOTHER, SISTERS, BROTHERS, ETC. —

We arrived here from Fortress Monroe day before yesterday, and our whole command has gone to Barrett's Ford some ten miles from here up the Rappahannock. We follow this afternoon or evening.

We are encamped on Major Lynch's grounds right opposite Fredericksburg. The house is a splendid brick mansion beautifully situated on the banks of the Rappahannock. Terraces slope down to the river, and beautiful trees keep off the burning rays of the sun. The proprietor, of course, is in the Secesh army, and has left his place deserted. Our troops are encamped all over his grounds, and Major General Burnside and Major General Porter have pitched their tents close to the house. I was introduced to General Burnside yesterday, and found him very pleasant.

We have a very pretty view of Fredericksburg from here. It seems to be the picture of peace and quietness, and is a very pretty little town.

I was sent by General Porter down to Fortress Monroe, and was to meet him there, but by some mistake missed

him, and was obliged to follow after him in another steamer. I came from Aquia Creek here by railroad, — a distance of 13 miles. . . .

Heavy firing was heard from Pope yesterday and this morning. We have not heard the result as yet.<sup>1</sup> . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *Aug. 23.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . I see no chance of getting home for some time. I have asked for no leave, as I know the general would have offered me one if it was allowable. No furloughs are granted except to dangerously sick people, and I am in as good health as any one can be.

I am mighty sorry for Harry Russell. He will probably have a hard time of it in Richmond.

We leave to-morrow morning for Barrett's Ford. All our corps is there.

Franklin's corps will be here in a few days. . . .

I imagine you were all in a flutter to know what became of me until you heard from General Porter. I felt anxious enough to let you know, but could not. My imprisonment probably made me lose promotion on the staff, although it might have been the same had I been here. By the new law, a major general has a right to three aides, one major and two captains. Our present senior aide, Monteith, the general considered too young to make a major of, so he placed Kirkland, who was temporarily on duty here, as major and chief of staff, and made Monteith and McQuade captains. This was before I returned and while I was in Richmond, and when the general did not expect me back till autumn. I hope, however, that I may ultimately get promotion, although at present I must say

<sup>1</sup> The fighting was practically continuous along the line of the Rappahannock during the last half of August.

I see little chance of it. Kirkland and Mason have both gone home sick. . . .

Tell Father I was right in that letter I wrote in June about reinforcements, etc.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS, *Aug. 26, 1862.*  
Camp five miles from BEALETON.

DEAR MOTHER, — . . . We are continually on the go now, and are guarding several of the fords through the Rappahannock. Griffin's brigade is at Barrett's Ford some eleven miles from here. Butterfield and Martindale are at Kelly's Ford six miles from here, and Sykes's division is with us on the way to Rappahannock Station, where the Orange and Alexandria R.R. crosses the Rappahannock River. The first three brigades (Griffin's, Butterfield's, and Martindale's) compose Morell's (Porter's old) division. The corps has quite a long line to guard. Sumner, however, is landing his corps to-day at Aquia Creek and will soon join us. Heinzelman went to Alexandria and part of his force is 5 miles from us. Franklin lands at Alexandria and marches up to join Pope. Keyes stops to guard the Peninsula. You now know where McClellan's army is. Burnside came to Aquia Creek with 7000 men; 5000 of them are with Pope and the remainder with General Burnside at Falmouth. To-day I was in the saddle at seven o'clock A.M. and out at 4 o'clock P.M., having ridden all over the country with the general. As a general thing the country is barren, stony, and unproductive. There are some five or six gold mines round here, which were worked by New York companies but which do not amount to much.

I am remarkably well, and grow stronger every day. . . .

WARRENTON JUNCTION, *Aug. 27.*

DEAR FATHER, — We arrived here this morning and find that the enemy are at Manassas Gap, between us and Washington. General Pope, in my opinion, is a complete failure. He can handle 10,000 men, but no more. We still have communication with Washington via Aquia Creek. I hope we shall see a successful issue to this trouble.

CENTREVILLE, *Aug. 31, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — We had a severe battle at Bull Run yesterday, and were obliged to retire to this place. The retreat was conducted in good order, and without the loss of wagons, etc. General Porter's corps did most of the fighting. Pope made a complete muddle of the whole affair and ordered us into a place where we were hit hard. I can only thank God that I got out safe. We were under a very severe fire of musketry, round shot, shell and case-shot. My horse was slightly wounded in the leg by a musket shot. If we ever reach Washington in safety, it will be more than I expect.

Pope has blundered terribly. He let Jackson get between him and Washington, destroy any number of cars and the railroad track at Manassas Junction and the telegraph. Jackson then went to Centreville, then to Bull Run. Ewell<sup>1</sup> is killed on the rebel side. Lee commanded the rebel centre where we attacked. Pope knows he is dead if he retreats to Washington and so he keeps us here, where the enemy may cut off our supplies. The place itself is very strong and we occupy the enemy's old works. . . .

[The beginning of the next letter is lost, but I remember the circumstances which occasioned it. Colonel Webb,

<sup>1</sup> This was a mistake. Ewell lost a leg on August 28, but was not killed.



of McClellan's staff, came up to see the Army, and he was invited to breakfast by Ruggles, who was on Pope's staff. The rest explains itself.]

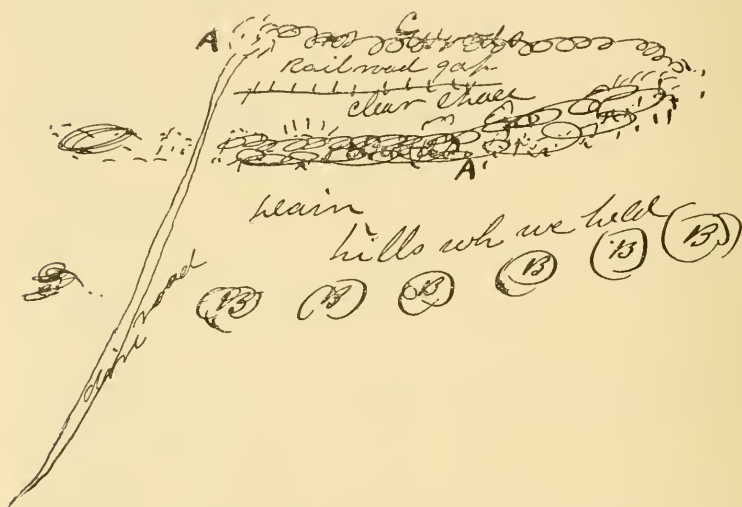
. . . Webb was quite hungry. Pretty soon he saw Pope call Ruggles aside and begin to scold at him. He thought from Pope's manner that he was displeased at Ruggles asking him to breakfast, and so he took up his hat and bid them good morning. Ruggles came up to him and said: "The truth is, Webb, that General Pope don't like my asking you to breakfast. He says that he won't have any of General McClellan's staff at his table." Pretty small for Pope.

There is a rumor that General Porter is to take command of the Army of the Potomac. I hope it is so.

In regard to my being rash in going out so far that day, I wish to say a few words. I have always made it my intention to do everything the general has told me to do, and not come back and tell him that I could not find any one I was sent for or do anything I was sent to do. So this time I did not want to come back and tell him that I could not find the rear guard. The position of some of our troops and of the enemies' batteries confused me, and made me go out too far. I will try and give you the position of our forces on the 2nd Bull Run field.

*A* was where the enemy had a battery placed during the day, that fired at us and finally withdrew, leaving only two pieces there. We advanced from the hills, *B*, and went across the plain into the woods *A'*. The enemy had a strong force in the woods *C*, and in the railroad gap in which they were posted. We tried to advance from the woods *A'* across to *C*, and were repulsed by a terrible fire of grape, canister and musketry which mowed down the men like sheep. They had their batteries posted along

the edge of woods *C*, and got a cross fire on us. The railroad gap served as a breastwork for them. Our left was turned by them and we were compelled to retreat to another range of hills behind the first, where towards night they were held in check by the Regulars, and time given us to retreat to Centreville, which was done in good order.



Some of the troops straggled dreadfully, but were all picked up by Franklin's division. I will get a map of the country and show it to you as soon as I can. The general and staff were in the skirt of woods *A*; and when the enemy began shelling, it was a hot place. Their case-shot would burst and come whizzing around us, knocking the dust up under our horses and on all sides of us. Then would come the sharp *zip* of the bullet, and the fearful screech of the shot and shell. I *saw* at least a dozen round shot and pieces of shell, come flying towards us, and then only could one get an idea of the fearful force

with which they were propelled. To see this dark object come by like a flash, strike the ground, and ricochetting along with enormous bounds was fearful. Then our artillery on the hills *B* would open and the noise of the cannon, the whizzing of the shot and the sharp buzz of the bullets seemed to make the place a perfect hell. I saw more than a half a dozen men knocked down by these round shot but not injured, the ball knocking the ground from under them or covering [them] with dirt. After a while the wounded men who could walk came straggling out, and others were carried by their comrades. Soon well ones came running out by squads, and the general sent me to General Bayard of the cavalry to order him to form a line and stop them. We soon, however, had to abandon our position and fall back to the hills. Two batteries were lost during the fight, none of them from our corps. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at HALL'S HILL, VA., *Sept. 4, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — We have at length, after fighting over a year, reached Washington, and are as badly off as we were a year ago. Here we are encamped in the identical spot we were last March when we started off on our way to Richmond. And now what is this owing to? Simply to the interference of the Abolitionists and politicians with McClellan. They bothered him, and interfered with him until they compelled him to retreat from his near position to Richmond, and finally made him come up here, when he offered to take Richmond with 25,000 more men. He, however, pushed his troops on to Pope's assistance with all the rapidity he could. Pope marched us and countermarched us, and wore us out by his marches, then let the enemy get between us and

Washington and capture three *new* and *complete* batteries from off the cars at Manassas, in addition to any number of things which they wanted. They also cut off our supplies. Pope then goes hunting in the wrong direction for the enemy, and finally finds him at Bull Run. Here he pushes our corps from a strong position into the woods, where we are butchered and fall back, protected alone by our artillery. The left is turned, and were it not for the assistance of Sykes's division of Regulars in Porter's corps, the whole army would have been cut to pieces. We are compelled to leave the field with a loss of some thousands, and retire to Centreville. Pope waits here while all the generals tell him that the enemy will surround him. He wanted to get all McClellan's troops and be in complete command of them. He gets them and retreats for Washington, being nearly cut off on his way. When near Chain Bridge McClellan comes out to meet the weary discouraged soldiers. Such cheers I never heard before, and were never heard in Pope's army. Way off in the distance as he passed the different corps we could hear them cheer him. Every one felt happy and jolly. We felt there was some chance for Washington. The *President* and *Halleck*, after taking away his army and leaving him two thousand men and a battery, and after he had sent in his resignation, were compelled to go and see him and ask him to take command, as he was the only man who could then save the country. Two days before, when he heard his own troops engaged in battle and he wished to go out and see them, as a spectator, leave was refused him. Pope deceived the *President* and General *Halleck* by his *lying* dispatches. I only hope that they did not find it out too late.

I am perfectly well. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at HALL'S HILL, *Sept.* 6, 1862.

DEAR FATHER, — The report is that Generals Porter and Franklin are relieved of the command of their respective corps, until charges are tried which are preferred against them by General Pope. Pope will probably try to blame Porter, and lay the blame of the whole matter on him, on the ground of disobedience of orders. General Porter disobeyed no orders, and if these stories are true, in regard to his being relieved of command, why I have no fear of the result of any court-martial. It will only turn out to the disadvantage of Pope. You cannot conceive of the intense feeling against Pope, McDowell and Stanton.

Meanwhile the enemy are advancing into Maryland, and there will soon be a bloody struggle there, I suppose.

They annoy us very little in front, and are waiting, I suppose, for the force in Maryland to operate.

I am in perfectly good health, and find that out-door life agrees with me.

*Sept.* 10.

Pope, I think, must have given up all idea of bringing any charges against General Porter, for I hear no more said about them. . . .

General Porter has charge of all the forts from Fort Bennett to Fort Ellsworth, inclusive. I have had a great deal of riding to do, between the forts, picking out encampments, etc. We moved here to Arlington House from Fort Corcoran yesterday, and shall probably stay here for some time. I think I shall have a commission as first lieutenant in my regiment soon. . . .

We have a very pleasant officer here as chief of staff, Lieutenant Colonel Webb of the regular army, — a very gentlemanly officer. . . .

LEESBOROUGH, *Sept.* 12, 1862.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS.

DEAR FATHER, — . . . We received orders this morning to join General McClellan, and set out on our way about nine o'clock. Our destination is Brookville.

I suppose you have seen General Pope's report of the battle. He wrote it apparently for the purpose of laying the blame of his own incompetency and mismanagement on General Porter. General Porter luckily has the written orders from Pope, which will completely use him up. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,

Camp near SHARPSBURG, *Sept.* 18.

DEAR FATHER, — I just write you a few lines to let you know that I am all right so far. Yesterday we had a terrible battle<sup>1</sup> in which we drove the enemy along the whole line. The severe fighting was on the right and left. The centre was slightly engaged. We were in the centre and in the reserve and were not actively engaged. From a hill where we were the whole day we had a fine view of the right and most of the centre. I carried several dispatches during the day. To-day we have been getting up ammunition, etc., and also some 10,000 fresh troops. The enemy greatly outnumber us, but the men are confident and in good spirits. To-morrow a great battle will probably come off, and I hope we shall be successful. . . .

Frank Balch was in the fight yesterday, I suppose. I have not been able to see him yet. . . .

We lost 8 generals yesterday, killed and wounded. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,

Camp near SHEPARDSTOWN, *Sept.* 22.

DEAR FATHER, — . . . The enemy are still on the opposite side of the river and I do not know what meas-

<sup>1</sup> The battle of Antietam, or Sharpsburg as it is called in the South.



1 Sadtte  
 2 Merrill  
 3 Major Sawyer  
 4 Gen. Howell  
 5 Col. Victor  
 6 Capt. Foster  
 7 Gen. Williams  
 8 Capt. Foster  
 9 And. Smith  
 10 And. Smith  
 11 Jim. Hunt  
 12 Capt. Foster  
 13 Capt. Foster  
 14 Gen. Humphreys  
 15 Gen. Humphreys  
 16 Col. Patchell  
 Headquarters 5th Army Corps - at Antietam

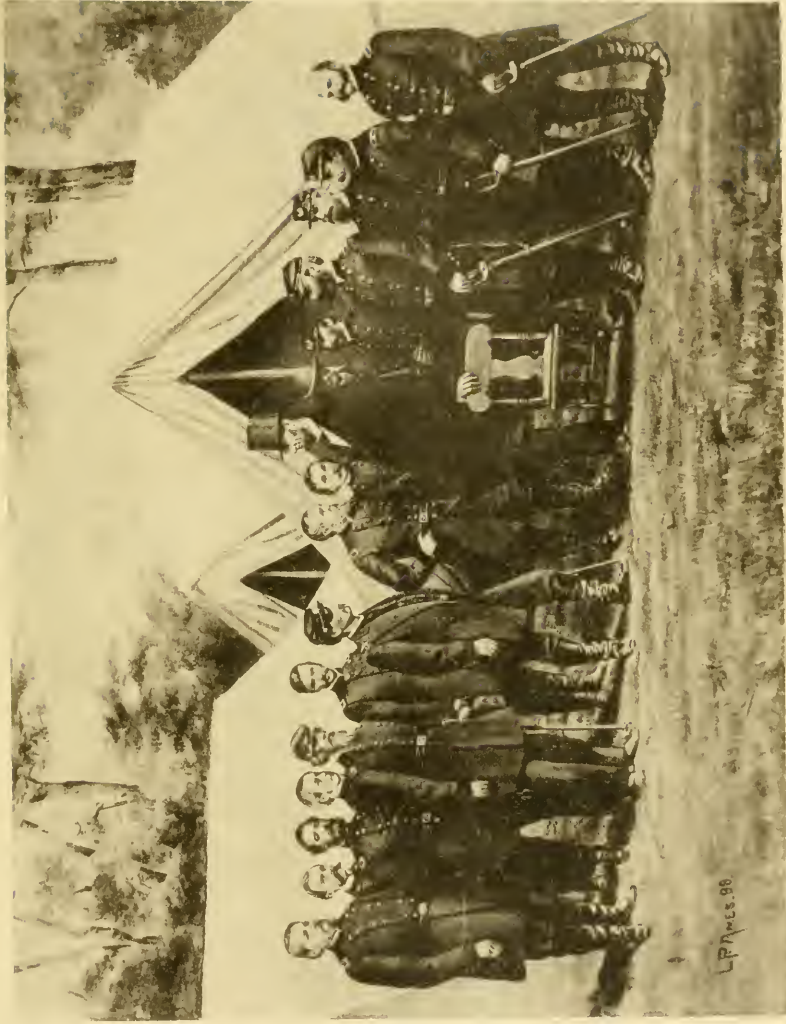
October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1862

Bellevue 11/18/96

With the regards of  
Sgt. John J. [unclear]

---





LP 7-18-98

10 LINCOLN

HANCOCK GRIFFIN SYKES HOOKER MORELL WEBB MCCLELLAN MEADE WARREN CUSTER HUNT F. G. PORTER LOCKE HUMPHREYS BURNSIDE  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 11 12 13 14 15 16

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH ARMY CORPS, ANTIETAM

Genl. J. M. Hild

From his affectionate friend

Wm. J. H. Smith

October 1<sup>st</sup> 1896.

ures will be taken to drive them off. Meanwhile we are getting a day's rest, which every one needs badly enough. I am in the saddle almost all the time, and have very few chances to write. I feel so tired after coming in at night, that I go to bed instantly.

We have four guns here at headquarters which were taken the other evening from the other side of the Potomac. One of them is a gun taken from Griffin's Battery at Bull Run No. 1. Griffin, who is now a general in the corps, is well pleased at getting the gun back, and is going to have it placed with his old battery.

I went over the river this afternoon with a message to Colonel Webb, who was over there with a flag of truce. We sent over some paroled prisoners and also applied for leave to bury our dead, who were killed in the skirmish on that side. I saw Colonel Lee,<sup>1</sup> who was in College with me, being in the class of '58. He now commands the 9th Virginia Cavalry. He said that their men behaved disgracefully in the fight of September 17 and ran like sheep. He gave as the reason, that they were starved and had nothing to eat. When the 4th Michigan crossed the river the other evening, he said, they drove a whole brigade of rebels, who ran shamefully. These are Colonel Lee's own words. He also said that the rebels deserted 27 guns that evening, of which we got four, not knowing where the rest were. There is no doubt that the rebels are mighty hard up for food and clothing. There were some forty of our dead there, and all of them had their shoes taken and pockets rifled. The faces of the dead were horrible. Some could hardly be distinguished from negroes, their faces were so black. I had charge of burying a good many of them. There are some 1200 rebels wounded,

<sup>1</sup> W. H. F. ("Rooney") Lee, already mentioned.

in the barns and hospitals around here, most of whom will be paroled. . . .

I have every reason to think General Porter is satisfied with me, from the messages he intrusts to me, many of which are very important.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near SHEPARDSTOWN, *Sept. 23, 1862.*

DEAR HANNAH, -- I have cut out a map from the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, which gives a fair view of the battle-field of September 17. With the aid of this map and what I have marked upon it, I think, aided by this letter, that you will be able to form a good idea of the battle. Except when carrying messages, I was on the hill marked "Gen. McClellan's Headquarters," and had a fine view of the whole affair.

On the map you will see the crescent-shaped ridge occupied by the rebels. Now imagine this long ridge *over-looking* a hilly and open country in front, which country is full of ravines and cornfields, but free from woods, and lower, mind, than the ridge. The ridge itself is wooded on its summit on the right of Sharpsburg, the Hagerstown pike running parallel and in front of the woods. On the left of Sharpsburg the ridge is mostly free from woods. All that we could see of Sharpsburg was two steeples, the rest of the town being hidden in the valley beyond the ridge. All along this ridge the rebels had batteries placed, both on the right and left of the road. Their infantry, according to their custom, was hidden in the woods. Our batteries were, except on the extreme right, placed on a line of hills parallel to the Antietam, and on the south of it. Our infantry held about the line I have marked in ink. The attack began early in the morning, the artillery on both sides firing rapidly at each other. Soon the musketry on the right grew loud and furious, and we could see



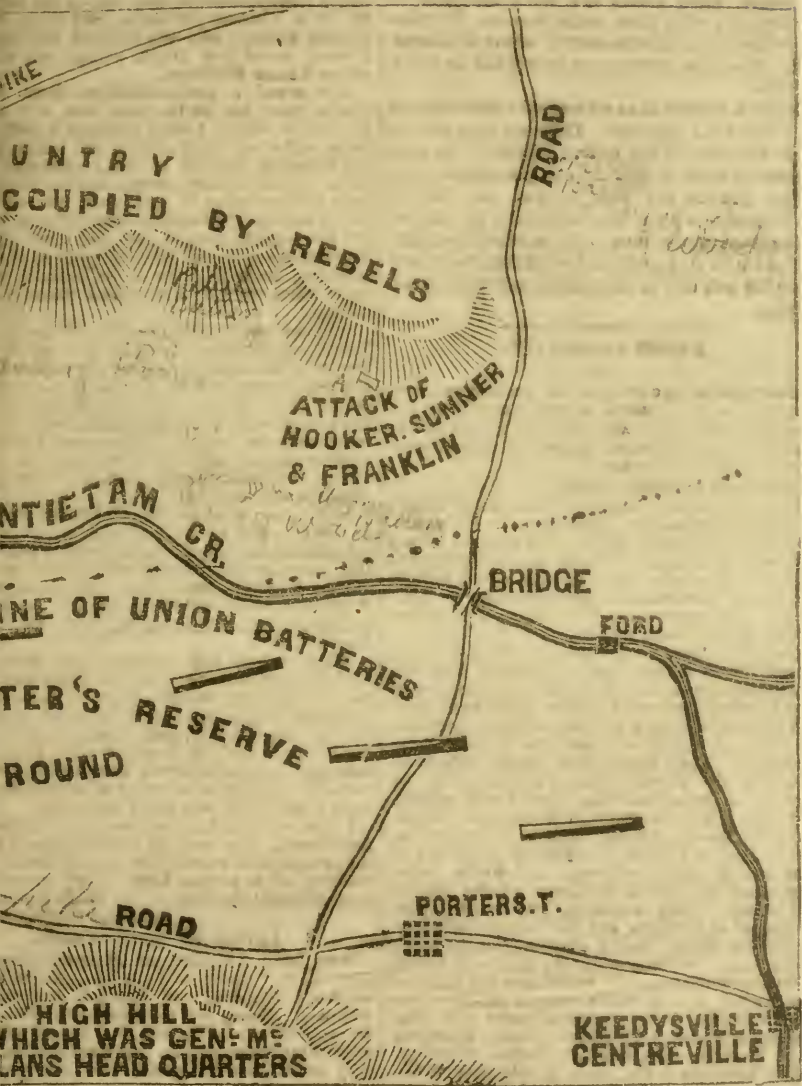
# THE BATTLE FIELD

Wednesday, September 11, 1862



# OF ANTIETAM.

ber 17th, 1862.







our whole line advancing slowly but surely. You see *A*. That is a school-house in the edge of the wood held by the rebels. Our line advanced nearly up to that, and crept through the cornfield *C* until they came onto the crest of the hill, where a furious fire from infantry and artillery opened on them, which after a few minutes drove our men back in disorder. It was a dreadful sight, and it made me feel badly, I can tell you. All along the hillside black specks could be seen which we well knew were the dead and wounded on our side. Soon our men rallied, and fresh troops came up and deployed more to the left of the cornfield *C*. Again we advanced, and this time I could see the rebels run from the cornfield *D*. Meanwhile Burnside tried to cross the bridge on the left of the map, and after great loss charged across the bridge and took it. He advanced about a mile, but was driven back about half the distance. So it was throughout the whole day. We would advance and get driven back, but would again advance, and the rebels run. Our men on the right broke four times, but were four times rallied, and finally kept the ground they had gained. Very little firing was done in the centre, except artillery. There was one mighty plucky battery on the right. It kept pushing forward, whenever it could get a chance, and banging away at the enemy. Finally it got near *D*, and there it had three batteries firing on it, with a cross fire. They stood it some time, but finally had to give way, leaving two caissons. As soon as they had got their guns in a safe place, back they went for their caissons and got them away safely. It was a plucky thing and well done.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near SHEPARDSTOWN, *Sept. 27, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . I saw the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry day before yesterday. The officers were all well.

I am rather glad I did not get into it, and from what I could learn, I imagine that the officers do not like Colonel Williams. Captain Sargent wished me to remember him to you.

I went up in the balloon yesterday and had a fine view of the country around here. Nothing could be seen of the enemy, and they are now some distance from the river. As soon as the river rises I suppose that things will assume a different aspect, and that we shall pitch in again. At present we are enjoying a rest, which is much needed by officers and men.

In looking over one of your letters to me, you ask why we were beaten so by the rebels, when we were under Pope. You have a sufficient answer as to our men's fighting as well as the rebels' in the battles of September 14<sup>1</sup> and 17.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near SHARPSBURG, *Oct. 9.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have not heard from home for some days as our mails do not go and come with much regularity. We shall probably leave here in a few days, and move in some direction against the enemy. I suppose that the move will be across the river, but do not know, and I think we shall start to-morrow. The war will be over, in my opinion, before the first of January, either in one way or another,— that is, for or against us.

I went over with another flag of truce day before yesterday, to convey a letter to General Lee. I was stopped after going half a mile the other side of the river. I delivered my letter to Lieutenant Coney of the 5th Virginia Cavalry and then proceeded back. General Porter invited me to go with him to Hagerstown, where he was to meet his wife. We rode up in an ambulance, passing by

<sup>1</sup> South Mountain.

the field of battle of the 17th. Shattered fences, trees cut down and torn by balls, and graves on all sides showed plainly enough where the contest took place. We arrived in Hagerstown about 5.30. I went to the hotel, and the general made arrangements for his wife and mother at a private house. Hagerstown is a quiet, old-fashioned place of some 4000 inhabitants, and has nothing about it remarkably attractive. In the morning I was introduced to Mrs. Porter and to the general's wife, who is a very pleasant, ladylike person. His mother is quite young looking. He has a splendid boy four years old, who will look just like his father. From Hagerstown drove to St. James College, where General Porter's mother lives, and where she has her son at school. I left the general there and came back to camp yesterday.

General Porter spoke to me about Burnside the other day, and said that, hearing these reports about him and Burnside, he asked him whether he had preferred any charges against him. Burnside said, no; that he had not asked General Porter for reinforcements, so that of course there could be no charges to bring against him. I know that they are great friends, and that there is no truth in the reports about them. I suppose we shall have a big fight soon, which will in a great measure settle the contest in Virginia. . . .

I have just received your letter of October 2, and find your views and mine coincide. The expediency of the proclamation<sup>1</sup> at the present time is all I doubt. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS.  
Camp near SHARPSBURG, Oct. 16, 1862.

DEAR FATHER, — A reconnoissance was made to-day by part of our corps towards Smithville, which is part of

<sup>1</sup> President Lincoln's proclamation, promising emancipation on January 1.

the rebel line. General Humphreys was in command and had 6000 infantry, six guns and 500 cavalry, the latter under command of Major Curtis of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry. I was going with the cavalry to show them where the enemy's pickets were, in order that we might capture them; but as the cavalry did not go across when they were ordered to go, namely before daylight, and as I knew that they would catch it for not obeying orders, I merely showed them the way and washed my hands of the whole thing, in doing which Lieutenant Colonel Webb told me I was right. The pickets got away and our whole force crossed over the river in safety. In the afternoon, General Porter sent me to see how the affair was going on. I found General Humphreys 4 miles from Shepards-town, engaging a battery of the enemy's, and returning back to camp with all the news I could gather, found the general away. A dispatch came from General McClellan just after I had returned, asking for the latest news from Humphreys, and wanting an immediate answer. As I was the only officer here, I gave him all the information I could in a dispatch, the copy of which General Porter read on his return, and told me that it was a very good and well-written answer. He is quite complimentary to me now, and seems to have a good deal of confidence in me. This, of course, is for your own ears, as I don't want to sound my own trumpet.

I went up in the balloon the other day, and had quite a fine view of the country. When I have nothing else to do, I amuse myself by going up in the balloon, and the view one gets amply repays one. The other day I reached the altitude of 900 feet, which is quite fair for a small balloon with ropes to it. . . .

We have a new aide on the staff with the rank of first

lieutenant, which he gets from his regiment. His name is MacIntyre and he belongs in Philadelphia.

Mrs. Colonel Webb and her child left camp to-day for home. . . .

I think there will be a forward movement soon. We have been waiting for clothing, shoes, etc., for the men, many of whom are in a very destitute condition.

*Oct. 17.*

The general and staff are going to Washington to-morrow to attend a court-martial.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near SHARPSBURG, MD., *Oct. 24.*

DEAR FATHER, — We returned from Washington day before yesterday, and reached camp safe and sound in the evening. . . .

I saw Mr. Bowditch while in Washington and invited him to come and see me in camp. The day after I arrived here, he came in company with Mr. Donelson, and I took them through the camps, and down to the banks of the river. I then introduced him to Generals Porter, Sykes and Reynolds. Both he and Mr. Donelson seemed pleased with their visit.

In regard to my horses, I do not have to pay for their food, and even if I did, it would be necessary for me to have two, as I have so much to do, when there is anything going on.

I have been hard at work all day inspecting the 1st brigade of Sykes's division, consisting entirely of Regulars. It is very tiresome work, when one has so many to inspect in one day.

Caspar Crowninshield's squadron, and Captain Motley's squadron are at headquarters as body-guard for the general. I had the pick out of three squadrons from the

1st Massachusetts and chose these two. It will be very pleasant for me, and they all seem to like the change. . . .

We are under orders to move at any moment, and I think we shall soon be on our way. The enemy had a large force of infantry just across the river a day or two ago, but they have now withdrawn them, I think. . . .

I don't feel at all doubtful of the result of this contest provided politicians do not interfere with the plans of our generals, and produce disasters such as we witnessed this summer. Our men will fight as well as the rebels, and will whip them if we are only let alone. Of course I naturally feel anxious, when I see these politicians at work and look back upon the disastrous results of their scheming during times past. . . .

Camp at SANDY HOOK, *Oct. 31.*

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS.

DEAR FATHER, — We are at length on the march again, and I must say that I find it quite pleasant after being still so long. We left Sharpsburg yesterday afternoon and reached here this morning, camping on the way at night. The weather is delightful and the country beautiful. It is warm and pleasant, quite a contrast in fact to the weather for the last two weeks.

The men are now all provided with shoes and clothing, which they were very much in need of after the battle on Antietam.

General Morell has been transferred to the command of the Upper Potomac, and General Butterfield now commands Morell's division. The change is a very beneficial one, and will greatly improve the command. Morell is an awful slow man, and would never take any responsibility upon himself. His whole division is heartily glad to have this change made.

General Porter took me with him to headquarters yes-

terday, going off on a side road, while the rest of the command proceeded to Harper's Ferry. I had quite a long conversation with him about different subjects, and among other things he asked me what you thought about the chance of finishing this war quickly. I told him you were at times very hopeful and sometimes blue. He told me to tell you the following from him. Of course you will keep this private. He said that we never could conquer the South quickly, with the present course the Administration is pursuing, alluding, I suppose, not only to the political, but to the military course. The President is managing this war and not the generals. Halleck does not have his way even. Now have we not had enough of civilians like the President undertaking to manage a campaign? I think you will say we have. In regard to the political course of the Administration, General P. says, and very sensibly, that the South is under the control of the most wicked men in the world. Now, our great object should be to make the people feel this and disgust them with their rulers. But all this abolition talk is a great handle for Jeff. Davis and Co., and always will be. General P. says we ought to take all the sea-port towns, then take the line of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, push into the interior from all these points, starve and freeze the people, so that they will become disgusted with their rulers. He certainly seems to me to be right. In regard to slavery, I think General P. is right. Leave the whole thing alone, and as our armies advance, slavery must go under.

In the present campaign I think we are going to push for Front Royal, thus compelling the enemy to retreat from Winchester and the Valley, from fear of being cut off, and if possible to push them so that they will have to give fight.

In regard to an advance on Richmond from the way of Manassas, I don't think it practicable. We must of necessity have a long line of communication with our base to keep guarded from their cavalry. The Peninsula is the only safe and true way, and you will find it so, unless we should rout them in a big battle near Manassas.

Humphreys's division crossed the river this morning. He is in our corps. Please remember that what I have said is strictly private. General Porter also wished me to say to you that men's and horses' bellies must be filled, and no one who has not been out here can imagine the work it is to do it.

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at SNICKERSVILLE, *Nov. 4, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — General Sykes's division holds Snickers' Gap, and yesterday General Porter sent out our cavalry, two squadrons, amounting to about fifty men, under Lieutenant Colonel Sargent, to make a reconnoissance to the Shenandoah, which runs the other side of the mountains. General Sykes also sent two infantry regiments to support him. I went out with the general to see how our party was getting on. The general sent me on to the front to get some dispatches from Colonel Webb. I found our cavalry on the banks of the Shenandoah, firing at the enemy's cavalry who had just forded the river. Infantry sharpshooters were also firing at our men from a house on the other side. Colonel Sargent and the cavalry behaved very well. The enemy soon opened on our men with artillery; and when we had discovered their force, we retired, having lost 29 men killed, wounded and missing.

We took a prisoner yesterday, who gave us some valuable information, which I will give you, of course as a secret. The man was a clerk in the quartermaster's department of Hill's division. He said that Jackson was at



Winchester, D. H. Hill at Ashby's Gap, and Longstreet near Front Royal. He said that Stuart lost two guns in his fight with Pleasonton, and that Stuart attributed his defeat to the carelessness of his pickets. Last evening, we expected to have a fight at Ashby's Gap this morning and take it, in which case Jackson would be in a bad fix, as we should cut him off. I have not heard any guns until just now, when I heard three or four. I think anyhow we shall have a big fight soon, and whip the rascals.

One of the captains, named Pratt, of our escort, was killed in the reconnoissance yesterday. His body was sent on this morning.

From the top of the mountain here, we can see the rebel wagon trains moving to the South as fast as they can. We can also see their troops moving. D. H. Hill occupied Ashby's Gap yesterday, and now holds it with some three or four brigades. He was the general whom we whipped so badly at South Mountain.

By this movement of ours, we shall drive all the rebels out of Northern Virginia, and, I hope, capture a good lot of them. If we do so, General McClellan will be as popular a general as any man can hope to be.<sup>1</sup> . . .

HEADQUARTERS 5TH ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at WHITE PLAINS, *Nov. 8, 1862.*

DEAR MOTHER, — We have had the first snow-storm of the season to-day, and a very disagreeable one it was, too. I had to ride from here to General McClellan's for orders, and was pretty nearly frozen by the time I got there. It was a ride of about eight miles through a rough hilly and stony country. I had to wait there 5 hours for an answer, and arrived back here at about 7 o'clock P.M.

<sup>1</sup> On Nov. 7 Gen. McClellan was superseded in the command of the Army of the Potomac by Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside.

We all move forward to-morrow, and from present appearances I should judge that we were on a race, Richmond being the goal for both parties. Our advance, consisting of cavalry under Bayard, is beyond the Rappahannock, and we are pushing ahead with all possible speed. May Good Luck attend us! Just imagine how severe this weather is for the soldiers. The officers can manage well enough, but it is very severe for the privates. . . .

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Nov. 14, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I telegraphed you last night that I was here, and hope that you will come on here, as I wish to see you not only for the pleasure of meeting you, but also on matters concerning myself.

General Porter has been relieved of his command and ordered here, according to the programme which has and is to be carried out against McClellan. Franklin will soon follow, and Burnside will be relieved, to be superseded by Hooker.

You may expect to hear of a raid on the Orange and Alexandria R. R. by the enemy at any moment.

From what I can see and learn, every effort will be made to crush General Porter, and if they succeed I shall resign. I have been offered a position on Butterfield's staff, but shall not take it, being determined to hang on to General Porter through thick and thin. He is a brave, generous and good man, and he has a pack of cunning, wicked and lying men who are trying to hunt him down. I wish to see you in person in order to tell you some things which I am afraid to write, as mails are not safe nowadays. . . .

WASHINGTON, *Dec. 6, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . General Pope was on again to-day, making the third day he has been on the stand.

He has not made nearly as strong a case against General Porter as the general expected he would. It has been very difficult to get a straight answer from him, and he certainly has shown a wonderful amount of cunning and sharpness in evading the questions put to him. His memory, too, has been very convenient, not remembering things one day, but the next day recalling a heap of things which he managed to arrange to suit himself during the intervening time. I rather think General Porter got the best of him to-day, though I have not seen the general yet.

I hope to get a chance to go home about Christmas. It will depend altogether on the time that I am called up as witness.

I am afraid that General Porter will be sent out West if he gets clear of this court. If they give him a command anywhere, it will be there, I think. Of course that would not be so pleasant as being near Washington. However, I mean to stay by him as long as he wants me. The rumor here is that Burnside would have crossed to-day if the storm had not interfered. . . .

WASHINGTON, *Dec. 11, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . I received General Porter's letter in your note and gave it to the general. I have not yet testified in General Porter's case, and do not know when I shall be called upon. Yesterday Captain Pope, a nephew of General Pope, testified, and gave testimony injurious to General Porter and directly contrary to my testimony, which I shall give. General Porter depends on my testimony for knocking Captain Pope. Of course I shall testify to nothing that is not straightforward and true, and I feel positive, to say the least, that Captain Pope has been stretching a point. To-day, however, General McDowell will testify, and if he remembers all

that took place his testimony will go to prove mine to be true. This will, of course, be important to General Porter, as McDowell is a witness called by the prosecution.

The report is that Burnside will cross the river at Fredericksburg this morning. There will be a terrible battle there if he does, and I only hope he will be successful. I hope none of General Porter's witnesses will be killed. . . .

I am glad you feel so confident about the success of this war, but I must confess I do not. I am afraid the North will meet with a terrible blow, and will be greatly disappointed. I do not judge this from what General P. says, and he has never told me anything of the kind, but get it from officers who come up from the army daily.

I am pretty busy now, and have my evenings and a good part of the daytime taken up in writing, etc., for General Porter.

WASHINGTON, *Dec. 15, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — The news from the front is very disheartening. Our loss<sup>1</sup> is at least 10,000, and most say nearer 20,000, while the rebels have not lost as many hundred. Our men behaved nobly and are not disorganized, but still, when one thinks of our terrible loss, and the want of gain to balance it, it makes a person feel blue enough. Major Kirkland and Colonel Locke, both on General Porter's staff, were with General Butterfield at the time of the battle and have just returned this evening. People are just beginning to know, or rather to suspect, the result of the fight. We have not taken any of their works and have met with a terrible repulse. Can God ever devise punishment bad enough for Stanton and his crew? Just think, a number of human beings equal to three times

<sup>1</sup> At Fredericksburg, Dec. 13.

the population of Jamaica Plain wiped off the face of the earth, by the rascality of men here in Washington! It is too dreadful to think of. . . .

It is doubtful whether I shall be able to come home Christmas, but I hope I shall be able to get there by that time.

General Porter's trial goes on slowly. McDowell's testimony is very injurious to General Porter, and is directly opposite to what he said to General Porter at the time he was with him on Aug. 29. So much did General Porter depend on his testimony that he was going to summon him as one of his own witnesses until he found that he was summoned by the Government. Still, he will be able to disprove McD.'s testimony if some witnesses are not killed in this battle.

I do not suppose that you at home will get at the truth in regard to this battle until some time passes by. Still, we will hope for the best.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17, 1862.

DEAR MOTHER, — . . . There is a great deal of excitement here with regard to the late battle at Fredericksburg. There is an intense feeling against Halleck and Stanton, and from all I hear I think the President will be obliged to remove them.

Just think, 15,000 wounded and killed, and no advantage gained or corresponding loss inflicted on the enemy! When the North learns the true state of affairs, there will be a howl loud and long enough to make that villain of a Stanton tremble. This last fight exceeds any other we have had in its severity and loss of life and limbs. The proportion of killed to wounded is small, a great many being wounded. I saw the adjutant of the 2d Maine to-day, named Mudgett. He was a prisoner with me in

Richmond, and was wounded in this last fight. He had two of his toes broken by a bullet. . . .

General Porter's Court has adjourned till to-morrow on account of the absence of witnesses. He receives new evidence for his defence almost every day.

I don't think I shall be able to get home Christmas. I shall have to wait here anyway until I am examined as a witness, and it does not look now as if I could be up until after Christmas.

From the feeling here I think we shall see General McClellan in command soon. His enemies are changing wonderfully. Wilmot, Senator from Pennsylvania, said, so I hear, at Willard's last night that Stanton and Halleck must be driven out of Washington. . . .

WASHINGTON, *Dec. 21, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — The city is full of all sorts of rumors, naturally, and it is difficult to find out what is true, and what false. One thing I have heard, which I know to be true. Halleck and Stanton have had a fight. They were each trying to put the blame of the Fredericksburg affair on the other, and finally Stanton called Halleck a liar. Halleck slapped his face. I do not know whether the affair proceeded any farther. It was a most disgraceful affair anyway, and fully worthy of the actors. "When rogues fall out, honest men get their dues."

Burnside came up here last night, and went to see the President. From what I hear, I am confident that he was ordered to cross the river where he did.

The next few days are, or will be, the most important ones in the history of our nation, in my opinion. The events that take place then, will decide our fate as a nation, and will determine whether we are to be utterly ruined, or whether we shall stand a fair chance of being

saved. I will tell you how matters stand. There are two parties at work, to gain the Cabinet and the control of the army. The ultras, with Sumner and Co., are trying to break up the present Cabinet, and make it very ultra indeed, saying, *à la Tribune*, that the President should rely more on the party who put him in power. Their plan is to put Frémont in as general-in-chief, and of this several conservative Republican members of Congress are very much afraid. Should it be done, our ruin will be complete and effectual. Since the recent reverse, I don't think the army will stand any more trifling. Such an act would cause innumerable resignations among our best and highest officers, or might even lead to direct acts of violence against the Government, from the army. In such a case, I should not at all be surprised to see Lincoln kicked out, and a dictator put in command. . . . May heaven save us from any such steps, for we shall surely be lost if such things become necessary, or rather *seem* necessary, to any one. The triumph of the ultra Republicans would be the triumph of the rebels, and the ruin of this nation.

Then there is a second party, composed of conservative men of all parties, but chiefly Republicans, with Seward at the head. The story to-day is that Seward is to remain in the Cabinet, and all the rest of the Cabinet except Welles to be turned off, and Halleck with them. Then Seward is to have the formation of the new Cabinet. I hope this latter story is true. I hear, however, that Frémont is staying at the White House, which makes the first supposition look unpleasantly probable.

Anyhow, things are in a perfect turmoil here, and everything is upside down. The Cabinet is about broken up, Chase among others having handed in his resignation, much to my joy. I only hope the President will choose wisely and well, and save us from ruin. If Seward were

in, I suppose McClellan would be put in Halleck's place, Burnside kept where he is, and Halleck sent out West. This is the "slate" as now laid down. . . .

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Dec. 24, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — I was called up before General Porter's Court to-day, as witness. I had a pretty severe cross-examination, which only made my testimony stronger. The general and his counsel were very much pleased. I, of course, told nothing but what was true, and so came out all right. I testified to the night of the 27th,<sup>1</sup> and to my carrying an order to General Pope, on the 29th, and to various circumstances connected with movements, etc., on the 29th. I was paid a very high compliment for the clearness and straightforwardness of my testimony by Mr. Eames, one of the general's counsel.

Christmas is kept here just as Fourth of July is at home, by firing crackers, etc. I don't anticipate a very pleasant time here to-morrow.

*Dec. 26.*

I spent Christmas here, and took my dinner with Charles Horton, who is in Washington. I hope it will be the last Christmas I shall spend away from home for some time. . . .

The general had some very strong testimony in his favor to-day, and things look very bright for him.

I am very busy most of the time writing, etc. I am perfectly well. . . .

WASHINGTON, *Dec. 30, 1862.*

DEAR FATHER, — The evidence in General Porter's case continues to be more and more favorable for him every day. I cannot see how he can help being acquitted without the Court's stultifying itself. My only fear is that

<sup>1</sup> Of August, 1862.





Head-Quarters Army of the Potomac,

Camp near Calmar, or Camp. S" 1862

Special Orders, }  
No. 8

S. Genl. S. M. ~~Bliss~~ Adm. de Camp  
on the staff of Genl. J. J. Porter is  
authorized to proceed to Boston Mass.  
and await further orders from the Head  
quarters.

EXTRACT.  
[Stewart's  
Cavalry  
Mans.]

1862

By command of Major General ~~McCallum~~ ~~Burnside~~  
Edward M. Neill

Capt & Assistant Adjutant General.

E. M. Neill  
Capt Major Genl. S. P. Porter



Head Quarters, Defences of Washington,

January 11<sup>th</sup> 1863

Sicut. S. M. Child A. D. C.

has permission to visit  
Philadelphia and return  
Reason

Gov. business

By command of  
Maj. Gen. Hinzelman  
Henry Norton  
Capt. & A. D. C.



January 28<sup>th</sup> 63

My dear Friend -

Thanks - a thousand thanks  
from my heart for your sympathy.  
I know well - you have seen me &  
know I hope my heart - that I am  
with the man that can't would make  
me - I'm sure will turn the passion  
which now rules here and will check  
the spirit ~~of~~ which is leading to  
ruin. I fear it may come too late -  
but God in his mercy will spare  
us. We have sinned politically and  
our people have to suffer - but I  
hope not to the benefit of the Southern  
cause, whose infamy appears to us  
so dark that if the better side and  
God must intend it - is to succeed -  
and the South should prosper as  
us - we must indeed be dup

did -

I shall leave here to-morrow  
for New York - at once or as soon  
as possible to look around for  
accommodation - and to become  
I hope a useful citizen -

You are at liberty to use  
the facts, <sup>in my case</sup> as you desire - I trust  
to get the matter out in the  
Senate - It should know the  
justice of the act of the Post  
in order to act <sup>justly</sup> on the nomination  
of my successor in the regular  
army - But no, it is a party affair  
and I am doomed - My companions  
& friends <sup>are</sup> going with me - The end  
is not seen yet -



If you can get the pamphlet  
and it to New York 66 Union  
u -

Remember me kindly to your  
Father & Mother. Sisters &

and accept ever the  
best wishes of ever

Your friend

F. J. Porter

S. M. Wells Jr

Jamaica Plain

Mass

I have written once before to  
- hope you rec<sup>d</sup> my letter



the majority of them are packed, and that their opinion was made before they met.

In any case, however, the general will see that I get a staff appointment. I had a talk with him this morning in which he said he would look out for me. I think if *from any cause or reason* he should not be in the service, that I shall try and get on General Reynolds's staff. He is a very fine general and a gentleman. He was with me in Richmond, and I know him quite well. . . .

Dec. 31.

The general said that he should apply for leave to go on to New York as soon as his Court was over and there abide the decision. He told me that I could get a chance to go home then. I shall avail myself of it most certainly.

We are having a snow-storm here to-day, with signs of cold weather. Thus far I have worn my overcoat but once, the weather being quite mild and pleasant. To-morrow is a great day here. Every one calls on every one else, and has a good time generally. We all pay our respects to General Porter to-morrow morning. The general's Court has adjourned until Friday. All the evidence is in, except three or four witnesses. General McClellan comes on the stand on Friday. Burnside was on to-day, and General Butterfield and Buford.

Major Walley, son of your classmate, is here. He was at my room last evening. He has just been appointed paymaster. All such positions should be given to disabled officers and not to men fresh from civil life. . . .

There are rumors here that the army is going to cross the Rappahannock below Fredericksburg. Richmond will never be reached in that way.

## CHAPTER V

ON GENERAL BENHAM'S STAFF — CAMP AT FALMOUTH, VA. — PRESIDENT LINCOLN REVIEWS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC — GENERAL BENHAM'S PECULIARITIES — ON GENERAL REYNOLDS'S STAFF

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 7, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I am very comfortably settled here at headquarters, and feel quite at home.

The first day I got here I dined with General Hooker. He has certainly one good quality and that is self-confidence, and a sure feeling that he will be successful. I feel pretty confident from what I heard said at his table that he will not have any interference from Washington, and that he will not stand anything of that kind. He is going to work in such a way that he will make himself popular in the army, and I think will gain the confidence of the soldiers. He will make a spoon or spoil the horn. It is uncertain what command General Benham<sup>1</sup> will have, although I think it may be a division, with the Engineer Brigade under Woodbury as a part. This private, of course.

We are messing together, but as we have no cook or cooking stove as yet, it is pretty hard scratching. I hope by Tuesday to have everything in shape, and ready to go ahead. I have a nice new wall tent, with a board floor and stove, and feel quite comfortable.

I met some of my old friends here. Among them was Lieutenant Perkins of Butterfield's staff; I messed with him until we got our mess going.

<sup>1</sup> General Henry W. Benham.

General Benham went down the river on a reconnoissance the other day as far as Port Royal. To-morrow he will probably go up the river. I like him very much, and find him very pleasant and kind. I think I shall find my position very pleasant.

I am on the lookout for another aide for the general. He asked me if I knew of any officer. I think I can find one in the 2d or 20th Massachusetts. Captain Motley has gone on to General Gordon's staff. To-morrow I shall try and go down to my regiment, and see whether I can get a place for George.<sup>1</sup>

I find I can have my own way on the staff here, and on that account it is, of course, much better than my former position. Then, too, General Benham seems to be a favorite of General Hooker's, and will stand a very fair chance of promotion.

That letter in New York was from General Butterfield, advising me to return or resign. I saw him last night and explained the whole matter to him. He was quite kind.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *March 15, 1863.*

DEAR MOTHER, — We are having at this moment, 9 P.M., a delightful hail-storm, but as I am in a nice comfortable tent, I do not mind it much more than you do in the parlor at home.

General Benham went to Washington yesterday, and left me here to see that things went straight, although I really don't see much to look after or attend to. James went to Washington this morning to get me a horse and a few mess stores.

The general told me to find him an aide, and so I went

<sup>1</sup> My cousin, George W. Weld, who was trying to get a commission. He was a son of William F. Weld, and a classmate of mine in College.

over to the 20th Massachusetts yesterday to try and get Ropes. He is a fine fellow, and would have been a great acquisition, but I am sorry to say that he did not like to leave his regiment. He is a very conscientious person, and felt that as there were so few officers left in his regiment, and so many of them permanently absent from loss of limbs, etc., he did not think it right to leave. I am very sorry indeed to lose him. I hardly know where to find any one who would suit me and the general, or rather the general and me. I shall keep my eyes open, however. I dined with the fellows at the 20th, and had quite a nice time there. I met Major Macy, Captains Abbott and Holmes, and Lieutenant Ropes, all of them well.

To-day I went to General Sedgwick's headquarters and dined with Captain Whittier, a classmate of mine. I saw General S. there, and he told me that he considered General Benham the smartest man in our army, which, coming from General Sedgwick, is a great deal of praise. . . .

HEADQUARTERS ARMY POTOMAC,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *March 16, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . I was very glad to hear General Sedgwick speak so highly of General Benham as he did. He said that he considered him the smartest man in the army, although he thought he did not possess so much general information as some others. General S., General Hooker, and General Benham were classmates at West Point. I think General B. may have a corps, although I do not want you to say anything about this. I see no chance of any move for some time.

I tried to get Henry Ropes on General B.'s staff, but he did not wish to leave his regiment. I do not know whom to get now. Almost all my friends are captains. . . .

I have very little to do at present, except read and write,

and ride about to see my friends. I am reading a French book, among other things.

I have got a cook and everything in regard to our mess fixed. We take two meals a day, breakfast at eight, and dinner at five. . . .

I hear that General Porter is to be made Street Commissioner in New York. I hope it is true.

I called on General Barnes the other day, and also on my regiment. I am glad I did not get on Meade's staff. From what I can learn, I do not think he is a very pleasant man to be with. . . .

*[At this point my diary begins again.]*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, VIRGINIA.

*March 20, 1863.* — General Benham relieved General Woodbury,<sup>1</sup> to-day. Snowed hard.

*March 21.* — General Woodbury started for Washington this morning, and General Benham issued General Orders No. 1, announcing his staff. For the present I am acting as adjutant-general. Did not move from headquarters to-day on account of the storm. Saw General Williams<sup>2</sup> about adjutants-general, and found that there were two unassigned, Captain Williams and Captain Wood.

*March 22.* — Colonel Sherwin, 22d Massachusetts, came over to see me this morning. We rode down to the Fifth Army Corps, and stopped on the way at General [David B.] Birney's and General Whipple's headquarters. Saw Captain Dalton<sup>3</sup> and in company with him rode

<sup>1</sup> United States Engineer Corps.

<sup>2</sup> General Seth Williams; he was the bearer of the letters between General Grant and General Lee at Appomattox.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Henry R. Dalton. He was on General Russell's staff.

down to headquarters of the Fifth Corps. Saw Colonel Locke and Colonel [Alexander S.] Webb, and asked about Captain Williams. He was very highly recommended by both of them. Then went to the 18th and 22d Massachusetts and to General Barnes's headquarters. Then called on Captain Martin, and Colonel Vincent,<sup>1</sup> 83d Pennsylvania. Came back to camp at 5 P.M. Was cloudy in morning, but cleared off towards noon. Roads muddy.

*March 23.* — General Benham rode off this morning with Captain Bowers, Lieutenant Van Brocklin, and Major Spaulding. He visited the commands of Major Spaulding and Captain Slosson. Major Spaulding and Lieutenant Van Brocklin selected a new encampment for the pontoon train. Captain Lubey went down to Belle Plain to drill in the pontoon-bridge laying. Moved our headquarters over to the Engineer Brigade. Morning pleasant, but towards afternoon it grew cloudy.

*March 24.* — General visited detachments at Belle Plain. Confidential circular received from headquarters in regard to leaves of absence after April 1. To-day was set apart for a hurdle race and a good time generally at General Birney's headquarters, but on account of recent rains it was postponed until Friday.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *March 24, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — We moved over here to the headquarters of the Engineer Brigade yesterday morning. I am still acting as adjutant-general, but expect to be relieved to-morrow or next day. Last Sunday I went down to the Fifth Army Corps, and inquired about Captain Williams, who is on duty there as additional adjutant-general. He was away on a leave of absence, but from

<sup>1</sup> Strong Vincent, Harvard 1859.



what I could learn, he is a very nice fellow. He will probably be ordered to join General Benham. I am sufficiently acquainted with the duties now to perform them whenever the regular officer is absent. I should not like to be adjutant-general permanently, as there is too much office work, and as it is too confining. I think if the army cross successfully, and everything in our department is done promptly and well, that General Benham will stand a very good chance of promotion. In case he is promoted, I shall be also. We are about a third of a mile from headquarters of the army. It is always the custom, I believe, to have the Engineer Brigade near by headquarters.

We shall move soon, I am quite certain. Orders come in every day, which show that a move is soon to be made.

Lieutenant Perkins, our new aide, joined us to-day. He is a very pleasant fellow. . . .

I have no idea where we shall cross the river. I should think that if we crossed down below, we might move to the York River, and establish our base of supplies there.

We have two regiments in this brigade, the 50th and 15th New York Volunteers, numbering about 7800 men in all. They are very much scattered though, one company being at Harper's Ferry, one at Washington, and the rest scattered through this army, some at Aquia Creek, some at Stoneman's Switch, and some at Belle Plain. There are six pontoon trains with the brigade, only two of which are completely equipped and ready. The others lack transportation, but will soon be complete. . . .

*March 25.* — Captain Rasdereschen<sup>1</sup> came here to-day, to see about his new trestle bridge. The general had some spikes and hooks made according to his plans. An

<sup>1</sup> Captain Rasdereschen, if I remember right, was a Russian who had invented some new kind of bridge. He was currently reported to feed on candles and nothing else.

order was sent to Captain Slosson to furnish chess to General Birney for use on Friday. Day cool and pleasant, and very windy. Cloudy at night. General selected a place for Major Spaulding's command to encamp.

*March 26.* — Captain Strang went to Washington and Captain Bowers left to report to General Woodbury. One lieutenant and 40 men reported to Captain Rasdereschen for trestle-bridge drill. Colonel Stuart spent the night here. Snowing in the morning. Cloudy most of the day. Went over to headquarters of the Army of the Potomac in the evening with Colonel Stuart. Saw General Williams in regard to the Adjutant-General, Captain Williams. The general said that Captain Williams wished very much to remain where he was. Said that the general might nominate any one he chose for the place. Lieutenant Perkins and Van Brocklin went up to Bank's Ford. Issued an order to Captain Slosson to furnish balks to General Birney.

*March 27.* — Day clear and beautiful. There was a hurdle-race at General Birney's headquarters, besides other amusements. One man was seriously injured by his horse falling on him. The general and staff went over to the race, and from there to Major Spaulding's, where the general reviewed the detachment. I was at home all day. Received present of some fish from Major Cassin.

*March 28.* — Day cloudy and rainy. Saw Colonel Schriver in the evening, in regard to the appointment of an inspector-general. He said we were entitled to one. Went over to General Sedgwick's in the evening.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Near FALMOUTH, *March 28, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — Do you know of any good engineers in Boston, who would like commissions in this brigade?

I wish you would write me, and let me know, as General Benham wants to find some good engineers to commission. I told him that I would write you, and see whether you knew of any such.

I received your letter inclosing George's recommendations, and sent them over instantly to Captain Abbott of the 20th, a friend of mine and a classmate.<sup>1</sup> He is a son of Judge Abbott. I could not deliver them personally, as my duties kept me closely confined in camp. I sent a very strong letter of recommendation with them, and told Abbott that I would consider it a personal favor if he would recommend George. I also told him that I would be over at his camp to-morrow and see him about it. He sent back word that he would make it all right when I came over. I also asked him to show the recommendations to Major Macy, who is in command. I shall go over to-morrow and see him personally. Even if I could not get George a place there, I feel quite sure I could get him one in this brigade. You need not say anything about it, as I do not wish to raise any false hopes. You can let George know that I am doing my best for him.

I hear that Longfellow's son ran away, and enlisted as a private in the 1st Massachusetts Battery, and that Senator Sumner sent for the captain of the battery, and told him that he would get L. a commission in the regular army if he (the captain) thought him fit for it.

General Benham is trying to collect the brigade together, and soon we shall have most of the companies near headquarters, together with a band. At present the brigade is very much scattered, some being at Harper's Ferry, some at Washington, and the rest scattered throughout the army.

<sup>1</sup> Henry L. Abbott, of the 20th Massachusetts, who showed great military ability. He was killed later in the war.

I am still acting adjutant-general, and do not know how soon I shall be relieved.

The general is going to appoint an inspector-general on his staff. If I can find a good fellow, I shall get him on the staff. The new aide, whom I got, is a very nice fellow. His name is Perkins.

Yesterday was a delightful day, but to-day we have one of those everlasting rains. It has cleared up again to-night.

General Birney's division had races yesterday. There were some 10,000 spectators present. As usual, there were some accidents, men being thrown and breaking their legs.

The army is in good spirits, and very good discipline. As soon as we can move, we shall do so. . . .

*March 29.* — Went over to the 20th Massachusetts, with Whittier.<sup>1</sup> Saw Ropes, Macy, and Holmes. Was not very successful in regard to George. From the 20th we went to General Whipple's headquarters, where we saw Henry Dalton. From there went to General [Charles] Griffin's, and then to [George M.] Barnard's. Started from the 18th Massachusetts to the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, where I saw Clapp and Bowditch.<sup>2</sup> Spoke to Clapp about coming here as inspector-general. He said he would like to come. Day very pleasant, but windy.

*March 30.* — Colonel Stuart came up from Aquia Creek with one company. Captain Slosson's boats were moved to-day. Captain Strang back from Washington.

*March 31.* — Severe snowstorm in the night. Sent over to Captain Clapp in the afternoon to see about adjutant-generalship.

<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Whittier, my classmate.

<sup>2</sup> Channing Clapp, and Nathaniel I. Bowditch.

*April 1.* — General Benham and Lieutenant Perkins went to Washington. The army was stampeded last night by a report that the enemy were coming down on us. From all that I can learn, it was probably an “April Fool.” I went down to Dalton’s to-day, and then to General Griffin’s. Also saw Colonel Hayes in regard to George, and received a favorable answer. Went to the 22d Massachusetts with Barnard, and saw Sherwin. Day pleasant and windy. I should judge from indications I see around me, that the next move will be in the direction of Burnside’s mud movement.<sup>1</sup> Some think that we shall be sent out to the Mississippi. Granting furloughs again certainly does not look much like a speedy move.

*April 2.* — Channing Clapp came over from camp, and we went over to General Sedgwick’s together. As we found no one in there, we went to General Devens’s,<sup>2</sup> where we saw the general, Colonel Eustis, and Lieutenant Davis of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry. I sent the general’s letter asking for Clapp, to General Williams, and also a communication asking to have him detailed as acting assistant adjutant-general until his regular appointment arrived. Saw General W. personally about it. Weather pleasant, but very windy in the evening.

*April 3.* — General Benham arrived here this morning at 8 o’clock. About 11 A.M. Lieutenant Van Brocklin, Captain Strang, and I started for Major Spaulding’s old camp. From there we went to the new camp, and then to the picket line, but here we were stopped, our passes being of no avail. On the way back, stopped at the 20th Massachusetts and saw Major George N. Macy. Camp was partially surrounded with a hedge to-day.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Fredericksburg campaign, which was so called.

<sup>2</sup> General Charles Devens, afterwards Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and Attorney-General of the U. S. under President Hayes.

*April 4.* — Lieutenant Perkins returned to-day from Washington. He could not get my money, so that I shall be obliged to go to Washington for it myself. The day has been cold and disagreeable, and promised a storm, which began about nightfall. It snowed quite fast, and blew a very heavy gale. No signs of an immediate move. Report says the President and Cabinet will be down to-morrow to see a review of the whole army.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Near FALMOUTH, VA., *April 4, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I received a note from you in regard to George yesterday. . . .

I don't know how soon we shall move. They are granting furloughs again, on the ground that the roads are bad. These high winds that we are having, however, are drying the roads wonderfully fast. I went out yesterday on the Warrenton road, about to be an important one, I judge, and found it very bad. The mud movement under Burnside cut it up so much that it will be some time before it is decent again. I was going out of the lines on business, but had so much trouble with the pickets that it got too late to go. The President and his wife are coming down this afternoon, to review the troops. The review will come off to-morrow.

Channing Clapp of the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry will probably be appointed as our adjutant-general. He is a very nice fellow, and will make a pleasant addition to our staff. I am still acting as such.

We have been fixing up our tents and camp-ground the last few days. It looks quite nicely here now. The whole camp is surrounded with a pine hedge, about ten feet high, and the interior is nicely gravelled. . . .

I send you an old copy of the countersigns. A list like

the enclosed is sent out every week to the headquarters of each corps.

*April 5.* — This morning the snow was between two and three inches deep. We were to have a brigade guard-mounting to-day, but owing to the storm it was put off until to-morrow. About ten o'clock the sun came out, and before night the snow had almost entirely disappeared. I went over to the Sixth Corps with Dalton about one o'clock. I saw Dr. Dalton there. Went from there with Whittier to Brigadier General Devens. General Benham called Lieutenant Roosa up to-day in regard to disturbance while the general was in Washington. Also a sutler named Jerry. There was to have been a grand review of all the cavalry to-day, but it was postponed on account of the weather. Major Cassin was here to-day. A detail of 500 men was ordered this evening.

*April 6.* — I went over to General Sickles's headquarters this morning with a letter from General Benham in regard to the difficulty of passing our picket line. General S. sent his compliments to General Benham, and said he would issue a general order on the subject. After leaving there, I went over to the cavalry review of General Stoneman's corps. It was a fine sight, and almost every one who had a horse was present. As the President came in sight he was saluted with the usual number of guns. General Steinwehr, Major-General Sickles, Meade, Reynolds, Hooker, and Slocum, and Brigadier Generals Pratt, Kane, etc., were present. I saw Waldo Merriam, Scott,<sup>1</sup> Phillips, Martin,<sup>2</sup> Colonel Vincent, and numerous other friends of mine there. Five hundred of our brigade were out on fatigue duty, clearing a space for the infantry review to-morrow.

<sup>1</sup> Henry B. Scott, my classmate.

<sup>2</sup> Augustus P. Martin.

The President looked very thin and pale, so much so that many people remarked that there was a fair chance of Hamlin being our President soon. We had brigade guard-mounting for the first time to-day, and I officiated as assistant adjutant-general. A few days' experience will make the whole thing go off quite successfully. In the evening I went over to General Hooker's headquarters.

*April 7.* — We all started out this morning, except Perkins, to see the review, by the President, of the army. On arriving at headquarters, we found that the review was postponed on account of the mud. Day pleasant.

*April 8.* — To-day there was a review of the Second, Third, Fifth, and Sixth Corps by the President. It was one of the finest spectacles I have ever seen. The different corps arranged in line, with their flags of all colors, contrasting well with the dark blue of the uniforms, was a very pretty sight. As they passed in review they would come to the shoulder, and then double-quick as soon as past the President. I went over in the evening to see Starr,<sup>1</sup> and had a very pleasant time. Received a letter from Hannah full of interesting items. Mounted guard this evening quite successfully, and I believe made no mistake. This is the third time that we have had brigade guard-mounting. Day very pleasant. Several ladies were at the review, and among others Mrs. Lincoln. The President's son rode at the head of the reviewing column. It was quite exciting when riding through the lines, as we did, at a full gallop. There were several ditches in the way which we had to leap, and in trying

<sup>1</sup> Captain James Starr, of Rush's Lancers. They had a lance with a small red flag on it. They were called "Turkey Gobblers" by the men, and whenever they passed the infantry every one began to gobble. It was extremely annoying to them, particularly as they were a fine regiment, under perfect discipline, and always performed most effective service.



to do so some were stuck in the mud, others thrown, etc. It was quite amusing for those who got through safely.

*April 9.* — Day delightful, being a real summer, or rather spring, day. The President reviewed the First Corps to-day. Rode over to see Colonel Eustis in regard to Engineer officers. On my way back, I stopped for Whittier, and went over with him to see Furness on Stoneman's staff. Had guard-mounting in the afternoon, which passed off quite successfully. The general rode over to Major Spaulding's in the afternoon, with Lieutenant Van Brocklin.

*April 10.* — Charles Whittier came over here this morning, and after getting my monthly report ready, and having sent it in, and having my tri-monthly report well under way, I started off with Whittier to see John White.<sup>1</sup> We came by headquarters just as the President and General Hooker came out, on their way to review the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps. On our way we came to the camp of the 16th Massachusetts and stopped and saw Captain Amory. We then continued on our way over the corduroy road until we came to the camp of the 1st New York Volunteers. Both sides of the corduroy road were lined by Sickles's corps, who were out to cheer Father Abraham. We found John in, and spent a very pleasant hour with him. From there we went to Belle Plain, to see about the pontoon boats. I found Major Cassin there, and Captain Wood. Saw the canvas boats, and reported their condition to the general. On my way back I stopped at Rush's Lancers' camp, and saw Winsor, Furness, and Davis.

When I arrived here at camp, I found that the general had gone out on a reconnoissance toward and beyond White Oak Church, General Reynolds's headquarters.

<sup>1</sup> John C. White, my classmate.

He told me in the evening that it was Lieutenant Comstock's plan to cross the river below Fredericksburg. The general did not seem in favor of such a move. Sent in my tri-monthly report this evening. Day pleasant.

*April 11.* — A detail of 500 men was ordered this evening to report for repairing roads, etc. General Benham sent in to General Butterfield his report on his first reconnaissance. All the pontoon trains were inspected by order of General Benham. Inspected the one in the 15th New York Volunteer Engineers. Day pleasant, as have been all the days in the week.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *April 11, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have been quite busy for the last few days, getting in my monthly, and tri-monthly reports, besides a great deal of other office business. To-morrow, I am glad to say, I shall be relieved from duty as adjutant-general by Channing Clapp. Although I have got along very well with General Benham, I don't think I should like to be his adjutant-general permanently. He is not at all well posted in regard to office business, and keeps doing things which are irregular, and the blame of which, if any mischief should ensue, would fall upon the unfortunate adjutant-general. I have never got into any scrape with him, except once, and I did it then from following out his orders. I gave a certificate of "muster out" to an officer, in order that he might be mustered in, with his new and increased rank. The general had given me an express order to do so in all such cases, but as it happened, he did not wish *this officer* to get his new rank as it had been obtained in a rather underhand manner. The officer, too, lied to me in regard to his commission, and so obtained the certificate. The general made me

write *him* (the officer aforesaid) a note, saying that I had given him the certificate *without authority*, which was not so. I did as he directed, however, as I did not wish to have a quarrel with the general. Of course the proper way for the general to have done would have been to demand the certificate back on the ground that it was fraudulently obtained. As it was, it exposed me to insult, etc., by having my authority to sign a paper called into question, and indeed, I don't see why any officer might not now refuse to obey any order signed by me, on the ground that I had signed it without authority. Even if I had signed it without authority, it was very impolitic for the general to have a written statement made to that effect, when he could get out of the scrape in any other way. This, and one or two other things of a like nature done to others on the staff, makes me feel rather anxious in regard to the future. If anything the general orders to be done is not successful, I very much fear that the blame may be thrown on his staff officer, whoever he may be, by the general disavowing the act or order. He has constantly thrown the blame of all his former troubles on other people. However, it will only make me more careful and anxious to do my duty faithfully. I don't wish you to think that I am on unpleasant terms with General Benham or that I have had any serious trouble. We are on the best of terms, and he did not blame me much about the certificate, but, as you know, straws show which way the wind blows, and I, of course, wish to go through this war with honor, and don't want to render myself liable to any blame. Now, this present position in the Engineer Brigade is a very ticklish one. Any amount of blame and censure has been heaped on the former commander, and should it come on the present one, I prefer that it should not be shoved off on my

shoulders. And from seeing General B. not disposed to stand up for his staff, which I have never before known a general not to do, I feel somewhat anxious. Of course, an aide's reputation, honor and everything is in the hands of his general, and if an aide cannot feel that his general will support the orders he gives him to carry or to perform, why there is an end of him. Now, I think I can easily get on some other staff, and after giving you, *in perfect confidence and with a knowledge that you will see it in its true light and keep it perfectly secret*, a full statement of the case, I wish to know your opinion about it. I know the general is satisfied with me and has perfect confidence in me, and as a companion he is jolly and agreeable. But then he is very incautious in what he says about others, and censures the acts and abilities and doings of other generals in a way which must get him into trouble, and which has, undoubtedly, in my opinion, made him enemies in his former campaigns, and led him into many of his scrapes. He is very ambitious, and very conceited. Of course everything here is for your ear alone, and must go no further.

We shall probably move in two or three days. The roads are all dry, and all the preparations are being made for a speedy move, probably down the river. By the time you get this we shall be on our way, unless storms prevent. Parties are at work on the roads fixing the bad holes, etc.

To-day we had an inspection of all our pontoons, and shall have them all in condition by to-morrow night. We have over a hundred of them.

At some convenient time, I will write you a full account of everything here. Don't be at all anxious about me, as I have always and shall always do my duty. I have spoken to you in perfect confidence as a son would

do to his father, in regard to my position and to my feelings. I will again say that I am on the best terms with General Benham, and know everything that is going on from him, which would not be the case if he did not have confidence in me.

I have been mounting Brigade Guard for the last week, and find it quite pleasant. I have at least learned much by my present position, and gained a great deal of useful experience.

*April 12.* — Captain Clapp came over this morning with his servant and relieved me as assistant adjutant-general. Lieutenant Van Brocklin went out with a detail of 500 men to repair roads near Bank's Ford. The detail of 250 men that came from the 15th Regiment was half an hour late, much to the disgust of the general. He had two officers placed in arrest, and fumed and fretted the whole day long. Day pleasant.

*April 13.* — Duplicate copies of the estimate for mules, etc., handed in to-day to Generals Williams and Ingalls. The original that was sent in on March 25 could not be found at headquarters. Preparations are being made for an immediate move. All the pontoon boats have been made tight, and have been caulked and put in complete order. Orders received from headquarters to be ready to move at short notice in any direction. Day pleasant.

*April 14.* — Rode out to Bank's and United States fords this morning with Generals Hooker, Benham, and Warren, Captain Cadwalader, Major Ludlow, and Captain Comstock. Before going went to Colonel Stuart with an order from General Benham to send an officer out to examine the roads from White Oak Church to Schenker's Neck. Officer started, but could not get through the picket line. On the way to Bank's Ford we passed over

the road repaired by Mr. Van Brocklin. At Bank's Ford we found three lines of rifle-pits. At United States Ford, some five or six miles above Bank's Ford, they had a line of rifle-pits, and a line of redoubts. At both fords the banks on our side are very high, and command the opposite shore. At Bank's Ford the ground is low on the enemy's side, and rises gradually. At United States Ford, the rise on the enemy's side is very much less. I do not think that General Hooker liked either place as a crossing for the army. Coming back, we saw a working party leaving Bank's Ford. At United States Ford we saw about half a regiment behind the rifle-pits. Some of them called out to us, and asked us to come over. Our cavalry, which moved last Monday (that is, yesterday), crossed the river at Kelly's Ford. On my way back I stopped in Falmouth and saw John Perry, who arrived this afternoon. The morning was warm and pleasant, but towards evening it clouded up, and became chilly, and in the middle of the night it began raining.

*April 15.* — It rained heavily during the night, and also this morning, putting an effectual check on all movements for some time. The rain continued all day. Supplies were forwarded to the cavalry. Had an order to inspect the pontoon train in General Howard's corps as soon as the rain held up, but had no chance to go as the rain continued all day. Every one feels blue on account of the cavalry, whose movements the rain must seriously interfere with.

*April 16.* — Day was pleasant. Rode over to General Howard's headquarters, and showed him an order from General Benham to inspect the pontoon train. He was very polite and sent an aide with me to Hope Landing, where the train was. Got down there and saw Captain Lee, Quartermaster, and Mr. Waterman, a civilian, who

has charge of the train. The train consists of 22 wagons, with 8 boats, which are taken apart on the march and put together again when needed. One boat consists of some 35 to 40 pieces. The pieces are all tongued and grooved, and then bolted together. The stringers are 33 feet long, and the bays 25 feet in length. The chess are common plank, and average some 15 inches in width, and 15 feet in length. The boats are 18 feet long and 8 feet wide. I should think that they would be liable to leak on account of the numerous joints. It takes some fifteen minutes to put a boat together. The horses are very poor indeed, and very green. The train is in charge of Mr. Waterman, who receives \$150 a month, and 16 mechanics, who have from \$2 to \$2.50 [a day]. Got back to camp about 2 P.M.

*April 17.* — General sent me down early in the morning to Hope Landing with an order to Mr. Waterman to send up the train immediately, and also ordered me to direct the train. I reached Hope Landing at about 11 o'clock and started the train by 12. Such a miserable, green, balky, God-forsaken set of horses I never saw before in my life. All the 23 teams utterly refused to draw except one, which went ahead very well. To make matters worse, there was a corduroy road leading up a very steep hill which we had to go over in the first part of our journey. After getting all the teams up the hill, I rode on to Stafford Court House to see Colonel Asmussen, General Howard's chief of staff. I got a detail of 100 men from him and went back to the wagons with them. On my way to Colonel A.'s I stumbled on General Slocum's headquarters, and found Charles Horton, Morse, and Motley. I got my wagons as far as Stafford Court House by 8 P.M., having gone some three miles in 8 hours. Colonel Asmussen gave me a bed, a stable for my horse, etc., and

treated me very kindly indeed. In the evening I had a guard placed over my wagons, having first telegraphed for permission to park at Stafford Court House for the night, which was granted. I went to General Slocum's in the evening and passed a pleasant hour with Morse, Horton, and Motley. Day pleasant. Cloudy part of time.

*April 18.* — Started from Stafford with my wagons a few minutes past six A.M. Reached General Howard's quarters myself about 8. Asked him for a new detail of 100 men to relieve the 100 obtained early in the morning from the 82d Ohio. He was very pleasant and obliging, and ordered the men to meet me at Brook's Station, where I arrived with train about 10 o'clock. Found my detail and pushed on to our headquarters, which I reached about 2.30 P.M., without meeting with any accident except having a team run away and tumble into Potomac Creek. We had a tough time getting up the hill near the creek, but after that everything went straight. There was a Captain Mensel of General McLean's staff who had charge of the fatigue party of 100 men. He lunched here with me, and was very agreeable.

*April 19.* — The general had some of the new pontoon boats of Waterman's put together, and sent for General Hooker to see them, but the general could not come. A detail of eight or ten men was made from each regiment, composed of the best mechanics, to see the boats put together. The general and Captain Comstock went down to the river, where General Franklin crossed in December. This is the first time we have had any hint in regard to the army's crossing at this place. General B. says we have got to butt against the enemy somewhere, and that we might as well cross here as anywhere. Major



# Head-Quarters, Engineer Brigade,

Camp near Falmouth, Va., April 17, 1863.

## General Orders, } No. 7. }

### ORDER OF MARCH OF THE PONTON TRAINS OF THE ENGINEER BRIGADE.

The ponton trains will be arranged and designated as follows :

The train in charge of the 50th regiment New York volunteer engineers, (now with Major Ira Spaulding,) and having the mule teams broken in, will be called the "First Train of the 50th Regiment." The Captains of these trains, especially responsible, for the details of equipment and march, will be, for the "first train" Captain Geo. W. Ford, and the "second train" Captain W. W. Folwell,—Major Spaulding being in general charge of both trains.

Major E. O. Beers, 50th regiment, (with Captain Asa C. Palmer, company "H," captain of the train,) will take charge of the train recently repaired by him, which will be called the "Third Train of the 50th Regiment."

The train now under the charge of Captain H. V. Slosson of the 15th regiment, and having the horses broken in, will continue under his command, and be styled the "First Train of the 15th Regiment." The other train recently parked with this, will be under the command of Captain Jos. Wood, Jr., 15th regiment as captain of the train, which will be called the "Second Train of the 15th Regiment." Both trains will be commanded by Major Walter L. Cassin, 15th regiment.

The train at these Head-Quarters will be commanded by Captain Timothy Lubey, and will be called the "Third Train of the 15th Regiment," and be under the general charge of Major Thomas Bogan.

In addition to these, there will be assigned to each train another company, to be under the general command of the captain of the train, as already designated. To the 1st, 2d, and 3d trains of the 50th regiment, companies "C" and "F," and ("D" and "K,") of Captains Geo. N. Falley, and M. H. McGrath, and Asa C. Palmer, and James H. McDonald, respectively, and to the 1st, 2d, and 3d trains of the 15th regiment, companies "A" and "I" and "K" of Captain A. P. Green, Lieutenant Thomas Sanford, and Captain Sewall Sergeant, respectively.

Each train will be divided by its captain into four sections, comprising "first section" and "second section of pontons," and "first section" and "second section of equipage." The first and second platoons of the captains of the trains, will be assigned to the first and second sections of pontons, and the 1st and 2d platoons of the second company to the first and second sections of camp equipage.

The remaining companies of each regiment will form a *road party*, the largest company and any force beyond one company to each train, preceding the first train, the second in size the second train, and so on,

and if there are but two companies, the second in size will be divided so that about one-half shall precede each of the last two trains.

The working parties of the 50th regiment will be under the charge of Major Wesley Brainerd, and of the 15th, under Major E. C. Perry. Each working party will be supplied with tools in the proportion of one to each two men, who on a march, will relieve each other in carrying these tools, at equal intervals, by the order of the officer. The kind of tool will be, not over one-tenth picks, though with two at least to each party, and the balance about equally, shovels and axes. The whole command, being necessarily available as a working party at all times, will have their knapsacks and extra rations carried on the trains, if not overloading the teams, but so placed as to be readily unloaded in case of emergency. The men will habitually, only carry their arms and 40 rounds of ammunition, rations in their haversacks, blankets and overcoats.

The ambulance trains will be about equally divided, for the rear of each train until otherwise directed. The largest proportion of ambulances with the rear train, the officer in charge to have his position in the rear of 2d train of 15th regiment, and one non-commissioned officer in rear of 2d train of 50th regiment. The instruments of the band will be carried in the trains to which they belong, and the musicians will be prepared to assist at the ambulances.

The colonels of the regiments will take the general direction and charge of the trains and see to their proper closure, &c. on the march, taking care to expedite their marches to the utmost degree practicable, and being each responsible for the same, directly to the General commanding, from whom, or through his staff all necessary orders will be given.

The place of the colonel will be generally (when not called elsewhere by duty) between the 1st and 2d trains of his regiment. And the colonel will be careful to send an officer to the General commanding, each evening on the parking of the trains of his regiment, and when practicable between 10 and 12 A. M. of each day, to impart full information as to the condition of their trains, or to receive orders.

The colonel will be assisted in his general supervision by the lieutenant colonel, whose position will be habitually between the 2d and 3d trains, and who will be especially charged with selecting positions for, and parking the trains, as well as with their prompt starting on marches at the hour ordered, with a view to which, their mode of parking will be arranged, and trains 1 and 2 of each regiment will be parked as near together as practicable. These marches, will, unless otherwise directed, usually begin at the earliest light that the roads can be plainly visible, the breakfast of the men, the striking and packing of tents and harnessing and hitching up of teams being completed before that hour.

The respective field officers commanding trains will select a careful, reliable non-commissioned officer with a guard of five men for each company under their command, to bring up the rear of each train, to pre-

vent straggling, marauding, skulking, &c., and presistent stragglers will be summarily dealt with. The officers in charge of the different sections of the train are held responsible, that no one rides on the wagons without the written authority of a medical officer therefor, for which one medical officer, if so many are available, will accompany each train, the senior of the regiment with each 2d train. Each section of a train will start off when ready at the hour ordered, to follow the movement of its next advance section, and without being delayed for a rear section. And in all cases when a wagon is delayed by an accident or any cause whatever, those in the rear must if it is possible pass on, leaving such wagon to take its proper place, whenever practicable, and without delay to the trains, unless contrary orders shall be given by the colonels, in writing, to the captains of the train.

Should wagons become fixed or "set" in bad places, it may be expedient to unload them at once, to drag the wagons out seperately, as the balks, ches, &c., can be readily carried for short distances on the shoulders of the men, and it may even be advisable to dismount a ponton to move it by rollers, or even directly on soft muddy ground, like the stone "boat" or "drag."

As it is desirable to give as much freedom of passage as possible to the trains; when two roads are known to be practicable to the point aimed at, unless otherwise specially directed, the trains of the 50th regiment will habitually take the right hand roads, in such cases, those of the 15th regiment following the left roads. One wagon load of ammunition, with the regimental wagons, forage, &c., with the beef on the hoof, will follow in rear of the 2d train of each regiment, in charge of its regimental quartermaster and assistant commissary of subsistence.

The Head-Quarters wagons under the brigade quartermaster will take the head of the column of the 50th regiment, near which will be the habitual position of the commanding General.

The wagons of the *trains* will not be halted for locking the wheels, or for watering the animals, except under the direct orders of the captains of the trains or other superior officers, who, in giving such orders will at the same time, station reliable officers or non-commissioned officers at the points for locking, and for unlocking wheels, and watering the animals, who will be responsible that these operations are performed with the utmost expedition possible. A supply of extra wagon poles and kingbolts will be carried with each train to avoid delays from these sources.

The road parties, will whenever it is at all practicable, in very bad, especially miry places, construct double road ways, that the train may pass, if any wagons should break down at these points, and in making "corduroy" ways, especial care will be taken to lay as near as may be the logs or poles of the same diameter next each other, the butts on the same side, and to place above these the smaller branches or limbs well streightened, before laying on the earth of the road-way. The stumps of trees

in road ways, must be cut close to the ground. *These rules are to be general for all roads, worked by this brigade.*

All orders to any of the officers of the regiments in relation to the halts or movements of the trains, given in the name of the General commanding, by the assistant adjutant general, aides and quartermaster will be at once complied with.

As a prompt obedience to orders, especially as to hours for details or for marches is indispensable to the successful movement of this brigade (it may be said—in its present situation—for this whole army,) the officers of the command may rely upon it that any delinquency in this respect will be inexorably followed up and traced to the offender—to the end that, even in a first offence discovered in any person not of a fair character as an officer, or for *any* second offence of this kind such delinquency may be reported to the General commanding this army for his action.

BY ORDER OF BRIGADIER GENERAL H. W. BENHAM:

*Commanding Engineer Brigade.*

OFFICIAL:

*Capt. and A. Ass't Adj't Gen'l.*

Cassin's trains moved to near the Wallace House. John Perry and Abbott were here to-day.

*April 20.* — It rained to-day, and I had to start with Waterman's train to go over to Major Spaulding's. I moved it to a point a mile the other side from the railroad, where I was relieved by an officer from Major Spaulding. The Regular battery reported to General Benham, and had Captain Wood's old train assigned them.

*April 21.* — Captain Falley's train moved from Major Spaulding's this afternoon to Major Beers's camp. Rode over to Major Spaulding's and to General Couch's headquarters with General Benham. Went ahead with a road party to repair road, etc. The Regulars moved their train to a point near the river. Major Cassin also moved his train some hundred feet or so. The only mule teams that arrived at the time they were ordered were Major Cassin's. The others were from an hour to two hours late.

*April 22.* — Rode down to the river, and saw the places where it is intended to cross the river. Three bridges are to be where Franklin formerly crossed, and two a mile below. Two also at Bank's Ford, where I did not go. The report is that our cavalry all crossed at Rappahannock Station to-day and that the Orange and Alexandria R.R. is running. The general and Captain Clapp and Major Hewitt and myself formed the party that went out this morning. A division of General Reynolds's corps went down to Port Royal with some of our canvas pontoons. They came back again without crossing.

*April 23.* — It rained all day, thus putting off any movement for some days. General Benham, I hear, is blamed for not sending down the material with the can-

was boats, for making a bridge at Port Royal. His orders, however, were to send the boats only. The teams were ordered to be returned from the pontoon trains, and the trains parked. Everything looks as if the whole plan for the movement was changed. I went over to headquarters in the afternoon. John Perry and Henry Abbott were over here in the afternoon.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *April 23, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — It rained all last night, and for the third time we have had our move postponed. I hope the rain may not last long, as it will stop operations, which are now going on.

The plan of movement as far as I can see is as follows. The main body of the army will cross near where General Franklin crossed last December, about two miles below Fredericksburg. Here there are to be three bridges. One mile below this point there are to be two bridges. On these five bridges the main part of our army will cross, as I think. Then there are two bridges to be thrown across the river at Bank's Ford or near there, to cause a diversion. This movement, together with that of our cavalry, who crossed the river at Rappahannock Station yesterday, will bring a large force of the enemy up the river. Then a division marched down the river yesterday to Port Royal, where some of them will cross to create a diversion there. Of course I am not sure that such is the plan, but so it seems to me. The weather, however, may interfere seriously with us, as it has several times already. It really seems as if everything went against us.

I get along very well with General Benham, and give him no possible chance to catch me napping, or disregarding orders. He is unfortunately very quick-tempered,

and pitches into officers without giving them the slightest chance to tell their side. The consequence is that he is very unpopular and has created a great many enemies for himself. He is a man that I have no respect for at all. He loses his temper and becomes so violent that it is ludicrous to see him. The other day he called me out of my tent and showed me a paper that a colonel had just sent in to him. The colonel had, through mistake, and acting on the advice of one of the general's staff, the inspector-general, sent in a paper which was not strictly correct. The general worked himself into a terrible rage, swore that it was a piece of damned impertinence, and finally tore the paper to pieces. I tried to explain to him that the colonel was acting in good faith and that he meant nothing impertinent. He would not hear a word, however, and on seeing him tear the paper, I could not help feeling disgusted, both at his folly and anger. If he wanted to convict the colonel of impertinence, it was foolish to tear the paper up. I turned right round and left him, saying, "Well, sir, *I* had nothing to do with the matter." That day at dinner, when he had recovered his good temper, he said to me, "I am not quite such a d — d fool as you think I am. I saved those pieces and put them together again." He said this laughing, and he evidently knew what I thought of him. He is a man of good ability, and it seems too bad that he should go through life making any number of enemies and doing so little good, all from his bad temper. Luckily I can get along with any one and so don't mind him much.

I was ordered to bring up a pontoon train from Hope Landing the other day, some fifteen miles from here. I stuck to the train until I got it through, although I had a great deal of trouble and labor in doing so. I think

that he was pleased at my doing so. However, I shall be careful and always do as I am ordered, and hope to escape all blame by so doing. I have had three chances to go on other staffs since I have been down here, but do not like to do so until I am absolutely compelled to leave General B. It does not look well for an officer to change much. The enemy are being heavily reinforced opposite us, and will doubtless make a strong resistance. A few days ago they were reported to have but 40,000 men opposite here.

*April 24.* — Rainy most of the day. Towards evening it cleared up. Lawrence Motley was here to dinner. General Benham went over to headquarters, and came back very much pleased, as General Hooker told him that the pontoons were ready in time for this last proposed movement. Cut my thumb with case-knife. Received a letter from Father, in answer to the one I wrote about —.

*April 25.* — General Benham and Captain Clapp went up to Bank's Ford. Henry Dalton was here. The day was warm and pleasant. The general received a telegram from Major Cassin, who started for Washington in the morning, saying that the canvas pontoon train would be ready by Monday morning. I took the dispatch up to General Hooker.

*Sunday, April 26.* — Went up to Bank's Ford with General Meade, General Benham, Captain Weed, and Captain Jay. General Hooker and Captain Comstock went as far as Falmouth, where they stopped. Got back to camp about 5.30 o'clock. Day was pleasant. The works at Bank's Ford have been strengthened by traverses, etc. The enemy have a battery of five guns covering the river above the dam. Major Cassin telegraphed that the train was ready at 2.30 to-day.



*April 27.* — General woke me up at 2 o'clock this morning to write some orders for Captain Lubey in regard to the canvas pontoon train. Received a telegram from him at 7 in the evening, saying that he was at Washington Navy Yard. Day was pleasant. Everything points towards a movement to-morrow night.

*April 28.* — The general received a telegram from Captain Lubey, saying that the pontoon train arrived at Warrenton at 7.30 o'clock this morning. I took the telegram, or rather a verbal message, to General Butterfield, to the effect that the train arrived at Warrenton at 7.30. General Benham then went over to General Sedgwick's, with Perkins and myself. General S., General Sickles, and General Reynolds were there. After leaving there, General B. sent me with a message to Major Cassin, saying that he wished his train to be moved over the crest near the Wallace House. Major Cassin moved his train as ordered, and proceeded down to the pine forest near the river bank. At five o'clock in the afternoon, General Sedgwick and General Newton came to headquarters, and General B. went with them to the river, where they left me. I went back to headquarters in accordance with General B.'s orders, having waited for him an hour. At nine in the evening, General Hunt arrived here, and with all his staff, General Benham started for General Sedgwick's headquarters. After remaining here for half an hour, or rather 15 minutes, General Benham went on towards the river, until he met General Pratt. He ordered me to stay with General Pratt, and as soon as the enemy took the alarm to order the batteries down, and one train of pontoon equipage. While here, General Benham had a row with General Sedgwick's aide, Captain Halstead.

General Benham, after giving his instructions to

General Pratt and other officers, left for the lower bridges. General Pratt sent me down to the river to give notice as soon as the enemy were alarmed, General Newton's officers, who were to perform that duty, not being present. I waited on the bank of the river some half hour, having first questioned all the pickets in regard to any sounds or noises heard on the opposite bank. Everything was very quiet, except the sound arising from our pontoon boats being transported by our men. When the boats arrived at the bank, I joined General Benham. He sent me down to the river's edge to listen, and to see whether the enemy were aware of our approach. I soon heard the clanking of swords, etc., and saw signals displayed, and so informed the general. By one or two o'clock some 40 boats were at the river's bank. At four our men crossed, one volley and a few scattering shots being all the resistance that they encountered. Some half a dozen men were wounded. The time between 4 and 6 o'clock was occupied in crossing troops.<sup>1</sup>

Camp near FALMOUTH, *April 28, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I think we shall start to-morrow night, if it does not rain. The pontoons are all near the river, and everything is in readiness to move. Some of the corps have moved up near the river to-day, in order to move promptly and quickly when the order comes. It seems to me that we shall cross in three places: at Bank's Ford, where Franklin crossed at Fredericksburg fight, and about a mile below Franklin's position.

In regard to the feeling in the army, it is not so good as

<sup>1</sup> Gen. Hooker's movement to turn the Confederate left flank, which resulted in the battle of Chancellorsville, began on April 27, when a force under Sedgwick was sent across the Rappahannock below Fredericksburg.

it was. There is a feeling that the golden opportunity has passed away, and that if we cross now we shall have Hill and Longstreet's forces to contend with in addition to Lee's force. Had we gone over last Monday, we should not have half the force to contend against that we have now. However, it does not do to give way to any such feelings, especially before the men, and we must all do the utmost in our power to help and aid General Hooker. In regard to his drinking, I will say to you what I have never spoken about to any one else outside the army. *I know* of his having been tight twice since I have been here, although I hope he does not indulge enough to render him incompetent to perform his duty. He is, to tell the truth, a brave, dashing soldier, rather an adventurer than anything else, and bound to win or lose everything. Too much given to boasting and talking, he is nevertheless a man who will win the love and admiration of the soldiers, provided that he succeeds in his first fight. Whether he possesses the ability and the power to handle this large army remains to be seen. So far, in my opinion, General Butterfield has "run the machine," and he is admirably fitted to attend to its internal discipline, etc. I feel anxious myself in regard to General Hooker, on account of the numerous delays we have had. They are certainly as bad, if not worse, than any of McClellan's, and we must certainly admit that either Hooker is right and McClellan also, or that Hooker is wrong as much as McClellan ever was. Every one here begins to say now, "Well, McClellan was right after all." I do hope most earnestly that by the time you receive this letter you will also have the news of our crossing the river successfully, and giving the enemy a good whipping.

To-night it seems to threaten a storm for to-morrow. We get ready to move during the pleasant weather

and are on the point of starting just as the rain begins again.

I was called up this morning to write some private dispatches for an officer going on a secret expedition. General —— and myself were the only ones around here who knew of the place and object of the officer's journey. The officer himself did not know, as the dispatches were sealed and were not to be opened until he reached Washington. Yet this afternoon I was told by an officer where and for what purpose the officer was sent. It leaked out from headquarters of the Army of the Potomac in some way. It is a difficult thing to keep anything secret.

*April 29.* — At 6 the first bridge was begun, and at 7 it was completed. About 8.30 we all started for the lower crossing, where we had been repulsed in our attempt at crossing. At 9 o'clock our men, protected by rifle-pits, opened a sharp fire on the enemy posted in their pits, and soon made them start from them, they leaving one by one. Our artillery then opened on them, and I saw one man knocked plump over by one of our solid shots. Whenever a rebel attempted to run from one pit to another, or showed himself in any way, our men would open on him, and if he was hit, a shout would be raised by every one. It was pleasant for us who were not under fire to see the devils knocked over. Soon a few boat-loads of men were thrown over the river. As soon as our men appeared on the opposite bank, there was a stampede of the rebels from all the rifle-pits and houses along the bank, and then there was a race, our men running and firing at the enemy as they went along. As we came to the different pits, our men would pull out the rebels, and send them over the river. From one pit a white rag was shown, and one of our men pulled three rebs out of it. Over a

hundred prisoners were caught here. The bridges were laid here by 11 o'clock, the enemy shelling us towards 10 o'clock, but without any damage. At 12 o'clock, I reached camp, and immediately went to sleep, not having had any for twenty-four hours. In the morning, I was sent three different times to General Sedgwick: once with the message that General Russell had refused to obey General Benham's orders; the second time, that General Russell had refused to obey General B.'s orders, and that he had put him under arrest; and the third time, to ascertain how many bridges General S. wished.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *April 29, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — It is now 4.30 P.M., and we have finished five of our bridges. I will endeavor to give you a brief account of everything that has happened since yesterday morning. Yesterday was cloudy and rainy, towards afternoon and evening the weather growing very misty, much to our joy, as last night was the night selected to lay the bridges, two of which were to go down at Bank's Ford; but these were afterwards shown and exposed to view merely to deceive the rebs, without any effort being made to lay them; three more were to be laid at Franklin's old place of crossing, and two a mile and a half below Franklin's old place. The weather was perfect, and could not have been better. A very thick fog hung over the earth, completely hiding every object a few yards distant. The boats were drawn by teams to within a mile of the intended crossing place. From here they were carried on poles to the river's bank, there being 75 men to each boat. This was done in order to get near the enemy unheard, and take them if possible by surprise. At 10 P.M. last night we left our camp, and went to

General Sedgwick's headquarters, who had entire charge of the movements at the two lower crossings and who had the 1st, 3d and 6th Corps under his command. He and General Benham made their arrangements, and to *assist* General Benham, General Sedgwick sent an aide with him. While giving him some instructions a short time after, General Benham abused him shamefully without the slightest cause. Soon after he got himself into a scrape with General Brooks, and then with General Russell, whom he placed under arrest. I was asked by two officers, General Russell being one, whether General Benham was not drunk. I said he was not, as I knew he took wine only and not any liquors. Then, too, I was accustomed to his swearing, etc., and thought nothing of it. Pretty soon a captain came riding along on horseback, and General Benham opened on him, yelling out in a loud tone of voice and Goddamning him. This, too, right on the bank of the river and when he had just been cautioning every one to keep quiet. I said to the general, "Don't call out so loud, sir, the enemy can hear you." He still kept on, however. All this time he was lying flat on the ground, complaining of fatigue. He then sent me off to find a Captain Reese, and when I came back he was gone, having left directions for me to stay where his horse was. I did not see him then for some time, when he came back on a borrowed horse and reeling in his saddle. He said to me in a thick voice, "Go tell General Sedgwick that General Russell has disobeyed my orders," and kept repeating it. I went off with the message to General S. During this last hour, everything had been going wrong. There was no one to attend to the matter and General B. confused and confounded everything. The enemy knew of our presence, and were signalling all along their line. And so it was until 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, when

men were put into the pontoon boats and pushed over, several shots being exchanged, with a loss of six wounded for us. Our men went right over and drove the enemy. Meanwhile, I was on the go to General Sedgwick with any number of messages from General B. When I came back about 6 o'clock, I found General B. drunk as could be, with a bloody cut over his left eye, and the blood all over that side of his face and forming a disgusting sight altogether. He had fallen down and cut his face. Soon after he reeled in his saddle, and in trying to shake hands with General Pratt, he fell right off his horse on to the ground. I saw him do this. The soldiers picked him up, and he mounted again, and rode round among the men, swearing and trying to hurry matters, but only creating trouble and making himself the laughing-stock of the crowd. Finally three bridges were got across and then we started for the two lower bridges where an unsuccessful attempt had been made to cross in the morning. The general had got moderately sober by that time, and began to feel slightly ashamed of himself. I never in my life have been so mortified and ashamed as I was this morning. I shall leave his staff as soon as possible, and I don't see how he can escape a court-martial and dismissal from the service. By sheer good luck we got the men across the river and built the bridges. General Benham's being drunk delayed the laying of the bridges for four hours; his mismanagement all but ruined the whole plan. Every one there expected a disgraceful termination to the whole affair, and as I have said, good luck only saved us, for the rebels had two or three hours to prepare themselves, after we arrived on the ground, when they should have had but half an hour at the outside.

At the lower crossing, I witnessed one of the prettiest sights of the war. It was our men driving the rebs from

their rifle-pits. Our men in rifle-pits opened a heavy fire on the enemy's sharpshooters, and soon one man jumped out and ran, then another, and soon all along the line men could be seen running from houses, ditches and rifle-pits. Then our artillery would open and make the rascals scatter. I saw one round shot knock a rebel head over heels. Then, too, as the rebs ran from their hiding places, our men would yell and cheer and send a perfect storm of bullets after them. Soon our men rushed over in boats and ran up the bank and began popping away at the rifle-pits, houses, etc. Then came the grand skedaddle. From every imaginable place came a rebel running for dear life, with our men cheering at their heels and our artillery helping to kick them along. Out of one large rifle-pit, I saw 10 or 12 rebs taken prisoners. Out of another one, a white rag would be raised and waved. Out of this came three rebels. 100 prisoners were captured in all, and a prettier sight I never saw in all my life. It is all very pleasant to look on and see a fight when your side is whipping, and you are not under fire, but it is not so pleasant to be in it yourself. I think myself that this movement here is a feint, whilst four of our corps cross at Bank's or United States Ford. However, all will be settled in a day or two, and at present everything looks bright for us.

I cannot imagine where General B. got his liquor. I think it must have been sherry wine which he had with him. He must have drunk it very quietly, as none of us saw him drinking. May I be saved from another such general!

*April* 30. — General Benham went up to General Hooker's in the morning and came back to breakfast, saying that he [Benham] had been accused of being drunk, and that that was the cause of the delay in laying



the bridges. He asked all his staff what they thought, and received in answer that they considered him intoxicated. He asked me about it, and I had to tell him my opinion of the matter. He received an order in the afternoon to take two of his bridges up and go to Bank's Ford, and lay them by daylight, at which time the enemy would have evacuated. On the way to General Hooker's, he asked me why I had told Colonel McMahan that he was drunk. I gave him my reasons. At dusk we went down to the river, and had two bridges taken up, and started for Bank's Ford with them, one train leaving at 11 P.M., and the other at 12.

*May 1.* — We travelled all night with our pontoon trains, reached Bank's Ford at 6.15 A.M., and found that the enemy had not evacuated the ford. During the day we put the road leading to where our bridges were to be placed, in repair. General Hunt came up during the day, with orders to protect the ford, and keep the enemy from crossing. We were stampeded in fact, and the few men that we had with us in our brigade were ordered out on picket-duty at the ford. The day was pleasant, and reminded me very much of May Day at home. As we lunched in the woods, the presence of ladies was alone wanting to make one think that he was on a picnic. We had three tents with us. Captain Clapp and I slept in the ambulance. No alarm during the night.

*May 2.* — General Reynolds's corps moved up to-day from the left to United States Ford. Captain Lubey came here in the evening. He said that the canvas pontoon train was used at Kelly's Ford, where three corps crossed on it. General Benham sent me to General Hunt,<sup>1</sup> to ascertain whether he considered himself in command here. General Hunt said that he did. There was heavy firing on

<sup>1</sup> General Hunt was Chief of the Artillery.

the right in the evening, which turned out to be the enemy attacking the Eleventh Corps, which ran disgracefully.<sup>1</sup> Day was pleasant, and in the night we had the moon, which is now almost full. General B. spoke to me again about the occurrences of April 28 and 29, and I had to tell him my opinion again. Captains Strang and Nares were here to-day.

*May 3.* — The enemy evacuated the ford to-day, and General Benham laid one of the bridges. After he had done so, he received a telegram ordering him not to lay it. The other bridge was ordered to United States Ford, where it went with Colonel Colgate, and sixteen boats. General Sedgwick carried the heights behind Fredericksburg this morning, and made his way up as far as B.'s Ford, on the plank road. About 5.30 I went across the river, and saw his men attack the enemy posted near Salem Church. We were driven back. General Hooker telegraphed in the morning that he was driving the enemy, and that he only needed Sedgwick to make his victory complete.

*May 4.* — General Benham received orders to build another bridge, which he managed to do with the remnants of two trains. It took some six hours to finish the bridge, and before it was done the enemy began shelling it, sending their shot and shell disagreeably near the bridges, but luckily not hitting them. One sergeant of the 15th [New York Volunteer Engineers] was killed. The enemy got in Sedgwick's rear, and retook Fredericksburg. Sedgwick was hard pressed on all sides, and during the night sent for General Benham, when it was decided that he should retreat.

*May 5.* — The whole of Sedgwick's corps got across by 4 A.M., the enemy shelling at random, but not injuring

<sup>1</sup> May 2 was the second day of the battle of Chancellorsville.

any one. The night was dark and foggy, and favorable for taking up the bridges, which were swung round dismantled during the mist, the boats being drawn up the ravines under cover. During the day the enemy shelled us, throwing some shells over two miles. In the afternoon we started for United States Ford, having sent our wagons back to headquarters. We reached the ford at about 3.30 o'clock, and I was sent forward in a pouring rain to General Hooker, whom I found 3 miles out. He said that General Benham might return to camp. We found that the whole army was going to retreat during the night. On the way up, we passed all the wagon trains of the army on their way to Potomac Creek. We left United States Ford at 5 o'clock, and I went ahead. On arriving at the railroad, I found the creek so swollen that it could not be forded, so I went back to Falmouth, and spent the night with John Perry.

*May 6.* — Came to camp early in the morning. Slept during the day. The last boat was taken out of the river at Bank's Ford at 11 A.M. No pursuit of our army was attempted. Day rainy and disagreeable. I received a letter from Frank and Hannah. Also from Uncle Oliver. Read a paper for the first time since the movement began. Trains from Bank's Ford arrived late at night.

*May 7.* — Day cloudy, but not rainy. Went to headquarters in the morning. We received an order to have everything ready for a move this afternoon, and from the aspect of affairs I should judge that we were to move to-night, and lay the bridges at Franklin's Crossing. The order was revoked this evening for our crossing the river to-night. The President and Halleck were here this morning, and went away in the evening. There was a great feeling of relief when we found that we were not to cross the river immediately.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, VA., *May 7, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are back again from the front and in our old position near headquarters of the army. The whole army has likewise re-crossed the river, and are occupying their old positions. The loss in killed, wounded and prisoners will be about 10,000 men, as nearly as I can judge. From what I can see and hear, I should think that Hooker's plan was a good one, but he was unable to carry it out on account of the superior numbers of the enemy who were reinforced from Petersburg, Richmond, and, I think, even from Tennessee. They have shown their accustomed vigilance and activity, and have rather got ahead of us again. Hooker's plan was to turn their left, but they quickly massed their troops there, and by their superior numbers and through the disgraceful behavior of the Eleventh Corps, they compelled us to halt, and use the much despised (by us) shovel and spade for our defence. We were not whipped anywhere, and I think their loss was much greater than our own. The chief mistake that was made, was abandoning the heights of Fredericksburg after we had once taken them, and in underestimating the force opposed to us. As far as I can see, the soldiers are not disheartened, although the unsuccessful termination of this affair will, I am afraid, injure General Hooker, who was, as it were, on trial for ability to command this army.

I will try and give you an account of what our brigade has done during this move. On the morning of the 29th, 5 bridges were laid. On the 30th, 2 bridges were taken up and started for Bank's Ford, General B. and his staff going with them. We remained here six days, laying the bridges Sunday and Monday. Fourteen bridges were laid during this move. On Sunday I crossed Bank's Ford with Captain Clapp and went up to General Sedgwick's

corps, who were engaged in a fight. I saw the whole affair. A brigade charged and drove the enemy to Salem Church, where they made a stand and drove our forces back to their original position.

In regard to General ——, I would say that I received your letter to-day and shall certainly leave his staff as soon as I can get a chance. Major Whittier of General Sedgwick's staff has been trying to get me a place there, but I am afraid that I can't get it, as General S. says that it would be a rude thing for him to take me away from General Benham. They were talking about General B.'s affairs, and my name was mentioned in reference to it. General Reynolds who was present spoke a good word for me, and told General Sedgwick that whatever I said could be relied on. Whittier is still trying for me, and I hope will succeed. Please be careful and not have anything written to General S., as I would prefer him to select me, if he should do so, of his own choice and not through any pressure brought to bear on him by his friends. I am very much obliged to Miss Sedgwick, and am glad that she was kind enough and took enough interest in me to write the general, but of course I don't want him to think that I am writing home and trying to get his friends to get the place for me. You can understand how I feel, and of course will do nothing out of the way in that respect.

General Benham is not in the habit of getting drunk, as far as I know, and I do not think would have been so the other night were it not for his fatigue, etc. Still, I am not willing to be with any man who is at all liable to any such failing. You know Rosecrans charged him with the same thing. General Benham is a man whom every one hates and laughs at, and I can assure you my place is not pleasant with him. Please say nothing about what I have written about him.

General Reynolds told me, some three weeks ago, that he was glad that I had got a place, but as he afterwards told Whittier, he did *not* say he was glad that I was with —, as he knew I would not like him. General B. has tried to make me say that he was not — three times, but each time I have told him to his face that he was, and have given him my reason for so saying. His want of delicacy and tact disgusts me. He jokes with the privates and tries to cotton to them; but as he passes them, the staff see them laughing and making jokes about him. It is not pleasant, I can tell you. The contrast between him and General Porter is not favorable to the former.

As soon as I can learn in regard to our next move, I will write you.

*May 8.* — I went over to the headquarters of Whipple's division this morning, and saw Dalton. He told me that General Whipple had died from the effects of his wound. Gave me my shoulder-straps. Went to Griffin's headquarters and saw Batchelder, who told me that he could get me a place on General Crawford's staff as aide. Was waked up early in the morning (4 A.M.) to send Captain Lubey and his canvas train up to Kelly's Ford to meet and cross over General Stoneman and his cavalry. The animals for the train arrived at 9 minutes of 8, and the train started at 8.15 A.M. Went to General Stoneman's headquarters in the evening. Heard here when I came back that — — was to be relieved. Day cloudy.

*May 9.* — Weather warm and pleasant. Went over to headquarters to try Lieutenant Oliver's horse. Major Spaulding's detachment went into camp with their regiment. Enemy's tents visible in the same place as before. General Stoneman's force crossed the river safely, and so the canvas pontoon train returned to camp.

*May 10.* — To-day has been the first real summer's day we have had, the sun being warm enough to make one feel uncomfortable. I went back with John Perry to his camp, and spent a few hours there in the evening. John was here to dinner. Expected a move again to-night, but had none.

*May 11.* — Another hot summer's day. Sent a note to Captain Batchelder in regard to General C[rawford]. In the evening Captain Starr came over here from headquarters with Duncan Lamb, who is down here trying to find his uncle's body, who was killed at Chancellorsville. The band from the 50th [New York Volunteer Engineers] came here in the evening, and gave us some very good music.

*May 12.* — Weather very warm. Went down to General Griffin's and took dinner there. Went to my regiment, to General Barnes, and to the 22d, and stopped at General Meade's headquarters on my way back. Found that Captain Clapp and Captain Strang had gone to Washington, and that I should have to act as acting assistant adjutant-general.

*May 13.* — Had a thunder-storm in the afternoon. Mounted guard at 6 P.M. Went over to camp of the 15th New York Volunteer Engineers. Received an order at 9 P.M. to send a pontoon bridge train to United States Ford. Captain Slosson started with his train at 11 P.M.

HEADQUARTERS ENGINEER BRIGADE,  
Camp near FALMOUTH, *May 13, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I think I shall go on General Crawford's staff. He commands the Pennsylvania Reserves and is stationed on the defences of Washington. I hear very good accounts of him, and know his adjutant-general very well.

I am sorry to say that the army have very little confidence in General Hooker. When he was at Chancellorsville, he said that he had a position which God Almighty could not drive him from, and that he had the rebels and God Almighty could not help them. Not much wonder that we were whipped, I think.

I am quite busy and must stop, in order to get this into the mail.

*May 14.* — Weather was much cooler to-day. Very windy at night. Went over to headquarters in the evening. John Perry came over here to lunch. Two wrens have been building a nest in my stove-pipe for the past two days; they are quite tame, and come to the door of my tent to pick up rags, etc.

*May 15.* — Day was pleasant. Rode down to the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry with Whittier. Saw Dr. Perry there, and Dr. Heywood. Saw Osborne also. Stopped at General Griffin's on my way back.

*May 16.* — Captains Clapp and Strang came back from Washington. Went over to Captain Starr's in the afternoon, and also to headquarters. Day breezy and pleasant.

*May 17.* — Major Whittier came over here this morning, and told me a few things in regard to Brigadier General —. The major was on his way to Washington. I saw General Benham during the morning, and told him that I should like to leave him, on account of what had occurred between us in regard to the night of laying the bridges. We had a short conversation, and I told him that I should like to resign my place as A. D. C., to take effect on the 19th. I then went over to headquarters, where I saw General Reynolds, and told him everything that had happened in regard to this affair. He told me



Head Quarters Engineer Brigade at  
Camp near Portsmouth May 17 1862

Gen. A. W. Belmont  
General

I respectfully tender  
my resignation as your Aide-de-camp, effective  
this Tuesday May 20 1862.

Very respectfully

G. W. Allen Serjeant.

L. M. Wilder

Lieut. S. G. C.



Head Quarters Engineer Brigade to  
Camp near Falmouth May 17 / 63

Gen. A. W. Bingham  
General,

I respectfully tender  
my resignation as your Aide-de-camp, to-date  
from Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup> 1863.

Very respectfully

J. W. Alden.

S. M. Walden

Lieut. S. A. D. C.



that I had done right, and in reply to my question as to whether he would be willing to have me as an acting aide, said that he would. About 5 in the afternoon we had a severe wind, followed by a heavy shower.

*May 18.* — Rode down to the Fifth Corps and saw Captain Batchelder, and then went to General Reynolds's headquarters. The general told me to come over to his headquarters to-morrow. Captain Clapp went down to the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry in the evening.

*May 19.* — Left General Benham this morning at about 10 o'clock, and came over to General Reynolds. Saw Lieutenant Egbert, 12th Infantry, and made arrangements for tenting and messing with him. Am with Major Riddle's mess until our mess gets started. Day warm and pleasant. Saw General Sedgwick in the morning, and told him that I had left General Benham. He told me that I was right in doing what I did on the night of laying the bridges. Saw Charles W[hittier], who was sick.

[A few words of explanation will perhaps be proper, in regard to General Benham and my relations with him while on his staff. General Benham, I believe, graduated first in his class at West Point. He was certainly very high in his class. He was a man of a great deal of brain, but with an inordinate amount of vanity, and exceedingly nervous and irritable. On the evening that we were to lay the bridges, orders had been given to every one to speak in a whisper. Officers were to give their orders in a whisper, and every effort was being made to take the enemy by surprise, with no knowledge of what was intended. General Benham had a canteen, in which he said that he had put two glasses of sherry and had then filled it with water. This was the explanation which he gave us afterwards. At all events, his conduct that evening was

most peculiar. He rode down to the bank of the river where the troops were lying on the ground, and rode through them, yelling and screaming and making an awful row. Adjutant-General Channing Clapp and I did not know what to do. General Benham quarrelled with all the general officers and put several of them under arrest, which he had no authority or power to do, and finally, when it got towards daylight, he tumbled off his horse and cut his face very badly. He left the blood to dry on. He finally said, "Come with me, Weld," and off he started to General Reynolds's headquarters. He rushed up to the general, who was standing by his horse with his staff, "Hurrah, Josh!<sup>1</sup> Hurrah for here and Buena Vista!"

Altogether it was the most embarrassing and unpleasant and disagreeable experience I had ever had in the army. What to do I did not know, neither did Clapp. We tried to keep things as straight as we could, and to have the orders that had been given from headquarters carried out. It finally resulted in my sending in my resignation from his staff. The general first called all his staff together and said he had heard reports that he was intoxicated, and wanted to know what we thought. Every one of us said he was afraid that he had been. He said: "That is impossible. I had but two glasses of sherry in a canteen full of water. It was utterly impossible." Anyway, the affair was so disagreeable and made everything so uncomfortable, that I decided to leave, and I reported to General Reynolds, and both he and Sedgwick, as I have said in my diary, told me that I had behaved properly and as I ought to have done.]

<sup>1</sup> A nickname of Gen. Reynolds.

## CHAPTER VI

AIDE TO GENERAL REYNOLDS — WITH THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC IN MAY AND JUNE, 1863 — THE REBEL RAID INTO PENNSYLVANIA — FIRST DAY AT GETTYSBURG — DEATH OF GENERAL REYNOLDS — HIS FUNERAL — AIDE TO GENERAL NEWTON — THE PURSUIT OF LEE

*May 20, 1863.* — General Reynolds had an order issued this morning announcing me as acting aide. I rode over to the Engineer Brigade in the afternoon, and from there to the Fifth Corps, to witness the presentation of a horse, etc., to General Barnes, but found that the affair was postponed till to-morrow. Day warm and pleasant.

*May 21.* — Started James for Washington to get me some mess things. Egbert and I began our mess to-day. Went over to General Barnes's in the afternoon, and saw the presentation of a sword, etc. The affair passed off very successfully. The lieutenant colonel of the 118th Pennsylvania made the presentation speech, and General Barnes answered, reading from manuscript. General Meade, General Benham, and all the officers of the brigade were there. The good things of this life were there in abundance. All kinds of punches, champagne, etc., were freely circulated. The grounds were beautifully decorated with flags and banners. Over the entrance were two American flags, with two white flags with the coat-of-arms of Massachusetts intertwined. I got back to camp about 10 o'clock, having stopped on the way at General Sedgwick's. Weather warm and pleasant.

*May 22.* — Captain Wadsworth went down the Penin-

sula this morning. Day warm and sun shining. Lieutenant Smith of the 12th Infantry was here this afternoon.

*May 23.* — Rode along our picket line this morning, beginning near Mrs. Gray's, and going from there to the extreme left. Saw nothing new. Day sultry and warm.

*May 24.* — To-day has seemed to me more like Sunday than any other Sunday that I have spent in the army. I heard some men singing a psalm tune early this morning, which made me think of home, etc. Such thoughts, however, are too agreeable to be indulged in out here. I rode over to the Engineer Brigade in the morning, and from there went to Falmouth. Saw Perkins at the Engineer Brigade quarters, and found that he was going off to his regiment. Buzzby<sup>1</sup> was in Washington. The day was misty, and mizzly, and disagreeable. James came back from Washington with our mess things.

*May 25.* — This morning there was a great change in the weather in comparison with yesterday. The air was chilly and we had a slight rain. It was cloudy most of the day. In the afternoon I went over to see Whittier, but found that he had started for home, quite sick with a fever. I went to the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, and found them in their new position near General Sedgwick. I went from there to the Engineer Brigade, and settled my accounts with Clapp and Strang. We received the news of the fall of Vicksburg<sup>2</sup> in today's paper. Had a letter from Father, and one from Hannah, enclosing her photograph.

*May 26.* — Remained in camp all day. The expedition from the Neck returned this noon. Captain Clapp, Captain Strang, and Lieutenant Perkins were here this evening. The weather was moderately cool to-day. Captains Batchelder and Jay were here to lunch.

<sup>1</sup> General Benham, I believe.

<sup>2</sup> The news proved to be incorrect.



HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, *May 26, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I am happy to say that I have left General Benham and gone with General Reynolds. My position here is only as acting aide, but still it is on a corps staff, and with a brave and fine general. I might have obtained a position on Crawford's staff or on General Barnes's staff as a regular aide, but I preferred this place. I told General Benham that I should like to leave him, and soon after I met General Reynolds, to whom I told the whole story. He told me that I acted perfectly right throughout the whole affair. . . .

I see no prospect of our moving for some three or four months. Our army is growing smaller every day and will soon be reduced to 55,000 men fit for duty. Our loss in the recent battles was between 17,000 and 18,000 men in killed, wounded, and missing. This is true, although the officer in command of this army has reported it at only 10,000 or 12,000. He has also reported that one cause of his retreat was the rising of the river, on account of the storm. Now, I know that the retreat was ordered long before the storm came up, some 12 hours before. I was at United States Ford when the storm began, and our wagons and part of our artillery had started some time before. I think it possible that General Hooker may have been seriously affected by that shell which struck a pillar he was leaning against and knocked him senseless. I think that he may not have recovered from the shock for some days and that he was not himself when he ordered the retreat. His plan certainly seems to have been a good one.

I wish you would send me the *Saturday Evening Gazette* once in a while. It has some articles in it that are quite interesting. . . .

General Reynolds has treated me very kindly through-

out this whole affair. I spoke to General Sedgwick after I had this place on General R.'s staff, and told him what I had done. He also said that I had acted perfectly right in the whole affair. When he saw me coming into his tent, he said, "Well, Weld, has old Benham shipped you or have you shipped old Benham?" He was very kind to me. General Benham has been boring him dreadfully about this matter and he is thoroughly sick of him.

General Benham's adjutant-general, inspector-general, and his other aide have left him, and the remaining two officers on his staff will leave as soon as possible.

*May 27.* — We received orders to have three days' cooked rations on hand, and to be ready to start to-day, but the order was afterwards countermanded. I went with the general to headquarters, and from there to General Wright's headquarters. I then went down to the picket line, and delivered a message to Colonel Wistar in regard to citizens passing through our lines. Saw a Lieutenant Fisher in the evening, of Harvard '56. The day was pleasant.

*May 28.* — Asked the general to let me go off this morning, but he thought he might want me, so I remained. This afternoon there were rumors that we were going to move to-morrow. The day was pleasant. I received letters from Father, Hannah, and Alice.

*May 29.* — Had a letter from Frank Balch this morning, and also one from Father in regard to George Weld's commission. Day pleasant. Lieutenant Nares came over in the evening. Amused myself pitching quoits.

*May 30.* — I got up this morning at 5.30, as we were to have a review of the corps at 7 o'clock by General Reynolds. The ground selected was near Colonel Shaler's headquarters, and considering the wind and dust and

rain, I think the review passed off well. There were about 8000 men out. I rode over to see Captain Starr in the afternoon. Also went to Engineer Brigade, and had my horse shod. Saw Van B., etc. Captains Clapp and Strang came over here in the evening.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, *May 30, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I received your letter yesterday in regard to George, and will try and show it to Colonel Hayes. I am sorry that the Governor has sent George's name back, as Colonel Hayes took George almost solely on my recommendation, as I had lost those you sent me, and now I am afraid that he will think that the Governor is opposed to George. I shall see him as soon as I can get away from camp. The regiment (18th) had no chance to distinguish itself at Chancellorsville, and only lost one man killed and half a dozen wounded, so that there was no chance for any man to deserve promotion for bravery.

I am very pleasantly situated now with General Reynolds. The way I came to leave General Benham was as follows: you know that I tried to get off his staff as soon as that trouble occurred that night. For some time he did not know that I was trying to leave him, and he did not dare send me away, for fear that I would tell people that I was sent away for saying that he was drunk. He told an officer, whom I know quite well, and whom he did not know I was acquainted with, that he should not touch Weld this time, but that he would give it to him in a little while. The old rascal meant to let this affair pass by, and then try and catch me on something and play the mischief with me. By some means or other, he got wind of my efforts to get a position on another staff, — I think myself that he listened to some conversation going on in

my tent, — and so he thought he would get ahead of me, and send me back to my regiment, and at the same time prevent my getting on General Sedgwick's staff, so that by having the odium of being sent back to my regiment on me, I could not get another staff position, and could do him no harm in my regiment, where whatever I might say would be confined to a limited circulation. I can tell you he is the most cunning and bitter man I know of. I found out everything that he was planning, and so went to him immediately and told him that thinking my presence would not be agreeable to him, after what occurred between us in regard to that night, I had been trying to obtain a position on another staff, and that I hoped to hear the next day in regard to it; that if I was not successful, I should like to return to my regiment. He said that he supposed I had been trying to leave him, and that he had selected another aide to fill my place. I then said that I would like my resignation to take effect two days from that time. He asked me where I was trying to go. I said that I would rather not tell him. He then spoke about what I had done, and said that I had committed a gross violation of good faith, etc. I told him that I had acted solely from what I considered my duty, and that I felt that I had done perfectly right. I then went over to headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, where I met General Reynolds and told him that I had resigned my place as A. D. C. to General Benham and would like to go with him as acting aide if he was willing to have me. He said that he should like to have me very much indeed. That when he heard that I had gone with Benham he felt very sorry, for he felt sure that I could not get along with him. I told him the whole story, and what I had done. He said that I had done perfectly right; that he saw him that night, and knew that he

was drunk, and that General Wadsworth also knew that he was drunk. I felt very much relieved indeed. The day I left him, and while on my way to General Reynolds's, I stopped at General Sedgwick's and said that I wished to have a few minutes' conversation with him about that night. He said that I had done right. He asked me as I came in, whether old Benham had shipped me, or I old Benham. General Reynolds has been very kind to me, indeed, throughout the whole of this affair.

We have had orders to move for two or three days, but I suppose we shall stay here for a while. I think that the enemy have been threatening our right flank, and that we were to move up there, but as a division of the Fifth Corps has already gone there, I think there will be no necessity for our moving for some time. I think the enemy will assume the offensive before we do, and I am afraid now that they will try and cut us off from Washington.

All General Benham's staff have left him except Captain Clapp, his A. A. G., and Captain Strang, his Q. M. They will leave as soon as possible. I hear that he is very bitter on his staff, indeed.

The weather here has been extremely dry and hot for some time. It is entirely different from our weather up North, or rather its effects are different. Here I can sit all day with coat off and do anything of that kind, which up North would give me a severe cold. I suppose living in the open air all the time has a great deal to do with it. . . .

We had a review of the corps this morning at 7 o'clock. There were only some 8000 men out. The 13th Massachusetts made a very fine appearance. Indeed our Massachusetts troops are ahead of any others that I see, except some of the Western troops, who make fine soldiers.

Jarves's old regiment, the 2d Wisconsin, is in this corps, and a fine regiment it is. . . .

*May 31.* — General Reynolds went to Washington alone this morning. I started for Stafford Court House to see the 2d Massachusetts, about 10 A.M., and stopped on my way at General Sedgwick's, where they had no news from Whittier, and also at headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, where I saw Perkins. I found the 2d, after a long and dusty ride, about a mile west of the Court House. When I arrived, they were having church. I saw Mr. Quint, the chaplain, and Charlie Mudge, now in command of the regiment. Also both the Foxes, Tom Robeson, and George Thompson. I took dinner and tea there, and saw their dress-parade, which was very fine. After spending a very pleasant day, I started for Falmouth at 7 P.M., and reached there about 8.15. Left there for home about 10.30. The weather was very warm.

*June 1.* — The first day of summer, and as dusty and disagreeable a day as one often passes. Nothing of any interest occurred, except in the evening, when we had some officers over here, and the band to play for us. After the band left we had some banjo-playing and nigger dancing. Egbert returned to-day.

*June 2.* — Rode down to see Henry Dalton this morning. On my way I stopped at headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, and saw Oliver and Russell, and rode down with them to General Graham's, where Dalton is. I took dinner there and spent the day. Received a box of very nice French candy from Hannah, which Dalton brought on. After leaving him, I rode over to the Engineer Brigade and found Captain Clapp away. Rode on and caught up with him on his way to headquarters. He and Captain Strang came over to see me. Day windy and pleasant.

*June 3.* — James came to me this morning, and said that he wished to go home. I shall have to let him go, I am afraid. Captain Dalton was over here this afternoon, and took dinner with us. Late at night we received orders to be ready to march at daylight in the morning. Day pleasant and cool. Showers in the morning and evening. General Reynolds returned from Washington this evening. Had a letter from Hannah saying that I was commissioned a captain in the 18th.<sup>1</sup>

*June 4.* — I got up about 2 o'clock, and had all our things packed up, expecting to start, but nary move did we have. Remained in camp all day. Wrote Father in regard to Palfrey,<sup>2</sup> and forwarded his application for a commission. Heard this evening that Colonel Dana, our quartermaster, had resigned.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, *June 4, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — Will you please make an application for my degree as A.M. I think that I receive it this year; if possible I shall try and get a leave of absence to come home for Commencement, but I am afraid that I shall stand a slim chance of getting it. . . .

I received a letter from Hannah yesterday, saying that I had received a commission as captain in my regiment. Will you please send me a copy of the paper announcing it. My regiment is at United States Ford at present, so that I have no chance to see my colonel about it at present.

I spoke to Palfrey this morning in regard to what you wrote about getting him a commission in the 55th. He was very much obliged to you, and said that Dr. Palfrey and Charles Hale were both trying to get him a commis-

<sup>1</sup> My commission was dated May 4, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Hersey G. Palfrey, of the class of 1860.

sion, that he would not like to lose any chance for a commission that they might have obtained for him, by asking for one in the 55th. I think the best plan would be for you to see them, and if they have any chance of getting him a place in a white regiment, then you could aid them. If not, why then he would like a position in the 55th, and you three could probably obtain it for him. I would be very much obliged to you if you could get him a place. I enclose a note from him to you.

We are under orders to march at any moment, probably to resist any attempt the enemy may make to cross the river. The rascals are up to something, and I think it may be that they will try to cross the river above, and attack us. I think that we are waiting here simply to prevent the rebels opposite from going to Vicksburg. Were it not for the critical state of affairs there, I think we should go to Washington, in order to fill up the army with conscripts, and reorganize it. . . .

*June 5.* — We received orders this afternoon to be ready to move at daylight to-morrow. General Reynolds told me to keep my horse saddled all night. Sent James down to Aquia Creek to get some mess stuff and a box from Adams Express. Day pleasant and cool. Had a mess-chest made, and got all my things packed up, ready for a move. Heard heavy firing in the afternoon. Found out that it came from Sedgwick, who crossed the river at Franklin's old crossing with one division. Captain Cross of the Regular Engineers was killed during the crossing.

*June 6.* — Got up at 3.30 A.M., but all to no purpose, as we did not move to-day. In the afternoon, I went with General Reynolds down to the signal station near the Fitzhugh house. Could see two guns in position on the Bowling Green Road, and the enemy behind their rifle-pits.



On the way back, General Reynolds sent me to General Sedgwick. Found his headquarters on the bluff, just opposite the bridges. He was very kind indeed, and spoke of receiving a letter from Miss Kate Sedgwick, in which she spoke about me. As I left General S. the rain began to pour down, and before I reached camp we had quite a heavy thunder shower which was extremely welcome. Introduced myself to General Wright<sup>1</sup> this afternoon. He remembered me and was quite pleasant.

*June 7.* — The weather was much cooler to-day, owing to the shower of last night. Spent the whole day in camp. We are still under orders to move. James made up his mind to stay with me, for \$20 a month.

*June 8.* — Remained in camp until after dinner, when I started for the Engineer Brigade. On the way there, I met Clapp, Strang, and Nares, on their way down to the river. I tried to get my horse shod at the Engineer Brigade quarters, but the wind was so bad that it could not be done. Came back to camp in about an hour. We had a very pretty serenade last night from a violin and a tambourine. Weather cool and pleasant. I heard that, when we crossed the river this last time, some fifty prisoners were taken in the rifle-pits, belonging to the 2d Florida. General Benham rushed up to them and asked them whether they knew him. They said they did not. Then he asked them if they did not know who built the sea-wall at St. Augustine. One of them said that he had heard it said that "red-haired Benham" built it. I hear that General Benham now tells every one that he was recognized by the rebels from their rifle-pits on the other side of the river.

*June 9.* — The general sent me down to the Fitzhugh

<sup>1</sup> General Horatio G. Wright was the officer with whom I served at Port Royal as volunteer aide. He afterwards commanded the Sixth Corps.

house to see if there was anything new from the rebel force opposite Mrs. Seddon's.

Could discover nothing new. Camp<sup>1</sup> had just found a new rebel signal station. Towards evening one of our guns opened on the rebels, who replied to them. I was sent again to the Fitzhugh house and Mrs. Seddon's, but could discover nothing new. In the evening, Colonel Sanderson celebrated his birthday by a punch and speeches. All the tents had lanterns, and inscriptions in front. Nigger-dancing, music, etc., completed the festivities. Got a cook named George Minot this morning.

*June 10.* — Had a letter from Hannah this morning. Went over to see Captain Starr, and from there to headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, after dinner. Heard of the fight our cavalry were in, and found that they behaved very well. Went over to the Engineer Brigade, but found no one there. Day warm, and towards evening cloudy and threatening rain.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, *June 10, 1863.*

DEAR MOTHER, — . . . We are still in our old camp near White Oak Church, and although we are under orders to move at any minute, I begin to think that we may be here some weeks yet. We may relieve the Sixth Corps, which has a division across the river at Franklin's old crossing, but that is the only move we shall make, in my opinion. This crossing the river was made solely to keep the enemy here, and prevent them from going out West or to any other point to reinforce their troops. Of course it may lead to a battle, should they attack us. . . .

My mind is made up to see this war through, if it don't see me killed beforehand. We have got to whip and partially exterminate the South, although it may take some

<sup>1</sup> Signal officer.

years to do so. I have got my dander up, and am mad with the rascals. I even think seriously of going back to my regiment and serving there, so as to be well posted in tactics, and fitted to take a higher position. I feel in much better spirits than when at home. I still think that the Government have treated General Porter shamefully, but live on in the hope of seeing him righted some day. We all feel here that we can whip the rebels if we only have a man who can command us properly. This Army of the Potomac is truly a wonderful army. They have something of the English bull-dog in them. You can whip them time and again, but the next fight they go into, they are in good spirits, and as full of pluck as ever. They are used to being whipped, and no longer mind it. Some day or other we shall have our turn. At present we are doing a great deal of good in holding Lee in check and preventing him from reinforcing Pemberton. . . .

Will you please get me some ginger and send it on. I tried to buy some in Washington, but could not get any. I want some sugared and dry and not preserved in liquid. It is very nice on a march, and is convenient to carry. . . .

Yesterday our cavalry had a real hand-to-hand fight with the rebels near Kelly's Ford. Our men behaved splendidly, and drove the rebels 5 miles. We captured all Stuart's private papers, and found that he was to have started this morning, with 25 guns and 12,000 cavalry, to make his raid into Pennsylvania.

Tell Henry that Jackson is dead, and that I send him a kiss and will let him ride my horse when I get home. . . .

*June 11.* — Slight shower in the morning. Received a letter from Father. Put on my captain's straps to-day for the first time. Received orders in the evening to move before daybreak.

*June 12.* — We (the staff) started at 5.15, having had our tents pitched and baggage all packed beforehand. We went at a gallop through woods and stubble down to Stoneman's Station, where we struck off for Berea Church. Just before reaching the church an orderly rode up with my commission, and a note from Colonel Locke inclosing \$8, which was my share of Norton's mess-bill, which he has since paid. We found General Meade's headquarters near Berea Church, and here we had a lunch. The troops halted here, and just before starting, a deserter was shot in accordance with the sentence of a court-martial. He belonged to General Wadsworth's division, and I carried the order to the general to have the affair hurried up.<sup>1</sup> At 12.30 we started for Deep Run, where the troops arrived at 5 P.M., having made a march of 22 miles. The day was warm and the roads extremely dusty. Spent the night near Deep Run, in almost precisely the same spot where I was with General Porter last August.

*June 13.* — We started on our march again at day-break, and went to Bealeton Station on the Orange and Alexandria Road, a distance of 15 miles. General Reynolds has now the command of three corps, the Third, First, and Eleventh. Day warm, and the evening threatening showers. The chaplain of the 4th Michigan was shot in three places near Deep Run last Monday. Day before yesterday, General Birney's advance guard was fired on by guerillas, while on the road to Bealeton. I was sent at 6.40 P.M. to General Birney, with an order for him to prepare to move, as the army was to start that evening for . . . I delivered the order to General Reynolds at General B.'s headquarters, at 6.45. On the way up

<sup>1</sup> It seemed rather hard to march a man all the morning and then shoot him at noon, but this was one of the hardships of war. Although I have seen lots of men killed, I could not wait to see this affair come off, — it was too sickening.

I met Major Stirling, Captain Dahlgren, and Lieutenant Bates, all from General Hooker's headquarters. I started at 9.30 for General Barnes's headquarters at Grove Church, with a dispatch for General Meade, which I delivered at 11 P.M., reaching camp at 2.34 A.M.

*June 14.* — Started at daylight, and went to General Birney's headquarters. Waited here for some time, and then went to Bealeton Station. By 12 o'clock our whole corps was in motion for Manassas Junction. Rode down to Rappahannock Station, to General Pleasonton's headquarters. In the afternoon rode down to Bristoe Station, and gave General Doubleday an order to move on to Manassas Junction. Started from here at 6.45, and delivered the order at 7.45.

*June 15.* — We started at daylight, and rode at a gallop to Bristoe's Station. Here we found General Meade. From here we proceeded to Manassas Junction, where we halted for some time, and where General Reynolds ordered the Third and Fifth Corps to be put in position. General Reynolds now commands five corps, the First, Third, Fifth and Eleventh, and the Cavalry Corps. From Manassas Junction we came to Centreville, and had our headquarters placed near General Howard's. The weather was very hot.

*June 16.* — Spent the day in camp, and had a chance to rest myself and my horse. Captain Babcock is in the Eleventh Corps now, and has his tent close to us. We heard to-day of the rebel raid into Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> The weather warm. General Hooker arrived at Fairfax Station to-day, and General Reynolds now commands only his own corps.

<sup>1</sup> The raid which culminated in the campaign and battle of Gettysburg. Lee's northern movement began early in June, and by the 26th the whole Army of Northern Virginia had crossed the Potomac.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at CENTREVILLE, *June 16, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — Last week we received orders to move up the river and support the Fifth and Third Corps which were guarding the fords. Accordingly we started at daylight last Friday on our way, and marched until four in the afternoon, camping at Deep Run, in exactly the same spot that General Porter encamped last August when on his way to join Pope. While on the march, and just before reaching Berea Church, I met an orderly coming from the headquarters of the Fifth Corps, with my commission as a captain. I was quite glad to get it, I assure you. At Berea Church we halted for an hour, and just before starting, a deserter from an Indiana regiment of General Wadsworth's division, was shot to death by musketry, he having been found guilty by a court-martial. I did not see the affair, as I had no desire to do so. The distance marched the first day was about 23 miles. The second day we pushed on to Bealeton Station, about 20 miles. On the way we passed another camp where General Porter stayed. About nine o'clock in the evening of our arrival at Bealeton, I was sent back to General Barnes, some 12 or 15 miles from us. As guerillas were round about, it was rather unpleasant, but I saw nothing of them. Here at Bealeton we received orders to march to Centreville and take up our position there. General Reynolds then had command of five corps, General Hooker, with the three remaining corps, taking the route by Dumfries. From Bealeton our corps moved to Manassas Junction, over twenty miles. Our headquarters were at Catlett's Station. Yesterday we arrived here at Centreville, soon to be on the march again, I imagine, for Pennsylvania, or the Valley of the Shenandoah. I hear that the enemy have whipped Milroy, and I suppose that

near Fairfax C. H. to Corps Head Quarters. The Aides  
who left before and after me were captured by Mosby.)

Head Quarters Cavalry Outposts

17<sup>th</sup> June 1863.

Guards and Patrol,

Pass the beam Capt. S. M. Wells jr.  
on Staff of Maj. Gen. Reynolds 1<sup>st</sup> Army Corps. Through the  
lines, on the R and Langens Road on the way to Frying  
Pan, with orderly and guides.

Geo. Gray, Col.

Grand. Outpost.

Capt. Darling or any vidette on the line will obey the above order

Geo. Gray.

I refused. After I had got my orders, General Butterfield asked me if I had had any dinner. I told him I had not, and he sent me to Major Lawrence, who provided me with a very nice dinner. I started back at 6 P.M., and reached camp at Herndon's Station at 11.30, having a guide and a pass provided me by Colonel Gray, of the 4th Michigan, who were on picket near Fairfax Court House. The guide had strange stories to tell about the guerilla Mosby. In all I travelled about 60 miles to-day, and was pretty well used up, as the day was extremely warm and sultry. Found camp at Herndon Station.

[In connection with Mosby, an interesting story was told of Major Fraser. He was out scouting after Mosby, and as they were passing a house close by the road, a sergeant, with the troops with him, saw a man in a gray uniform standing at the window of the house. The sergeant drew his pistol and fired. He instantly went into the house, and there was a Confederate on the floor with his cloak drawn over his face. He said, "I am mortally wounded, please leave me alone." They pulled up his waistcoat and saw a hole right through his abdomen, where he had been shot, and they left him, supposing he was dying. Five minutes after, they found it was Mosby. They turned around and went back, but he had been taken away by his friends. It turned out that the bullet had only penetrated the outer skin, followed around, and come out at the back, so that Mr. Mosby got well and tormented us as usual. Had Fraser captured him, he would have got a brigadier general's commission.]

*June 18.* — Major Riddle started for headquarters yesterday, and did not return to camp until this afternoon. We were all afraid that the guerillas might have



gobbled him, as there is a report that Major Stirling was taken last night while on his way to General Pleasonton at Aldie. I was going to start for our headquarters at the same time, and with Major Stirling, but on account of General Butterfield asking me to dinner, I waited fifteen minutes. It rained in the afternoon and during the night, being the first rain we have had for some time. All the crops through the country where we have been, are suffering terribly on account of the drought. The general was going to send me to headquarters again this afternoon, but just as I was starting an orderly came from there, which saved me the trouble. I drew a government horse to-day for temporary use, until my mare's back gets well.

[A day or two after writing this entry I found that two staff officers belonging to different corps headquarters, who had lunched with me at headquarters of the Army of the Potomac on the 18th, had got into trouble. One started a little after lunch, and wanted me to go along with him. I said no, I thought I would wait a few minutes and have a smoke. In about fifteen or twenty minutes I started. The other aide wanted me to wait and go with him in half an hour. I said no, I thought I had better go ahead; so I started. Before starting I was cautioned by General Butterfield to be very careful, as Mosby's guerillas were all around the army; and as soon as I got to our outposts I was to demand an escort and carry them with me to camp. Accordingly I started, as nearly as I can remember, about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. I rode until pretty nearly dark, when I met our outpost. I gave my orders to the colonel for an escort, and he gave me a lieutenant and, I think, five or six men. By the time we were pretty well started on our way, darkness had set in. The lieutenant enlivened our

way by telling me of numerous skirmishes and encounters they had had with Mosby within a few days. We passed one house, and he said that one of Mosby's lieutenants lived there, who captured one of our sergeants the other day. A little farther on, he said, "We had a fight with Mosby here the other day. He tried to surprise us."

I was in a state of nervous tension that one can hardly realize. I had one hand on my horse's reins, and with the other I grasped my pistol, ready to shoot in case we were attacked. As we rode along, we could hear the katydid singing, and occasionally an owl hooting, or some of the numerous midnight noises that one always hears on a summer's night. The lieutenant said to me: "The hooting of the owl is one of the favorite calls of Mosby's men." Then I would get a little more stirred up, if possible, and a little more nervous. Finally, though, we got through all right, after one of the most exciting rides I ever had in my life. In the morning our head teamster was up in a cherry tree about two hundred yards from headquarters, when Mosby came along right in our camp, made him a prisoner, and took him off. It happened, as I afterwards learned and as I have said, that both aides, the one who left after me and the one who left before me, were captured by Mosby, while I got through safely.]

*June 19.* — I had a good sleep last night, and enjoyed it very much. We left our camp at Herndon Station this morning at 8 o'clock, and followed Doubleday's division, which preceded us yesterday, to Guilford's Station, some three miles. Our corps was camped on Broad Run. In the afternoon I went out with General Paul to establish the picket line. The road was beautiful, being wooded on both sides, with oak groves. We left a real Union fam-

ily at Herndon, a family from Pennsylvania. This evening we received orders to move on to Goose Creek, but the orders were countermanded. I was sent to General Doubleday to countermand them. Our signal officers sent up a rocket this evening, to the great alarm of our cook, George, who had never seen anything of the kind before. We had a very heavy shower this evening, which I got caught in, much to my disgust, as it is the only time I have ever been out without my rubber coat.

*June 20.* — It rained very heavily last night, flooding part of our tent. This morning at 8.40 I started for General Howard's on the Church road, near Goose Creek, and distant about seven miles from here. I found the general out riding, and after seeing Captain Babcock, the signal officer, in regard to connecting with us, I went on with the general to our headquarters. Many of General Howard's staff have been chased by guerillas lately. This afternoon guerillas appeared between here and Herndon Station, probably capturing our guide. The weather has been cloudy all day, with occasional showers. Colonel Dana told me to-day that the number of our wagons was 370 odd. Received three letters from home to-day, and one from Jarves. Am officer of the day to-night.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,  
GUILFORD STATION, *June 20, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — We arrived here yesterday from Herndon Station, a distance of three miles. We expect orders soon to march on to Goose Creek, which is about six miles from here, and which empties into the Potomac near Leesburg and Ball's Bluff. I do not think that the whereabouts of the main force of the rebels is known, and until it is found out I think we shall not move very far.

Our cavalry is partly at Aldie, where they have had

two fights in both of which they whipped the rebels, capturing between 60 and 70 cavalry each time.

This railroad that we are on is the London and Hampshire road, running to Leesburg. It is torn up in many places from Vienna here.

I have a great deal of riding to do, and have already used up two of my horses. I am now using a government animal, but by to-morrow or next day I shall be able to use my own. Their backs are a little sore, but are getting well fast.

I am perfectly well, and was never better in my life. In regard to the position of our Army, I shall say but little, as this letter might be captured. The corps are mostly round about this country, however.

I have not heard from home for some eight or nine days. We have not been able to get our mails, on account of our frequent marches.

A correspondent of the *New York Tribune* has been arrested this morning for publishing the movements of the different corps. . . .

*June 21.* — Rosengarten relieved me as officer of the day this evening. The weather has been cloudy and rainy most of the day. We sent a regiment (7th Indiana) down to Frying-Pan, to capture guerillas, etc. A detachment came back this evening with seven citizens or bushwhackers. We found out to-day that our guide was captured at Coleman's house yesterday. Coleman lives about two miles from here, and as he had a lot of forage, our guide and quartermaster's clerk went there for it, and were caught by a Secesh there, said to be Mosby.

*June 22.* — Went over to General Howard's this morning, and gave him a dispatch from General Reynolds. Left here at 10.36 and arrived there at 11.20, not meeting

any bushwhackers on the way. The general had a dispatch this evening from General Meade, saying that he had laid a trap to catch Mosby, but that M. with 30 men drove our 40 cavalry and then escaped from 30 infantry. Tried to buy me some trousers this afternoon, but did not succeed. Weather cool and pleasant. Saw Colonel Asmussen, whom I met once at Stafford Court House, at General Howard's headquarters.

*June 23.* — The general routed us all up this morning at 6 o'clock, to be ready to go out with him. At 8 o'clock our cavalry escort of 20 men, with a regiment of infantry, started for Moran's Cross-roads, about two miles from headquarters. The cavalry rode ahead and formed a line near the cross-roads, while our infantry went into the woods on this side as skirmishers. We found no one in the woods, however. We stopped at Coleman's house, where our guide was caught the other day. It was undoubtedly Mosby who took him. In the afternoon three ladies and two gentlemen drove up here from Washington. They were Mrs. Dana, Mrs. Ames, and Miss Green, daughter of General Green. They spent the night here, and in the evening a band came over to serenade them. General Howard was ordered this evening to proceed to Harper's Ferry. The day was pleasant and cool. The evenings are still quite chilly. Received a letter from Hannah and Father.

*June 24.* — Started this morning for General Howard's headquarters with a dispatch from General Reynolds, but on reaching General H.'s picket line, I found that three guerillas had been started out of a house close by, some ten minutes before I came up. The ladies who were here started back for Washington this morning. This evening we heard that Longstreet had crossed into Maryland,

and we received orders to move for Edward's Ferry. Day pleasant.

*June 25.* — Received orders early this morning to be ready to move, and at about 8 o'clock we started for Young's Ford, three miles below Edward's Ferry. When near the ferry we found that the ford was too deep for infantry, so we moved for the ferry itself, where they have a pontoon bridge across. We met Birney's corps just before turning off from the pike to the ferry. Here General Reynolds took command of the First, Third, and Eleventh Corps. We reached the river just where Goose Creek runs in, and crossed the creek on a pontoon bridge, and then the Potomac on another. I found Captain Reese and Captain Turnbull here, and after a little while we went up to their tents on the hill, which rises from the river. A new bridge was soon finished here, so that we had two going. The view from here was very fine, and the troops crossing made a very beautiful scene. Up to this time we had had a very dusty march of eight miles, but about 3 P.M. it began to rain, and soon settled into a drizzle which lasted all night. Our headquarters were established about a mile and a half from Poolesville, Maryland. General Reynolds rode into the town and saw General French. I heard that the 2d Massachusetts Cavalry were near here, and on looking for them, found them. I saw Colonel Lowell<sup>1</sup> and Major Forbes,<sup>2</sup> both looking very well.

*June 26.* — We got up and breakfasted at daylight. It was a most dismal morning, being drizzly and thoroughly uncomfortable. General Reynolds and staff rode down to the ferry, where General Hooker and General Slocum soon came up. We then rode back to Poolesville,

<sup>1</sup> Col. Charles Russell Lowell, killed later at Cedar Creek.

<sup>2</sup> William H. Forbes.

and from there General R. went to Barnesville, about 6 miles, passing near Sugar Loaf. Barnesville is a small, old-fashioned town, with one or two neat little cottages in it, with pretty flower-gardens in front; quite a contrast to anything we had seen in Virginia. Some of the houses had overhanging eaves, others piazzas all round, and on the main street there was a well with windlass and wheel, quite different from anything I ever saw in New England. It seemed more like my idea of a European town than an American one. Like almost all Maryland towns the houses were all on one main street. From Barnesville we went on to Adamstown, a small way-station on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. From here we went to Jefferson, lying on the other side, and at the foot of the Little Catoctin range. The scenery all along the route was very beautiful. We passed neat farmhouses with whitewashed palings, and through fields of wheat, rye, etc., almost ready to be gathered. From the top of Little Catoctin the view was splendid. The fertile valley lying between the Little Catoctin and South Mountain ranges presented an appearance truly delightful to our eyes, which had been disgusted and wearied by the monotonous and uncultivated soil of the Old Dominion. Here acres upon acres of clover, wheat, oats, etc., were spread out to our view, seeming like a perfect paradise. We found that Jefferson was a strong Union town, with many pretty houses, and some three or four churches. We pitched, or rather established, our headquarters in a house at the west end of the town, and here I slept in a bed, for the first time since I have been in the field. Our wagons did not get up with us. We travelled about 27 miles to-day, and most of the time in a drenching rain. I ate some cherries, the first I had tasted this season, in Jefferson. General Reynolds still has command of three corps.

*June 27.*—Started early in the morning for Middleton. The day was cloudy and rainy part of the time. Reached Middleton and went to General Howard's headquarters. Learned that the rebels had gone through Hagerstown to Pennsylvania yesterday, Longstreet's corps being the last to move. General Lee went through Hagerstown yesterday at 12 o'clock. Our tents were pitched just behind the town. I went on as officer of the day this evening.

HEADQUARTERS RIGHT WING,  
Camp near MIDDLETON, *June 27, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — We arrived here this afternoon, and found that the rebels had marched on through Hagerstown towards Pennsylvania yesterday. I imagine that they have possession of Harrisburg by this time. We have them now just where we want them, and with decent generalship we ought to seize the whole party. Our men will fight desperately and give the rebels fits.

General Reynolds has still command of three infantry corps, and of General Stahl's cavalry. It is only a temporary affair, however. I dated my letter to Hannah yesterday one day too early. . . .

It may be some time before you hear from me again, and you must not be alarmed if you do not hear from me for some time. We are within three miles of South Mountain, where the fight occurred last year.

I am perfectly well.

*June 28.* — Sunday, and the sound of the church bells in Middleton seemed pleasant indeed. I went over to General Howard's with General Reynolds, and from there started down for Frederick, when we met an orderly with an order for our three corps to move down to Frederick. The general sent me back to Generals Doubleday





Head Quarters, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1863

Wilmington. Md. June 28. 1863

General:

I have two Brigades, one in the  
Gap proper, and one at the cross roads the side,  
about three miles from this point. If you have  
no objection I will let the last mentioned  
Brigade remain where it is for it can't be  
moved in either direction without delay, and

I would like to know the men spend their  
time of rest in cleaning up their arms.

I will withdraw the Brigade from the  
Gap as soon as the Cavalry passes, or I  
learn that it has passed.

Respectfully  
D. D. Stevenson

Wm. H. H. H.

Maj. Gen. Reynolds



and Howard, with orders for them to move at once. While at General Howard's we learned that General Hooker had been relieved, and General Meade put in command.<sup>1</sup> The intelligence was welcome, although I should have preferred McClellan to any one else. I went on and joined General Reynolds at headquarters, and then picked out a camping place near the alms-house, and a mile west of the town. In the evening it rained. During the day it was cloudy. Secured some chickens and eggs to-day. The movement of the army to-day looks like a move to protect Baltimore.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, *June 28, 10 P.M., 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — We have had another change for the better. General Hooker has been relieved, and General Meade put in his place. The Administration would not let Hooker withdraw our forces from Harper's Ferry, nor would they give him any reinforcements from Washington or Baltimore, and so he properly resigned. This suicidal policy of the Government is strange. Here we have the whole rebel force in Pennsylvania, and greatly outnumbering us, and yet they persist in keeping a large force at both of these places, in order to prevent the Secessionists from "robbing the stores." This is President Lincoln's reason, given to General Butterfield.

You spoke of Porter and McClellan in your last letter in a very unfair way. They are true and loyal and were always willing to carry out the views of the President. The more I see of this war, the stronger and firmer is my belief in McClellan. I see Hooker doing exactly what

<sup>1</sup> I was with General Reynolds when he received the order appointing Meade to the command of the army. He said he was very glad of it and he spoke most highly of Meade. He then told me, confidentially, that the command had been offered to him, but that he had refused it.

McC. was blamed for doing, and I see Grant butting against the fortifications of Vicksburg and being driven back with fearful loss, and finally resorting to the despised spade. Now, McClellan would have suffered the same defeat at Yorktown had he attempted to assault it, and yet just see how he has been abused for not doing it. All the soldiers and officers are still strong McClellanites, and General Meade among the number.

We are encamped near Frederick, having marched here to-day, and to-morrow march Northward. <sup>3</sup>May success attend us.

Palfrey is sick and in the hospital. I sent him a bottle of sherry and a few delicacies to help him along. . . .

*June 29.* — We started early this morning, moving in a drenching rain, which continued most of the day, for Emmetsburg, some 23 miles off. We passed through some magnificent farms near Frederick, the fields of grain being ripe for the harvest, and looking as if they were ready to bend to the ground with their golden fruit. We passed through Mechanicstown and Catocin Furnace, and finally reached Emmetsburg about 2 o'clock. I managed to get a feed for my horse, and some bread and milk for myself, and then started for Middleburg, 10 miles off, with a note from General Reynolds. I met Newhall <sup>1</sup> on the way, with General Gregg. I arrived at Middleburg, and found headquarters in a hotel. I had to wait until 10.30 for orders, but the time seemed less tedious from the music of the cavalry band, which played almost all the evening. Came back to camp and found our headquarters in the town. We passed on our march to-day St. Mary's College for young men, about two miles from Emmetsburg, and St. Joseph's, a convent where the Sisters of Charity

<sup>1</sup> From Philadelphia.

M., from

Signal Station.

To Major Gen. Reynolds

My troops were  
camped between the road  
to stay road and Long  
Creek. They were out at  
Annamis, at the upper end  
of town square across the  
street that leads to Golding  
from Hoffmann's Garden

When you find  
please to

Correct

June 29<sup>th</sup> 1862

Signal Officer

Letter from Gen. Reynolds  
while en route to Gettysburg.





Head-Quarters, Army of the Potomac,

June 24 1863

1863.

11-55 a.m.

General G. B. Reynolds  
 Commanding  
 Cavalry  
 21st Army Corps  
 Fort Lee  
 Va.

Dear Sir  
 I have the honor to acknowledge  
 the receipt of your letter  
 of the 21st inst. in relation  
 to the matter of the  
 21st Army Corps  
 and in reply to inform  
 you that the same  
 has been forwarded  
 to the proper  
 authorities for  
 their consideration.

I am, Sir,  
 very respectfully,  
 your obedient servant,

Wm. B. Franklin  
 Adj. Gen.



“hang out.” I travelled between 40 and 50 miles to-day and did not get to bed until nearly one o'clock. Obtained General Howard's orders, and brought them to him. Every one felt better to-day as General H. was away.

*June 30.* — Moved this morning in a mizzly, misty rain to Marsh Creek, a branch of the Monocacy. One division, rather, moved here, and the others a mile or two beyond. We had our headquarters at a tavern called Moritz's, about a mile inside of the Pennsylvania line. Just after we started I was sent to Taneytown (9 miles from Emmetsburg), to headquarters. I delivered my dispatches to General Meade, and received orders for Generals Howard and Reynolds. Moritz's Tavern is about 7 miles from Gettysburg, where our cavalry advanced this morning. General Reynolds has command of three corps again, First, Third, and Eleventh. General Sickles resumed command of his corps again to-day. Spent the night at the tavern. Corps marched about 5 miles.

*July 1.* — General Reynolds came in and woke us up this morning, as he has frequently had to do, but we little thought that it would be the last time that he would do so, or that he had passed his last night on this earth. We moved off at 8 A.M., the weather still being muggy and disagreeable, and making the roads very bad in some places. When we reached the outskirts of Gettysburg, a man told us that the rebels were driving in our cavalry pickets, and immediately General Reynolds went into the town on a fast gallop, through it, and a mile out on the other side, where he found General Buford and the cavalry engaging the enemy, who were advancing in strong force. He immediately sent me to General Meade, 13 or 14 miles off, to say that the enemy were coming on in strong force, and that he was afraid they would get the

heights on the other side of the town before he could; that he would fight them all through the town, however, and keep them back as long as possible.

I delivered the message to General Meade at 11.20, having been an hour and twenty minutes on my way. He seemed quite anxious about the matter, and said, "Good God! if the enemy get Gettysburg, I am lost."

I started on my way back, and when half-way met an orderly, who told me that General Reynolds was shot. I did not believe him, but of course felt very anxious, and rode on as fast as possible to ascertain the truth of the matter. When near the town I met Captain Mitchell with an ambulance, and General Reynolds's body. I felt very badly indeed about his death, as he had always treated me very kindly, and because he was the best general we had in our army. Brave, kind-hearted, modest, somewhat rough and wanting polish, he was a type of the true soldier. I cannot realize that he is dead. The last time I saw him he was alive and well, and now to think of him as dead seems an impossibility. He had just been putting the Wisconsin brigade in position when the enemy opened a volley and the general was struck in the back of the neck, killing him almost instantly.

I offered my services to General Howard, and was sent by him down to General Schurz, and also to find what regiment it was that was advancing into the town. I found General S. and troops retreating through the streets, and the bullets whistling around them and through the fence alongside of the street. The general said he was flanked on both sides, and I found out that the regiment was a rebel one, to my perfect satisfaction. A few minutes after I came back, our men came along the street that runs by the cemetery, in great disorder. We tried to rally them, turning the First Corps into a field on

the left of the road, and the Eleventh to the right. Steinwehr's men, who were not in action, were placed behind a stone wall in front of the cemetery, and soon drove the rebel skirmishers back. General Doubleday sent me to get some intrenching tools, and as I was coming back with them, I met General Hancock, who told me to send them back. Just then I met Riddle on his way to join the general's body, and I went with him, as he seemed to think it proper. I tried to find General Doubleday, but could not. We rode on to Taneytown, meeting General Meade on the way to Gettysburg. At Taneytown we found that the general's body had gone to Westminster, and as soon as we got leave, we started for that place, riding all night. Rode 70 miles. Gave my horse to a lieutenant of the 84th Pennsylvania, to return to our headquarters.

[My journal for the first day of July ends here. A great many things that are not stated in the journal it is perhaps just as well for me to write down now, while my memory is still active and before old age overtakes me.

In the first place, I have been asked a great many times as to the time that we arrived at Gettysburg. My diary says we started at eight o'clock, and we could not have taken more than two hours, I should think, getting to Gettysburg. From there we rode out and saw the Confederates' batteries going into position on Seminary Hill, the lines of battle forming and skirmishers being thrown out. Opposed to them were our cavalry skirmishers, spread out like the fingers of the hand, falling back and firing, and, as I remember it, occasionally firing from a field-battery. After seeing this, General Reynolds rode back to the town, went into a field on the right of the road and talked two or three minutes with General Buford,

and then called all his staff around him. He looked us all over, and said, "Weld, I am going to pick you out to go to General Meade with a message" (the message as given in the diary). He told me where the road started for Taneytown, where General Meade was, and told me to ride with the greatest speed I could, no matter if I killed my horse; if I did, to take the orderly's.

I naturally felt quite complimented at being chosen, the youngest of the staff, to carry such an important message, and so I did my utmost. As nearly as I could make out, I went about 15 or 16 miles in about an hour and a quarter. That ought to have got me to General Meade's somewhere about quarter past eleven, as I assume that it must have been at least two hours from the time we started in the morning before I set off with my message. General Meade was very much disturbed indeed at the receipt of the news. He said, "Good God! if the enemy get Gettysburg, we are lost!" Then he — to speak in plain English — roundly damned the Chief of Staff, whom he had inherited from his predecessor, for his slowness in getting out orders. He said that two or three days before, he had arranged for a plan of battle, and it had taken so long to get the orders out that now it was all useless. From what I have heard since I suppose this referred to the proposed plan of battle at Pipe's Creek. At all events, after this tirade against the Chief of Staff of the Army, he summoned all his aides out to hurry up Hancock and all the other commands. From what General Reynolds said to me, it was evident that he appreciated the importance of holding Gettysburg and the heights. General Reynolds also told me to tell General Meade that he would barricade the street at Gettysburg and hold the enemy back as long as he could. General Meade said, "Good! that is just like Reynolds."

These are unimportant details but perhaps may be interesting reading for future generations. The other staff officers, who were with Reynolds at the time he fell, told me he was not one hundred yards from the Confederates when he was shot through the neck and instantly killed. The corps captured one or two brigades of the enemy early in the day. When I reported to General Howard, General Hancock had not arrived. We were standing in the cemetery with a battery of guns pointing westerly, or northwesterly, I cannot say exactly which, when a line of battle came out of the woods about, I should say, 500 yards off. I said to the general, "General, those are the rebs, why don't you fire at them?" He said, "No, I think they are our men." I said, "They are not, sir, they are the rebs"; and they were. They were soon followed by another line. Then it was he sent me down into the town to see what those troops were. There was a board fence all along the road I was riding on, and the bullets were zipping through the boards at a lively rate. There was no question in my mind, and I soon found out they were the rebs. On my way back I saw a lady riding in, through all those bullets, on a horse with a side-saddle, who turned out to be Mrs. General Barlow. She had heard of her husband's<sup>1</sup> dreadful wounds and came in to nurse him. She came in safely, as I afterwards heard, and undoubtedly saved her husband's life.]

*July 2.* — Started from Westminster in the cars at 5 A.M. and reached Baltimore about 12. I gave my mare to an officer of the 84th Pennsylvania, who promised to send her to our headquarters train. In Baltimore we met Major Reynolds, the general's brother, and Mr. Gildersleeve, his brother-in-law. We had the body embalmed,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. Francis C. Barlow, Harvard 1855.

and placed in a coffin, and at 8.30 P.M. took the train for Philadelphia. We reached there about 12, and met Rosengarten's father and brother. The general's body was taken to his brother-in-law's, Mr. Landis. We went to the Continental.

*July 3.* — Started from the hotel this morning with Mitchell, and ordered a pair of trousers, to be finished to-morrow, as we go to the general's funeral then. In the afternoon I dined with Rosengarten, and then proceeded to make some calls. I first went to Mr. Furness's, but found him the only one at home, as the three boys had gone to the war. In the evening I met Milton at the hotel, and called with him on Hallowell and Parkman Blake.<sup>1</sup> I met Frank Haseltine<sup>2</sup> at Blake's, and was of course delighted to see him.

CONTINENTAL HOTEL, PHILADELPHIA, *July 3, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I arrived here last night from Gettysburg with General Reynolds's body. Three other of his aides also came on with the body.

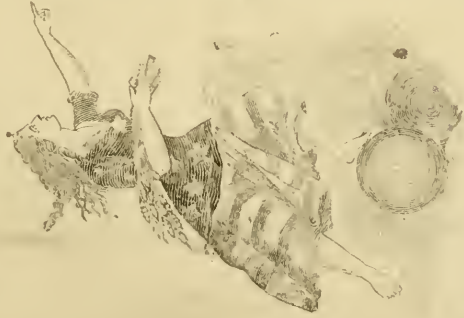
On the morning of July 1st we started from Moritz's Tavern on the road from Emmetsburg to Gettysburg, and distant 7 miles from the latter place. The general was two miles in advance of his troops, and as he entered Gettysburg, he heard that the enemy were driving in our cavalry pickets, posted about a mile and a half from the town. He instantly rode out there on a gallop until he came in to General Buford, who commanded the cavalry. Here he found out that the enemy were advancing in strong force from Cashtown. The position in which our cavalry were posted was a very strong one, being a range of hills back of the town, and whoever held this range commanded the town and the country round about.

<sup>1</sup> S. Parkman Blake, Harvard 1855.

<sup>2</sup> My classmate.



210,



HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLE DEPARTMENT, 8th ARMY CORPS,  
OFFICE PROVOST MARCHANT

Baltimore July 2 1863.

Permission is hereby given to Capt. Meld  
Genl Reynolds Staff  
in pursuit to Capt Madda before  
without further orders

By command of Major General Schenck,  
Provost Marshal.

PASS GIVEN TO TAKE GEN. REYNOLD'S BODY TO PHILADELPHIA



Therefore it was very important for us to get there, but as the enemy were much nearer them than we were, and were advancing rapidly, the general was afraid he could not get there in time to hold them. He galloped back towards our troops about 2 miles off, and on the way asked me if my horse was in good condition. As I had travelled 30 miles the day before, I said that she was not, but that I would go anywhere with her that he wished me to. He told me to ride as quickly as possible to General Meade and tell him that the enemy were advancing in strong force on the town, and that he was afraid they would get there before he did, but that he would fight them all the way through the town, and keep them back as long as possible. General Meade was at Taneytown, 14 miles distant. I started off on a gallop and got there in an hour and twenty minutes, very good time considering that my horse was so used up. I delivered the message to General Meade, and started back, and on my way back met General Reynolds's body in an ambulance. I was very much shocked and felt very badly about it. The general, it seems, hurried his troops up and was getting them in position on this range I spoke of, when the enemy opened on them; and while the general was rallying some of his men, he was shot in the back of his head, killing him almost instantly. A braver man or a better soldier than General R. never lived. He was a very reserved man, but still a kind one, and one for whom I had the utmost respect and regard. His kindness to me I shall never forget.

At the time he was shot, the general had command of the three Corps, the First, Eleventh, and Third. The First was coming on to the ground, the Eleventh near at hand, and the Third some ten miles distant. I offered my services to General Howard, who took command, and was

sent by him to General Schurz, to see how he was getting on. Just before I got to him the rebels got into the town and began firing. As I passed by a board fence along the road, I could hear the bullets come crashing through, making an unpleasant noise about one's ears. I found our men running back, the enemy having flanked us, and General Schurz was riding up the street, when I saw him. I had seen this rebel regiment approaching the town, and was sent both to see General S. and to find out what troops these were. I had good evidence that they were rebels. I reported then to General Howard. Our troops were now falling back in some confusion, having been flanked on both sides from the rebel line overlapping ours, from mere superiority in numbers. We took position, however, on a high hill on the south side of the town, where there was a cemetery, and along a stone wall in front our men were posted, with the batteries behind them. The rebels pushed out a few skirmishers against us, but these were soon driven back, and soon we drove the rebels out of the town again. So affairs stood at nine P.M., when I left with Major Riddle to catch up with the general's body, which had gone ahead. We rode about 30 miles, to Westminster, where we met the body, and took the cars for Baltimore. To-morrow morning we go to Lancaster to the funeral, and on Monday I expect to start for the army again. I shall try to get on to General Sedgwick's staff, but if I do not succeed, I shall go to my regiment. . . .

*July 4.* — Last June I expected to spend my Fourth in Richmond and to celebrate the day by a dinner, etc. Alas, I spent it there, but in a different character from what I expected, and my fare for dinner was sour bread and bad meat. This year I expected to spend the Fourth

in a battle, and find myself instead in Philadelphia. Were it not for the errand that brought me here, I should have enjoyed the day very much.

We started for Mr. Landis's house, 1829 Spruce St., at 6 A.M. From here the body was taken to the Lancaster depot, and placed in a private car. Only the general's brother and sister and staff were present. We reached Lancaster about 12 M., and there found an immense crowd of women, men, and children waiting at the depot. We got into some old wagons, and drove to the cemetery. Here a chapter of the Bible was read, and prayer delivered, and then poor General Reynolds disappeared from us for some time to come. We dined at the hotel, and started on our way back in our special car at 2.25, reaching Philadelphia at 5 or 6 P.M. Went to the Union League rooms, and to Blake's in the evening.

*July 5.* — I went out to see Rosengarten and his family. Their country house is at Germantown, where there are a great many country residences of the Philadelphians. R.'s house is quite a pretty stone cottage surrounded by a lawn, and with pretty shrubbery, etc. I spent two or three hours there, and then took a drive through Schoolhouse Lane, which they were fortifying, and then to the right on a road running along Wissahickon Creek. The scenery was beautiful and reminded me very much of the suburbs of Boston.

After spending a few hours here very pleasantly, I went back to Philadelphia, and on leaving the cars, heard the news about Meade,<sup>1</sup> etc. It literally poured, and in the midst of this rain I drove to Frank Haseltine's, arriving there at two o'clock, just at dinner-time. I saw Mrs. Haseltine, looking as young and pretty as ever. Mr. Haseltine I saw last night. Parkman Blake was present,

<sup>1</sup> That is, of the final victory at Gettysburg.

and we had a very pleasant dinner indeed. After dinner we adjourned to Frank's room, and looked over his old college papers, and talked over old times. I really passed a most pleasant afternoon. From Frank's we went to Mr. Field's, and took tea there, meeting Mr. Newhall, Mr. Furness, and Clem Barclay. Mrs. Field was very kind, as was Mr. F. Philadelphia people are much more hospitable than Boston people.

*July 6.* — Bought some things this morning, and had my photographs taken, and started for Baltimore in the 11 o'clock train with the rest of the staff. On arriving in Baltimore we found out that headquarters of the Army of the Potomac would be in Frederick the next day. We made two efforts to get a train for Frederick, but found that we could not get off until to-morrow. Met Rev. James F. Clarke at the Eutaw House, looking for Henry Huidekoper.<sup>1</sup> Before leaving Philadelphia, I called on General Reynolds's sisters, and received the general's pocketbook as a memento. Saw General Butterfield, and he offered me a place on his staff when he came back.

*July 7.* — Started at 8.15 A.M. for Frederick, and met at the Relay House Mr. Donaldson. I was glad to see him, and to find that his family were all well. He got out at Ellicott Mills. We passed on our way some ten trains loaded with troops for Harper's Ferry. Headquarters reached Frederick a few minutes after we did. They were at the United States Hotel, and here General Meade received a dispatch saying that Vicksburg had fallen. Some ladies came in to see General Meade, giving him bouquets, and insisted on kissing him. I saw the performance through the window. I found our mail ambulance here, and rode out to our wagon train, about a mile out from

<sup>1</sup> Henry S. Huidekoper, Harvard 1862, Mr. Clarke's nephew.

Frederick. I found that my mare had not been returned, and accordingly sent James out after her. He found her after hunting four hours. It rained heavily this evening, and during the night.

*July 8.* — We broke camp this morning in a drenching rain, and started with the wagons for Middleton, where our corps is. I saw the Twelfth Corps passing through the town, and saw Major Morse, commanding the 2d Massachusetts, and Bill Perkins. Heard of Tom Robeson's<sup>1</sup> death, and Charley Mudge's<sup>2</sup> also. About a mile out from town I passed the body of the rebel spy, hung by Buford, naked and discolored, still dangling to a tree, — a fearful warning to such rascals. He had been accustomed to sell papers and maps in our army. I found General Newton,<sup>3</sup> who was put in command of the First Corps, near Middleton. He said he should be happy to have me stay with him, and I shall do so. At 3 P.M. we received an order to move to the Gap, which we did, bivouacking there for the night. Our cavalry pickets had been driven in to Boonesboro, and we were sent therefore to prevent John R.<sup>4</sup> from getting the Gap. The Eleventh Corps also went there. A cavalry fight was going on a mile or more beyond Boonesboro during the afternoon, in which we held our own. It cleared off at noon. Found that Egbert had been taken prisoner and his things sent home.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, MD., *July 8, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I joined the corps this morning at Middleton, where we now are, about 8 miles from Frederick. I reported to General Newton, who is in command of the corps, and shall stay for the present with him.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas R. Robeson, Harvard 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Charles R. Mudge, my classmate.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. John Newton.

<sup>4</sup> Johnny Reb.

On my way back from Philadelphia and while at the Eutaw House in Baltimore, I met General Butterfield, who was wounded slightly in the breast. He said that he would like me to go with him when he came back. I told him that I was trying to get on to Sedgwick's staff, but if not successful would be happy to go on to his staff.

On my way here from Frederick, I passed the body of a spy hanging to a tree. He was stark naked and was a most disagreeable object, as he had been hanging there for two days. Our cavalry captured him and hung him immediately. He was a man who had been selling papers, etc., in our camps, and when caught was leading the rebel cavalry to our trains. . . .

What glorious victories we are having! I really begin to think now that we are soon to see the end of this war.

*July 9.* — We remained here during the day. I rode over the mountain where our corps was, and learned all the roads. Our tents were pitched this afternoon. Headquarters of the Army of the Potomac moved up to the Gap to-day. Egbert returned this afternoon, having escaped from the rebels. Day pleasant. Sixth Corps moved through the Gap to the front. Saw the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry.

*July 10.* — Started at 6 A.M. and moved to a position beyond Beaver Creek, and about 5 miles from Boonesboro. Our cavalry had a fight with the rebels, and drove them. We took up our position on the right flank of the Sixth Corps. Saw Whittier to-day. Skirmishing going on all day. We bivouacked at night in the woods.

*July 11.* — The Maryland Brigade under General Kenly joined us to-day, and was assigned to Rowley's division, thus putting Kenly in command of the division. Nothing new occurred to-day. Weather warm and sultry.



A regular dog-day. General Newton went to a council of war this evening.

*July 12.* — Sunday, and therefore a day to expect a battle. We did not have it, however. Our corps started in the morning with orders to hold Funkstown Heights. The weather was sultry and disagreeable and, although we had not more than three or four miles to march, we found it quite fatiguing. The Eleventh Corps got ahead of us, and we had to wait about three hours for them. Just before entering Funkstown, we found the enemy's rifle-pits, which they evacuated last night. The town is just like all Maryland towns. After entering the village, we turned to the right, and crossed the Antietam on the Hagerstown pike. We formed our line on the left of the Eleventh Corps, which formed our extreme right resting on Antietam Creek. On our left we joined the Sixth Corps. Our men built rifle-pits all along the line, and were prepared for an attack, although these measures were merely precautionary. Our line was a very strong one indeed, running parallel for a long distance to the Hagerstown and Sharpsburg pike, and then crossing it on the left, and running towards the river. The enemy's line was not much over 1000 yards from ours, the skirmishers of both parties being sharply engaged almost all the time. The general was sick to-day, and in the afternoon General Wadsworth assumed command of the corps. I rode into town to get some supper, and met Secretary Cameron and General Reynolds's brother, at a house in town. We had a severe thunder shower in the afternoon.

*July 13.* — General Wadsworth went to a council of war last night, and the opinion is that they voted not to attack the enemy to-day. The vote was as follows, I believe. Against it were General Sedgwick, French, Hays,

Slocum; and in favor, Generals Wadsworth, Pleasonton, and Howard. General Meade was also understood to be in favor of an attack. It rained all day long, and the only excitement we had was from the rebs opening on us with artillery. They fired four or five shots, and then subsided. I rode along our lines this morning. Had our tents pitched. Briggs's brigade joined us this evening.

*July 14.* — Went to bed last night wondering whether I should not be waked up by shells, etc., in the morning. We heard none, however, and soon found out that the enemy had evacuated. All the corps were put in motion for Williamsport. I went through Hagerstown and saw lots of pretty females. I met Mrs. Porter there, also. Our corps went on to within a mile of Williamsport, where we established our headquarters at a house owned by Mr. Findlay.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near WILLIAMSPORT, *July 14.*

DEAR HANNAH, — Johnny Reb has got away from us again, I am sorry to say. They left our front last night, and crossed the river in safety. It is too bad, but I don't well see how it could have been helped, as it would have been utterly useless for us to have attacked their position with the few men we had. I suppose now that we shall wait here until we get our conscripts, and then move on them again, and have another campaign in that god-forsaken, desolated country of Virginia. It is rather discouraging, but I think we ought to be satisfied with having driven them successfully out of Pennsylvania. General Meade has certainly done all that a man could do with the few men under his command. The enemy occupied a strong natural position here, made almost impregnable to our small force by fortifications.

Without disparaging General Meade, one can't help



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

1. Markoe Bache
2. Theodore Lyman
3. Charles E. Cadwallader
4. William Riddle
5. James S. Biddle
6. George Meade
7. J. G. Bates
8. Addison G. Mason
9. Frederick Rosencrans

drawing a parallel between McClellan's campaign at Antietam last year, and this present one. In both of them we whipped the enemy, but he succeeded in crossing the river safely. It seems to me that God has so ordered it that everything should turn out to show that General Geo. B. McClellan was right in his campaigns, and that he acted as every true soldier would act.

I am an acting aide for General Newton, and shall probably remain with him. All the other aides report to the Adjutant-General of the Army.

Please direct your letters to me, as before, to headquarters 1st Army Corps. . . .

*July 15.* — Received orders to march to Berlin. We marched to Keedysville, and from there to Crampton's Gap. Our corps did not go through the Gap, but headquarters were at Burkettsville on the other side of the Gap. Day pleasant most of the time. The march was long and tiresome, as other corps were ahead of us.

*July 16.* — Started from Burkettsville and marched about four miles, when we encamped for the day. Our headquarters were at Mr. West's house, our tents being pitched in a pleasant, shady spot in his front yard.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,  
Camp near BERLIN, *July 16, 1863.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We are wanderers on the face of the earth, like the Israelites of old. We don't stop 24 hours in the same place, but keep up this eternal marching all the time. We are going to cross the river again at the same place that we crossed last year.

We are having glorious news now, and I really think that the end of this rebellion begins to draw near. The only thing that mars this good news is the account we

have of the riots in New York, which I hope the Government will put down with a strong hand, and not stop until they have shot or hung every one of the rioters. It is disgraceful, and I only wish that I could be in New York to help kill some of the rascals. I see by to-day's paper that there has been some disturbance in Boston. I don't think there will be much danger of a riot there. I suppose that the Winthrop Home Guard will turn out in Jamaica Plain and prevent any disturbance there. Tell Father not to expose himself, for you know how excitable he is, and in case of any trouble I am afraid that he will be in the midst of it. A regiment of Regulars and a battery of artillery have gone from here to New York, and I think that with their assistance the draft will be put through in that place.

We are now near Berlin, and have our headquarters in the front yard of a Mr. West, amongst a large grove of trees. We get our meals in his house and are living quite comfortably.

*July 17.*

. . . Our cavalry crossed the Potomac last night at Harper's Ferry. There is a pontoon bridge being laid at Berlin, and we shall probably cross on it to-morrow. I suppose we shall push for Warrenton, as we did last year, and then we shall remain there, or make for Richmond. General Meade seems desirous of pushing ahead as fast as possible, but I am rather afraid that our present force is too small to take Richmond. However, we shall not remain inactive for a very long time, and you may feel sure that General Meade will do all in his power to whip the rebs. . . .

*July 17.* — Rained heavily in the morning, and continued at intervals during the day. We had a rest for one

day, and welcome it was, too. Our meals we obtained from the house. I received a letter from Father and one from Hannah. I answered Father's immediately. The Fifth and Sixth Corps crossed the river this afternoon. The rumor is that the Second and Twelfth move down the Shenandoah Valley. Late this evening we received orders to move at 4 A.M. across the river to Waterford, about 12 miles distant.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS, *July 17, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I received your note of July 13th, and hasten to answer it. I would like that position you speak of, and hope you can get it for me. Either that or a majority, I would like, and feel myself competent to fill such a position. I could get any number of recommendations for such a position, but would prefer not to do so, as I don't care about having anything to do with getting it myself. If General Reynolds were alive, I could get a very high recommendation, and could get such probably from General Newton, although he does not know me well enough as yet. General Porter would do anything of the kind I wished, but I suppose anything from him would do me more harm than good at present. I think that General Sedgwick would be very willing, also, to help me. Colonel Hayes of my regiment, and General Barnes would both of them be glad to assist me. If you find that you can get me such a position, I wish you would try to get it in Griswold's regiment, provided there are none others better than his. I could have my own way there. . . .

We move across the river in a day or two, but whether to Washington or Richmond, I don't know. Probably for the latter place, although we have rather a small force for an advance in that direction.

I am much obliged to you for getting that present for

Frank Balch. I meant to have written to you to do so, but on account of moving all the time, and the bustle and excitement attending the march, I forgot it.

Please let me know in your next letter how John Perry is and where he is staying. . . .

*July 18.* — Headquarters started at 5 A.M., and crossed the river at Berlin. Saw Captain Reese at the Bridge. We moved on to Lovettsville, and from there to Waterford, 7 miles distant. Just before reaching Waterford, we met a Union man, who said that a rebel cavalryman, named Orison, who lived there, was at home. I rode over to the house with two orderlies, and found that his horse was gone, and that he was not to be found. I soon found him, however, in the weaving-house, and sent him to Captain Taylor. Waterford is a good Union town. I hear that there are not more than five rebel families in the whole town. We stayed at Mr. Hough's house, and were very kindly treated. We lived on the fat of the land, much to our enjoyment. The march to-day was one of the pleasantest we have had on this campaign. Major Russell was sick to-day, and for a few hours I acted as A. A. G. Weather pleasant.

*July 19.* — We started at 6 A.M., and moved on to Hamilton, 8 miles distant. We found this town a regular secession hole, like almost all other towns in Virginia. Our headquarters were at a Mr. Janney's house. He was captured a short time ago trying to run goods over the river at Point of Rocks. Day warm and pleasant.

*July 20.* — Started at 4 A.M. for Middleburg, about 13 miles distant. Passed through the Quaker settlement, and through Circleville. Stopped at the Quakers' houses and found them very pleasant and hospitable. We reached Middleburg about 5 P.M., after a long and wearis-



some march, losing our way several times, and having a great deal of trouble in finding a ford over Goose Creek. The bridge over the creek was destroyed by our cavalry some three weeks ago. We finally forded the creek at Benton's Mill. Major Russell and Colonel Sanderson were gobbled near this ford by about twelve of Mosby's men, and taken through Middleburg on their way to Warrenton. After reaching M., I was sent to headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, and found them at Union, 6 miles distant. Received orders to stay where we were to-morrow. Baird is A. A. G.<sup>1</sup>

*July 21.* — We remained in camp all day on the eastern outskirts of the town. I went down into the town and seized a man named Chancellor to act as a guide. I also gobbled a negro living on Mr. English's place. I put them both under guard. Two drummer boys who were captured by Mosby yesterday came back this afternoon, having been paroled. They reported Mosby as being about 8 miles from here, and as having robbed Russell and Sanderson of all their money, etc. A man named Nolan was arrested and brought in, accused of having helped Mosby take the drummer boys. The weather was pleasant.

*July 22.* — As we did not receive any orders to move last night, we supposed we were safe for to-day, but

<sup>1</sup> As we were starting out this morning, we got one or two hundred yards ahead of the corps, and looking to the left, I saw fifty or sixty Confederate cavalry in the field, not more than two or three hundred yards to our left. I showed them to the general, and he told me to take our headquarters guard and go after them. As soon as they saw us, they retired in short order into the woods. I followed them for about a mile, but could not get them. I found a hospital for sick horses belonging to Mosby, but could accomplish nothing, so returned. When we got to Goose Creek, the general wanted to cross over. As we were about a quarter of a mile ahead of the corps, I begged him to wait, and he did so. Lucky he did, for Major Russell and Colonel Sanderson, who did cross a few minutes ahead of us, were captured by Mosby.

about 1 P.M. Major Biddle came up with orders for us to march on to White Plains. We started as soon as possible, compelling an old darkey and a man named Simmons to act as guides. We had a very pleasant march of about 9 miles, reaching White Plains about 8 P.M. On our way we found traces of Mosby's corrals, etc. The day was pleasant.

*July 23.* — Captain Mitchell arrived here at 5 A.M., with orders for us to move to Warrenton, 13 miles from White Plains. General Kenly led. We reached Warrenton about 3 P.M.; Mosby's men were ahead of us all along the route. We met the cavalry train parked about 8 miles from Warrenton. Our corps was camped on the Waterloo and Culpeper roads. Our headquarters are at the Warren Green Hotel. A year ago next November I passed through here with General Porter on the way to Washington. He had just been relieved, and was accompanied as far as this hotel by General Hooker. We saw Burnside at the hotel, General Halleck, and numerous other generals. There has been a great change since then. Burnside and Hooker both in command of this army, and both relieved. I wonder how much was gained by removing McClellan? We dined at the Warren Green on biscuit and bacon. Our wagon train, with General Cutler's division, went by way of New Baltimore. Colonel Painter was fired at while entering the town. We sent skirmishers in at one end of the town while our wagon train was entering the other end.

*July 24.* — The general sent Lieutenant Carson out to Waterloo with 20 cavalymen, and five companies of infantry as a support. He saw nothing of the enemy except a straggler, whom he captured and sent in. He went a mile across the river, and then returned. He heard heavy firing towards Culpeper, proceeding from our

cavalry, who crossed above here. In the evening Mrs. Wallach and her daughter came in from Culpeper. They said that when they left Culpeper there were no troops there. The firing was from our cavalry fighting infantry, near Annisville. General Ingalls arrived here this evening, and I obtained a paper from one of his party, the first I have seen for a week. I took a walk through the town during the afternoon. Saw some pretty girls, who would not even glance at us, however. The town is quite a pretty one, and has some neat cottages in it. Some of them reminded me very much of the houses on the Beverly shore. The population of Warrenton before the war was 2000. At present it cannot be over 600, and these mostly women and children. Almost all the families here are in mourning, but almost invariably, so I am told, give as the reason for wearing black, that some aged relative has died. I suppose they think that the Yankees would be glad to know of any one being killed in battle, and so refuse to tell.

*July 25.* — Received orders to march at daylight this morning for Warrenton Junction. Started as ordered, and reached there by noon, a distance of 10 miles. Before leaving in the morning, Mrs. Smith, wife of Extra Billy,<sup>1</sup> came up to the hotel, to try to get back her cattle, which General Cutler took. I believe she was successful. She said that she hoped Extra B. would be inaugurated Governor of the State and the Union in January next. We found the Eleventh Corps just arriving at the Junction as we came in. Two divisions of the corps were placed on the right of the railroad, and one proceeded to Bealeton. We found good water scarce, as it always is in this

<sup>1</sup> "Extra Billy Smith," Governor of Virginia somewhere about the beginning of the War. Called "Extra Billy" Smith because he put in so many bills for extras.

vicinity. Our headquarters were near the Junction, in a grove of trees. This makes the third time that I have encamped at Warrenton Junction during this war. The first time last August, with General Porter; the second time last month, with General Reynolds; and the third time with General Newton.

*July 26. Sunday.* — Lieutenant Jackson started for Washington this morning. We gave him various commissions to execute for us. Robinson's division went up to Bealeton to protect the railroad, etc. Day pleasant.

*July 27.* — I rode up to Rappahannock Station, where we have a brigade and a battery. Found that the enemy were on the opposite bank, but not in very great force. Rode over to General Buford's headquarters, which were near, and saw Wadsworth. Dined with them, and rode down here with Captain Keough. Lamed my mare on the way down. Jackson returned to-night, and brought our mess stuff. The Eleventh Corps is now on our right, the Twelfth in our rear, the Second three miles from us, on the road to Warrenton, and the Third and Sixth at or near Warrenton. Had a heavy shower during the day. Weather unsettled and close.

*July 28.* — Went this morning to the 2d Massachusetts and saw Bill Perkins, George Thompson, and Francis. From there I went to General Greene's headquarters, and saw Charley Horton.<sup>1</sup> Went to Gordon's division of the Twelfth Corps, and saw Gray, Motley, and Scott.<sup>2</sup> When I came back, I found that the general had gone to Rappahannock Station. Nothing new. Weather showery in the afternoon.

*July 29.* — Received a letter from Father, saying that I had been nominated as lieutenant colonel by Charley

<sup>1</sup> Charles P. Horton, Harvard 1857.

<sup>2</sup> Henry B. Scott, my classmate.

Griswold, and that the Governor was going to confirm the nomination. Told the general, who said that he was sorry to lose me, but that he was glad to congratulate me on my promotion. Was not very well to-day. Charley Horton came over here in the afternoon, and I rode over with him to General Gordon's. We had a fine band here belonging to General Gordon's old brigade. Rainy throughout the day, as it has been ever since we have been here.

*July 30.* — Received a letter from Father, saying that the Governor had signed my commission, and that I would soon receive notice to come home. Weather showery.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at WARRENTON, *July 30, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I received your letters of the 27th and 28th inst., and am very much obliged to you indeed for the trouble you have taken to obtain that position for me.

On receiving the letter, I went to General Newton, and told him that I expected the commission as lieutenant colonel, and that as soon as convenient to him, after receiving the commission, I would like to go home. I also told him that I was sorry to leave him, and that I was much obliged to him for his kindness to me. He said that he was sorry to lose me, but that he congratulated me on my promotion, etc. He was very kind to me indeed, and told me the best way to get my discharge. As soon as I receive my commission, I will start for home. I shall take James and both of my horses with me. The box of clothing I luckily received last night. I shall endeavor to get that bundle sent by Lieutenant Corcoran, but I am afraid that I stand a poor chance of obtaining it.

We are encamped close by the spot that General Por-

ter was, last year. His not moving when ordered to, was one of the charges against him. Our position here is not very pleasant. We are on low ground, which gets soaked every time there is a rain, and yet decent drinking water is impossible to get hold of. It is convenient on account of being so near the railroad, but that is its only advantage. I saw Charlie Horton and Motley yesterday. They were both well. General Gordon, on whose staff Motley is, is in the Eleventh Corps, much to his disgust. The corps has such a bad reputation that any good soldier feels himself disgraced to be in it. The best way is to disband it and mix it in with the other corps.

James has a letter from his wife which says that he is drafted. If so, he had better enlist in the regiment I am going into, and then let me detail him as my servant.

General Newton does not work his staff nearly as much as General Reynolds used to. I am rather sorry for it, as I like to have plenty to do out here. I am not at all afraid of having too much to do at Readville. I like the idea, and think that it will do me good.

There has been some sharp correspondence between Halleck and Meade. Halleck telegraphed that this army could not fight or march worth a damn. Meade immediately asked to be relieved, but this was not granted, and Halleck apologized. If you take into consideration our inferior force, every one must acknowledge that Meade has done all that a man could do. Even now, we do not number 50,000 infantry in this army. If we are compelled to cross the Rappahannock with our present number, we shall stand a fair chance of being soundly whipped. We shall have to wait here until we receive our conscripts. . . .

*July 31.* — Rode up to headquarters of the Army of the Potomac this morning in an ambulance with the

general, Jackson, and Wainwright. About halfway our ambulance broke down, compelling us to seize one belonging to the Sixth Corps, which was passing at the time. We reached headquarters about 3 P.M., having been three or four hours going 10 miles. On the edge of the town of Warrenton we found an immense quartermaster's establishment, where they were repairing ambulances, shoeing mules and horses, etc. Headquarters were half a mile out from the town, on the Sulphur Springs road. Took lunch with Perkins. Saw Riddle, Oliver, Mitchell, etc. Started to come back on our horses at 6.30 P.M., having passed a very pleasant afternoon. When we arrived at camp, which was at 9 P.M., I found a letter from Father saying that I had been telegraphed for on the 29th. instant by General Schouler. Day pleasant.

*August 1.* — We received orders last night to picket the river from Beverly Ford to Wheatley's Ford; to hold the opposite bank of the river until the bridge was built; and also to hold the railroad from Warrenton Junction to Rappahannock Station. This is a good job for one corps to accomplish. We struck tents early in the morning, and the general, Jackson, and I, started for Rappahannock Station in an ambulance. When we arrived there we found that we had about 100 cavalry and some sharpshooters across the river. The enemy retired without firing a shot, being only videttes. The engineers began to lay the bridge soon after we got there, and as soon as it was finished the cavalry began crossing. As soon as they had sufficient force over, a squadron went off to the right, and deployed as skirmishers, advancing up the hill very prettily, but meeting no enemy. Soon after, another force rode out to the front, and deployed as skirmishers, followed at a distance by the whole body of cavalry. It was a very pretty sight, and had it not been for the excessive

heat of the sun, one would have enjoyed looking at them. As it was, however, it was as much as one's life was worth to stand out in the broiling sun any length of time. Our cavalry met with no resistance until they had gone some two miles and a half from the river. I got leave about noon to go out and see the fight. I found our forces a mile beyond Brandy Station, and soon after I got there the 8th New York made a charge on 4 guns, which they came near taking. Our headquarters are at a Mr. Bower's house, where General Buford was. In the evening I was sent to find General Buford. He was about three miles from the river. He advanced within a mile and a half of Culpeper, driving Jones's and Hampton's brigades of cavalry that far. He met A. P. Hill's corps, and was driven back two miles this side of Brandy Station.

[The cavalry staff officers were a lively set of boys. Craig Wadsworth and a lot of them sat down while there was a short halt before going into a fight, and began playing poker. In a few minutes the game was interrupted by the call to arms, and off they went into the fight, and were in the charge on the four guns. It was as near a capture as anything I ever saw.]

*August 2.* — The general rode down to the river this morning and crossed. We went first to the hill on the left, where General Cutler's division is. From there we rode to the hills on the right, where General Robinson's division is. Our position is a very strong one. We have rifle-pits built along the whole line. After being out we came back to camp with General Buford and staff, who remained and dined with us. The day was the warmest we have had yet, it being very oppressive and disagreeable. Heard nothing more about my commission. I think that there must be some mistake somewhere.



*August 3.* — We received a message this morning that the enemy was advancing in force. Lieutenant Jackson rode down to the river, and found that it was a false alarm. Weather sultry and hot.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,  
Camp at RAPPAHANNOCK STATION, 6 P.M., *Aug. 3, 1863.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have heard nothing about my commission, and nothing about coming home. I am afraid that there is some mistake about the matter. In case any telegram or document is sent me, you had better have it directed to me at these headquarters. Of course I can take no measures about coming home until I receive official notice that I am commissioned as lieutenant colonel, or until I am ordered home by the War Department. Even if I took any such measures, no attention would be paid them, unless, as I have said, I should receive official notice.

We are settled here for some time, I think. At present we have most of our corps across the river, waiting until the railroad bridge is completed. I went out to the front day before yesterday, and saw the cavalry fight. The fighting I saw took place near Brandy Station, some six miles from here.

Our headquarters are on this side of the river and about a mile from the river.

I hope I shall hear soon from some one in regard to my commission. As soon as I do hear, I shall start for home, going from here to Washington on the railroad, which is a safe route. I shall send my horses on to New York by boat.

*August 4.* — General Newton rode down to the river this morning and visited General Robinson and General

Cutler. Also stopped at General Buford's headquarters. We had just got back to camp when we heard firing down near the river, and found that the enemy were advancing. After swallowing a hasty dinner, we rode down on a gallop, and found that the enemy were being driven back by our cavalry. It was showery during the day.

*August 5.* — Rode over to headquarters this afternoon to see if I could get a leave, in order to go home and accept my commission as lieutenant colonel. Had a letter from Father this afternoon. Got back to camp about ten and a half. Found staff engaged in playing poker.

Headquarters First Army Corps,

Nov 10<sup>th</sup> 1863.

My Dear W. V.

Yours of the 4<sup>th</sup>

recd. a day or two since

For a month past  
we've been marching &  
countermarching and  
altho' we have our Hoops  
at the same place you  
left us I am so bewildered  
as to hardly know where  
I am. We are now engaged  
in the beautiful business  
of building and guarding  
the R.R. which our rebellious  
friends so effectually de-  
stroyed. We pursued the  
Rebs as far as Brandy  
Station but they ran  
so fast we had

to give it up and come  
back here to build the  
road. — The remainder of  
the army remains on  
the other side of the River  
— the Cavalry being in  
Culpepper. Wish you had  
been with us, old boy, —  
have had some jolly old  
times. I think the operations  
for the War are about  
over. The Smith family  
have gone to Baltimore  
and we occupy the  
house. I think you had  
better let that 58<sup>th</sup> Mass  
Reg. go to the devil and  
come back here where  
you belong — we need  
you. Every body wants  
to know how Well is  
and the number of men

in his Regt., Mitchell  
is drinking furiously,  
and is much bloated,

Riddle is at home, sick  
- has been gone two months  
but will soon be back,

Old Vic is with Buford  
- was here yesterday - thinks  
the Cavalry a "big thing"  
for fun but not much  
for fight. I sent Maj.  
Reynolds the documents  
you requested some time  
since. Enclosed is the order  
for your leave. The Genl  
and boys all send love,  
and with me wish you  
back.

Ever yours  
Kearney

S. C. S. M. M. C. S.  
102 Wash. St. (Boston)





Head Quarters Camp, Meigs,

Readville, Jan 16<sup>th</sup> 1864

Special Order

No. 54.

Colonel Charles E. Griswold, of the 56<sup>th</sup> Regt  
of Mass Infantry, having reported for duty at  
this Post: is hereby ordered to take Command  
of his Regiment.

Lieut. Colonel Stephen M. Weld will report to

Col. Griswold

The General Commanding takes this opportunity



to express my entire satisfaction of the able  
management on the part of Lieut Col. Weld,  
during the time of his having command  
of the above named Regiment.

By Command of

BRIG. GEN. R. A. PEIRCE.

(Signed) W. L. Leonard, M. D. L. S. P.  
Post Adjutant

Official

Leonard M. D. L. S. P.,  
M. D. L. S. P. & Post Adj.



## CHAPTER VII

LIEUTENANT COLONEL OF 56TH MASS. — RECRUITING —  
GOING SOUTH WITH THE REGIMENT — MR. BROWN  
OF PHILADELPHIA — ANNAPOLIS — THE BATTLE OF  
THE WILDERNESS — SPOTTSYLVANIA — COLD HARBOR  
— BEFORE PETERSBURG — THE MINE — TAKEN PRIS-  
ONER

[I LEFT the army at Rappahannock Station, having been appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the 56th Massachusetts Volunteers. This was one of four new regiments, the 56th, 57th, 58th, and 59th. The idea was to have them largely composed of veterans who had recovered from wounds or sickness. I came home and set about the work of recruiting my regiment. I was appointed superintendent of recruiting for several counties in Massachusetts. We finally started for the war, for Annapolis, in March, 1864, most of the winter being spent in Readville recruiting the regiment and getting it into shape for service. Camp life at Readville had many pleasant features. We had a splendid regiment and a very fine band, led by Martland, who for some time had led the band at Brockton, Massachusetts. The band was so well known in the army that it was selected to go to Gettysburg when Lincoln made his celebrated speech and dedicated the monument there.

My life while recruiting had many pleasant and many disagreeable incidents. I had a chance to go to parties and see the young ladies, dance, etc., but the difficulty of getting recruits and drilling them, and the constant dis-

ciplining the new men, was very wearing, and I was only too thankful when we finally got off and I started for the front. As I have said, we had a splendid band, and I used to enjoy them very much. We had for adjutant a fellow named Lipp, a very brave fellow, but excitable, and, being a foreigner, not understanding very well how to get along with our men. I had Horatio D. Jarves, my classmate, for major, and afterwards for lieutenant colonel. He always did well, but having lost his foot in the early part of the War, he was disabled a good deal of the time and could not always be present. I started out with my classmate, Charles J. Mills, as adjutant, but we lost him soon, as he was detailed on staff duty and was killed in the last battle of the War, before Petersburg, while on General Humphreys's staff. He was a brave and charming fellow and a delightful companion. His mother gave me his ring, which I still have,—an antique representing a lion tearing a hare. Colonel Griswold, my colonel, had been in the 22d Massachusetts; he suffered from a chronic trouble, which compelled him to resign from there. He used to be with me in the cadets. He was a brave man and a good officer. Captain Hollis, Captain Cartwright, Lieutenant Mitchell, Lieutenant Cadwell, and a great many others were fine officers and good men. Captain Duncan Lamb was also a good officer of the regiment, a brother of William E. Lamb of '59. Major Putnam was also a fine officer. He was mortally wounded at Cold Harbor. Some of the incidents of recruiting were quite amusing. A letter sent in by the mother of a recruit is reproduced on the opposite page.]

*Annapolis, March 20, 1864.* — It is now over six months since I left Rappahannock Station for home, to take the position of lieutenant colonel of what was then to



(Letter from a mother to the Recruiting Officer allowing her  
minor son to enlist.)

Headquarters 56th Massachusetts Reg't.

Worcester Sept 28/1863.

To the Director master or whom it may concern  
I the widow Harriet Deets have consented to my son  
George C. Deets enlist in the service of the navy of  
U.S.A. for one year (at his own request) providing  
all payments be sent to me by mail I will send a  
receipt back again except one dollar per month which he  
may spend for paper and ink and books (he is a minor  
admission. Name. No. mat. list. 1. 1. 1.

support) I also must have a copy of his commitments  
I do not know exactly your rules as to filing out but I  
expect the government furnish all that is necessary for him  
to have asad from the abov foresaid wages, I should like  
to have him go for to asist as cook for the crew and our  
Father which ast can Heaven go with him and may  
he be faithfull to help save the Government for Secus  
sake Amend Widow, Harriet Deets

Listen Master

Do I be ware of peek pockets you see to it





be called the 1st Veteran Volunteers from Massachusetts, but is now the 56th Massachusetts Volunteers. At the time I left the army I expected to be back again, with my regiment full, in the course of three months at the outside. I am now well satisfied at being here at all with my present rank.

When I reached home, matters looked badly enough for the regiment. Not a man enlisted, the recruiting, or rather attempts at it, having been going on for three weeks at least. My commission bore date of July 22, 1863, but I must say that for three or four months from that date, I had little expectation of ever being an officer in the United States service with that rank. I never should have taken the place, had not my old chum Harry Egbert persuaded me to do so.

Recruiting for our regiment began in reality about the first of November, under the call of October 17, 1863, for 300,000 men, stimulated by the promise of extra bounties from the State. It continued very fairly until about the first of March, when all our recruiting officers were called in. On January 2, 1864, I was mustered in as lieutenant colonel by Lieutenant Robert P. McKibben, 4th U. S. Infantry. The 4th of January, 1864, was my twenty-second birthday.

On Sunday, the 20th of March, 1864, after numerous false starts in accordance with the usual custom, the regiment finally started from Readville on its way to Annapolis. I was glad enough to get off, as the men were constantly deserting while in camp at Readville, and were all the time on guard or detailed, so that we could neither drill nor discipline them properly. The day before we started, over thirty gallons of liquor were confiscated on the persons of people coming to see their friends or relations in Readville.

[The passage in the diary describing the journey from Readville to Annapolis with the regiment is omitted, as that journey is described with more detail in my letter of March 25 to my father.]

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASSACHUSETTS REG'T.  
Camp Holmes, near ANNAPOLIS, *March 25, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are now comfortably settled in tents about two miles from Annapolis, on the exact ground that the 24th Massachusetts were encamped two years ago. The ground is dry and easily drained, with water, etc., within convenient distance. The railroad runs within a fourth of a mile of our camp, making it very convenient for us to get our supplies.

We left camp, as you know, on Sunday morning, the men and officers being in the best of spirits, and with but few of the men, I am glad to say, drunk. The day before we left, over forty gallons of liquor were confiscated at General Peirce's headquarters, being found on the persons of the soldiers' friends, or rather enemies. We reached Groton at 3 P.M. without losing a man. At every place we stopped, the officers and guards got out, and prevented any civilians from having access to the men. In this way we managed to keep all liquor away from the soldiers. At Groton we shipped the regiment on board the Plymouth Rock and reached Jersey City by 2.30 A.M., experiencing no trouble except from the boat-hands selling rum to the men. At Jersey City we had to wait until 10.30 A.M. before we could get the regiment on board the cars and started. We lost but two men here. We reached Camden at about 7 P.M. with all our men except one. At Newark a citizen was shot by one of the officers for refusing to go away from the cars, where he was selling liquor, and for throwing stones at the officer. I don't know whether the

man was mortally wounded or not. At Camden we took the ferry and crossed to Philadelphia, where we received a supper from the Union Association. I demolished a liquor shop in Philadelphia and took the proprietor prisoner. I had him hand-cuffed and taken on to Baltimore, where I had half his head and beard shaved and then turned him over to the provost marshal. At Philadelphia the colonel and quartermaster left us, and went on to Baltimore to provide transportation for the regiment, and therefore I had command. After taking our supper here, we marched to Philadelphia and Baltimore depot, where we took freight cars for Baltimore. We arrived there at 12 and found the colonel waiting for us. As a dinner was promised us here at the Union Rooms, we marched some two miles from the depot to the place, where we found that we had been taken in, for no dinner was ready, so like the king of old we marched down the hill again. We took the steamer Columbia at Baltimore about 2 P.M. and started for Annapolis, reaching there at 6.30 P.M. in a driving snow-storm. We disembarked as soon as possible, and marched to what are called the College Green Barracks, where the paroled prisoners are kept for the first day or two after their arrival. We found only four of the barracks empty, and had to pack our men in them, putting four hundred where two [hundred] are usually put. Still it was much better this way than without any shelter at all, for the night was bitter cold and the wind keen and sharp. In the morning we made arrangements with Major Chamberlain to provide our men with hot coffee and meat, until we could draw our rations. Major Chamberlain is in the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry and in charge of the parole camp. He was very kind and obliging to us, for without his aid we could have done nothing for our men, and should have been obliged to have seen them

suffer a great deal. As it was, they had a pretty hard time of it.) This same morning, that is, Wednesday, lots of our men got into the town, and drank much bad whiskey, besides bringing a lot more into camp. About noon camp began to be a perfect pandemonium, and as the colonel was away, the major and I sallied out to restore order. We put all the noisy drunkards in the guard-house, and soon quelled the disturbance outside. In the guard-house, however, confusion reigned supreme for a long time. We tied up any number of men, and finally succeeded in getting quiet restored. One of the worst cases in the regiment, named Casey, I had tied up by the thumbs, and gagged. He then kicked an officer there, and I said to him, "Casey, I will shoot you if you do that again." Another officer came by and he kicked him, and I drew that pistol Uncle Oliver gave me and fired at him twice. The first shot went through his arm, in the biceps, without touching the bone. The second hit the bayonet in his mouth by which he was gagged, and dropped into his stocking. The bayonet saved his life, for the shot would have gone through his head otherwise. I meant to kill him, and was very sorry I did not succeed. The shots had a wonderful effect in quieting the men, and I had very little trouble with them after that.

Yesterday morning we started for our camp outside the city and delighted (?) the Secesh citizens by playing "John Brown" as we marched through the town. We pitched all the tents before night and had the regiment comfortably housed and fed. Considering that some regiments that arrived over a week ago only managed to do the same thing in a week, I think we have every reason to be satisfied. . . .

My address is simply, 56th Mass. Vols., Annapolis, Md. I understand that we are the commencement of the



MAJOR JARVES, COL. GRISWOLD, LIEUT. COL. WELD OF FIFTY-SIXTH MASS. TAKEN IN 1864. JUST BEFORE WE STARTED FOR THE WAR



1st Brigade, 4th Division, 9th Army Corps, and that the corps badge is to be a cross with scalloped edges. Please ask Uncle Oliver to apply for our regiment, in case he takes any, on Burnside's expedition. . . .

While we were in the College Green Barracks, a boat-load of prisoners came in from Richmond. There were 500 in the lot that I saw. 500 of the worst cases had been sent to the hospital. Of the 500 selected as being in good health, I must say that I never saw a more horrible-looking set in my life. All ragged and filthy and thin, — it made one feel sick to see them. It was a good thing for the regiment, however, and I am glad that they saw them. The arrangements for these prisoners are very good indeed. They have a large bath-house for them, where they can take either warm or cold baths. I went in and saw some of them bathing. They looked more like skeletons than human beings. The rations for a day consist of one small piece of corn-bread. I saw Adjutant Cheever of the 17th Massachusetts, who said that Linus Comins was still in Richmond. . . .

You can't tell how glad I am to get the regiment away from Massachusetts. It is a great relief to me, I assure you.

On *Thursday, March 24*, we left our barracks and marched out to the old camping-ground of the 24th Massachusetts, the ground being covered with snow about six inches deep. We received our tents here, and managed to have them all pitched before night. In the evening we had the band play, and what with delight at being away from Readville and finally settled in camp, I feel ready to pardon all past and future offences of the men. The regiment was in good spirits and everything seemed lovely.

*Friday, March 25*. — We had a great deal to do in policing the camp, and towards evening it began to rain,

putting a decidedly unpleasant aspect on things in general. We sent in a patrol to Annapolis and secured about a dozen of our men.

*Saturday, March 26.* — The storm continued with great violence. Patrol brought in seven men. Men had to remain in their tents.

*Sunday, March 27.* — It cleared off last night, and to-day we enjoyed the most delightful weather. It is just a week to-day since we left Readville. Lieutenant Galucia went out to-day with the patrol, but did not catch any one. Wrote Sergeant Ford in regard to deserters. Had dress-parade for the first time since leaving Readville. During the night six men deserted, five from H Company and one from C Company.

*Monday, March 28.* — Weather pleasant. McCartney of A Company was sent in to-day for attempting to desert. He had bought citizen's clothing and was about to leave when he was apprehended. Lieutenant Galucia brought in Shean and Murray of E Company, both of whom were placed in the guard-house. The colonel had an officer's drill to-day and afterwards a battalion drill. Major Chamberlain was here in the afternoon, and saw our dress-parade. It is reported that private McAinsh was found with his throat cut in the woods near camp.

*Tuesday, March 29.* — The report about McAinsh is not true. It turns out that he is in town pretending to belong to the provost guard. Had a good battalion drill this afternoon. Very windy during the day, with rain during the night. Work commenced on the quartermaster's building.

CAMP HOLMES, ANNAPOLIS, *March 29, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . We are gradually getting our camp into very decent shape. The men all have A tents



and the officers wall tents. Most of the companies have bought lumber to build cook-houses with, and these are now almost completed.

Annapolis is probably one of the worst cities in the Union at the present time. All the camp-followers attendant on our army, together with a large body of New York and Baltimore roughs, infest the place. These, together with paroled prisoners, make the place dangerous for any civilized beings. Within a fortnight four soldiers have been found between here and Annapolis with their throats cut. The last one found was a man named Mc-Ainsh of this regiment, a very good man indeed, but one who was fond of going on a "bender" occasionally. He left camp without leave, went to Annapolis, got drunk probably, so that these rascals saw his money, and on his way out here had his throat cut, and his money taken. He was found dead in the woods close by here.

We have a new and novel way of holding the bad cases amongst the prisoners. There is a high platform built about twenty feet from the ground, and on this are kept some eight or ten very hard cases.

I hear that fifty-six infantry regiments are going with Burnside. My opinion is that we go to North Carolina, although I have no official or private information to make me say so. I do not see how we can get off before the 1st of May, and possibly later, even. New regiments are coming in daily, and amongst others several negro ones.

It turns out that the man who had his throat cut was not one of our men. . . .

*Wednesday, March 30.* — Woke up this morning and found that we had a confounded rain-storm. It is too provoking to have them now when we need all the pleasant weather possible, to drill our men. In this rainy

weather there is nothing to do, except sit in one's tent and read. The men have nothing to do, and consequently are liable to get into mischief. They are twice as happy when they are hard at work. Received no letters to-day.

*Thursday, March 31.* — Pleasant weather. The Council of Administration, composed of Captains Putnam and Thayer and myself, met at 11 A.M. We set a tariff for the sutlers, and then adjourned until to-morrow. Had battalion drill at 3 P.M. Men did quite well. All the company cook-houses are finished except one. Quartermaster's building all completed except roofing.

*Friday, April 1.* — Pleasant in the morning, but raining in afternoon. Gave Casey a pass to go to Annapolis on condition that he would touch no liquor. Received an order detailing me for court-martial to meet to-day, but as I did not receive it until late in the afternoon I did not report. Rode out of camp for first time since I have been here. Went about three miles on the road to Annapolis Junction. Bath.

CAMP HOLMES, ANNAPOLIS, *April 1, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . I am glad to find that you are so pleasantly situated in Baltimore, and hope you will enjoy your visit very much. As to my coming on to see you, I am afraid that I shall not have any chance to do so. I have not been out of camp but once since arriving here, and now I am on court-martial, which will take up all my time from nine A.M. until three P.M. every day. I am very sorry that I cannot accept the invitation for the ball this evening, but as I have said, my duties prevent.

The regiment is getting into very good shape indeed. The men begin to appear and act like soldiers. We have very little trouble with them, and the number in the guard-house is diminishing. For the worst cases, we have

provided a scaffold some twenty feet from the ground, erected on poles. Here the hard cases are placed, with the ladder withdrawn at night.

The troops around here are very poorly drilled and disciplined. Many of them are old regiments just returned from furloughs, which I most sincerely hope accounts for their want of drill and discipline. They are many of them Pennsylvania troops, however, which accounts for their deficiencies or failings. . . .

I am most happy to inform you that the regiment has improved greatly in battalion drills, etc. It will be a fine regiment soon. . . .

*Saturday, April 2.* — Stormy all night, with heavy snow-storm in the morning, which changed again to rain at noon. Reported to headquarters 1st Michigan Sharpshooters, where the court-martial was ordered to meet, but found that the colonel was away in town. The court will not meet until next Monday. Received a letter from Hannah, dated Baltimore.

CAMP HOLMES, ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April 2, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are in the midst of a heavy snow-storm, which seems more like November in New England than April in the "Sunny South." Since we have been here we have only had three sunny days, a great disadvantage to us, as we want all the pleasant weather possible to drill our men.

I am detailed on court-martial, which will take up most of my time for some weeks to come. We shall have ten or twelve cases from our own regiment to be tried.

I have been riding around in the camps of some of the regiments here, and am glad to say that our men and officers look more like true soldiers than any that I have

seen. They are more uniform in their dress, more respectful, and better disciplined by far, than the men of any other regiment here. Our camp is the neatest and most comfortable one that I have seen. We have cook-houses and cooking-stoves for every company, and most of our men have floors for their tents. Altogether I am very well satisfied with the regiment, and think that it will be one of the best in the corps.

In regard to shooting that man Casey, I was perfectly justified in so doing. He was formerly in the 12th Massachusetts, where he was utterly unmanageable. The lieutenant colonel of that regiment once drew a pistol on him, and told him he would shoot him if he did not keep quiet. Casey damned him and told him that he dared not shoot him, and he did not. This I heard since my trouble with him. When I had the trouble with him, he was tied up, and while in that position he kicked an officer. I told him I should shoot him if he did any such thing again. He at once kicked an officer who was passing by. I immediately drew my pistol and shot at him twice. He has often threatened my life, which of course I paid no attention to, as I knew he would never dare attempt it. I called him up a few days after shooting him, and told him that I meant to have killed him when I fired at him, but that if he would promise to let rum alone, I would release him from the guard-house. I might have had him tried by court-martial and shot, but I thought I would give him another chance. I have no doubt now but that the fellow will make a good soldier. He and other men in the regiment know that I will enforce discipline at all hazards. and that if I say that I shall shoot them, it will be done. I am firm and strict with all but always endeavor to be just and to discriminate between the totally bad and those temporarily led away. I find that I can govern men

with strictness and yet be liked, although popularity is a thing that I never have and never shall seek for, with my men. If an officer does his duty, it comes of itself. The good men in the regiment feel very sorry that I did not kill Casey, as they consider him a disgrace to the regiment. On the whole I am glad that I did not, as the results produced by the shooting are just as good as if I had killed him.

I am rather discouraged at the poor condition of the portion of the Ninth Corps that I have seen. If the remainder is at all like what is here, I hope we shall soon leave it. . . .

I think that General Grant is going to concentrate all his forces on Richmond this spring and take it by overwhelming it. I dare say that he will concentrate between 150, and 200,000 men. I think that two columns will move against the city. One will probably go up James River, and I dare say that we shall form part of that force. If we only get Virginia from the rebels, we shall get North Carolina and East Tennessee, and then our lines will be shortened wonderfully. It is absolutely necessary to get some great advantage over the Confederates this spring, and with Grant at the head of our armies, I feel confident that we shall succeed in doing so. . . .

I forgot to say to you that the liquor dealer <sup>1</sup> that I carried off from Philadelphia was a big rascal. Several of the citizens and policemen thanked me for taking him off, and begged me to keep him, saying that he enticed soldiers to desert, got them drunk, etc. I do not anticipate any trouble from the matter. I merely took him and delivered him over to the nearest provost marshal. I don't think he complained much about having his head shaved. He was probably afraid of being laughed at if he did so.

<sup>1</sup> See page 261.

*Sunday, April 3.* — Day was cloudy, although not stormy. We had the usual Sunday inspection, which was very poor. Inspected four companies, I, A, H and E. A and H were fair, but the other two were shameful. After inspection we had some forty men standing at attention. Two weeks to-day since we left Readville.

*Monday, April 4.* — Cloudy in the morning. At 3 P.M. began raining and continued so all the evening. Went into town to see Colonel DeLand, and found that he was out at camp. Found that Johnnie Hayden's battery arrived here yesterday from Knoxville. Looked for it some time but could not find it. Called on Major Chamberlain while in town. Lieutenant Galucia went to Baltimore this afternoon. Colonel drilled the non-commissioned officers this noon.

*Tuesday, April 5.* — Rained hard all day. Almost finished Benet. Received letters from Father, Hannah, and Carrie; <sup>1</sup> also from General Peirce. Confoundedly stupid in camp. Major Jarves received letter from Horace Howland, saying that he was coming to see us.

ANNAPOLIS, April 5, '64.

DEAR FATHER, — . . . We are having a continued storm here, without the slightest cessation. I don't think we have had three pleasant days since we have been here. They have with two exceptions been snow-storms, but the snow quickly melted away. The only difference between here and home is that it is much more moderate here than there. I suppose you have had snow all the time.

Our camp here is much better than the Readville one. The soil here is sandy, so that the water is quickly absorbed. An hour or two after the storm is over there is

<sup>1</sup> My sister, Mrs. S. S. Gray, who died June 16, 1912.



Prov'd Brig. Gen. S. C. Chamberlain  
for whom I had the highest regard





scarcely a puddle to be seen, and the ground is dry and hard almost immediately.

The regiment is in a very healthy condition indeed. We have but seven or eight sick in the hospital. . . .

Johnnie Hayden's battery has come here from Knoxville. I suppose I shall see him soon, as he is encamped about a mile from where we are.

Horace Howland is coming on to see us, from New York, in the course of a week. We shall have quite a class meeting if he gets here.

Colonel Hartranft, who is in command of the troops now here, said that our camp was the best one around Annapolis. This is quite a compliment for a raw regiment.

I see no probability of our leaving here for some weeks. Burnside has established his headquarters at New York for the present. . . .

*Wednesday, April 6.* — Morning cloudy, but towards noon it cleared. Rode into town and put \$398 of Foley's into hands of Adams Express. Major went with me. We stopped at Holland's to get some oysters, and witnessed some everyday occurrences in this town, such as officers treating their men to drinks, etc. The 3d New Jersey Hussars came in last night. Had battalion drill. I took command of dress-parade. Corporal Jones had his chevrons taken off for absence without leave, in presence of whole regiment. In the evening felt very tired and sick.

*April 7.* — Splendid day. Sick abed most of the day. Threatened with a fever. 14th Massachusetts Battery arrived to-day. Received letter from Ford in regard to deserters. Jonathan Soule, who escaped at Brunswick, is among the number caught by Ford.

*April 8.* — Received letter from Hannah. Day pleasant. Felt much better and took hot bath in the evening,

to drive away the cold. Guard-house finished to-day and the scaffold taken down.

*April 9.* — Rained all day along. Had nothing to do but sit in tent and read tactics and Shakspeare. Received a letter from Hannah. During the night the wind blew a perfect gale. General Burnside here a few minutes.

*Sunday, April 10.* — John Hayden came over to see us and stayed until evening. We also had Mr. Peabody from Boston here. We had the usually weekly inspection, which was fair. Saw Colonel DeLand this morning. The court meets to-morrow. Day pleasant.

ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April 10, 1864.*

DEAR MOTHER, — . . . The court-martial that I am on meets for the first time to-morrow morning. After calling the roll, they will adjourn until Wednesday, as the Judge Advocate has just got out of a small-pox hospital, and of course has had to burn all his clothes. He is going to Baltimore to buy new clothes, and hence the necessity of an adjournment.

General Burnside dropped down on us for about thirty seconds yesterday. He went off again immediately and started for New York. To-day we have had two visitors, one was John Hayden and the other Mr. Peabody from Boston, brother of Oliver Peabody. . . .

The regiment is in very good condition and the men behave very well indeed. They will soon be ready to go into a fight, or rather be fitted for it, for I don't think that there is much of that foolish "longing for a fight" extant nowadays.

I am perfectly well, etc. I had a slight cold the other day, which alarmed me a little, but falsely, I am glad to say.

I see very little of Annapolis, as I don't leave camp

much, and as I don't care about going there. It is a very old-fashioned town, decidedly Secesh in its proclivities, and full of stragglers and drunkards, — not altogether a desirable place to visit. One can see officers drinking with their men, etc., there, which is enough to disgust me with the place. There are some very fine old-fashioned houses there, which seem the very picture of comfort. I wish I could transport one of them to Jamaica Plain, to live in it after the war is over. . . .

*Monday, April 11.* — Court-martial met and adjourned until Wednesday. I got leave to go to Baltimore for twenty-four hours, and started in the 4 o'clock train. Met John Hayden on his way to Washington, and Colonel Coales, Chief Commissary of the Ninth Corps, on his way to Baltimore. Reached Baltimore about 6.30, and took a room at the Eutaw House. Went down and spent the evening with Hannah. Day pleasant. Called on Egbert and had jolly talk with him.

*Tuesday, April 12.* — Walked around the city to see the sights. Saw the Washington Monument, etc. Spent the morning with Hannah and called with her on Mrs. Burnap. Saw the two Miss Hydes, both of them very pretty girls. Started for Annapolis at 4.45 P.M., and reached there about seven. Nothing new had happened, except that charges were laid against Captain — by the major.

*Wednesday, April 13.* — Court-martial met this morning. Finished one case to-day. General Grant reviewed the whole corps, riding to each camp and inspecting its regiments. Day showery. I was rather disappointed in General Grant's looks. He reminded me of Captain Wardwell, or of old Mathison. Felt as if I were going to have a fever this evening.

ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April 13, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — The court-martial that I am on began its sittings this morning. From the amount of business before it, I imagine that we shall have a busy and long job. Many of the cases are small ones, which ought properly to be tried by a field officers' court.

General Grant inspected all the regiments here to-day.<sup>1</sup> I was rather disappointed in his looks, as he is anything but an able-looking man. General Burnside and General Washburn were with him. I understand that General Burnside is to remain at Annapolis where his headquarters will be. I am glad of it, as he is much needed here. I see no preparations made for our leaving here and imagine that we shall remain here some time. . . .

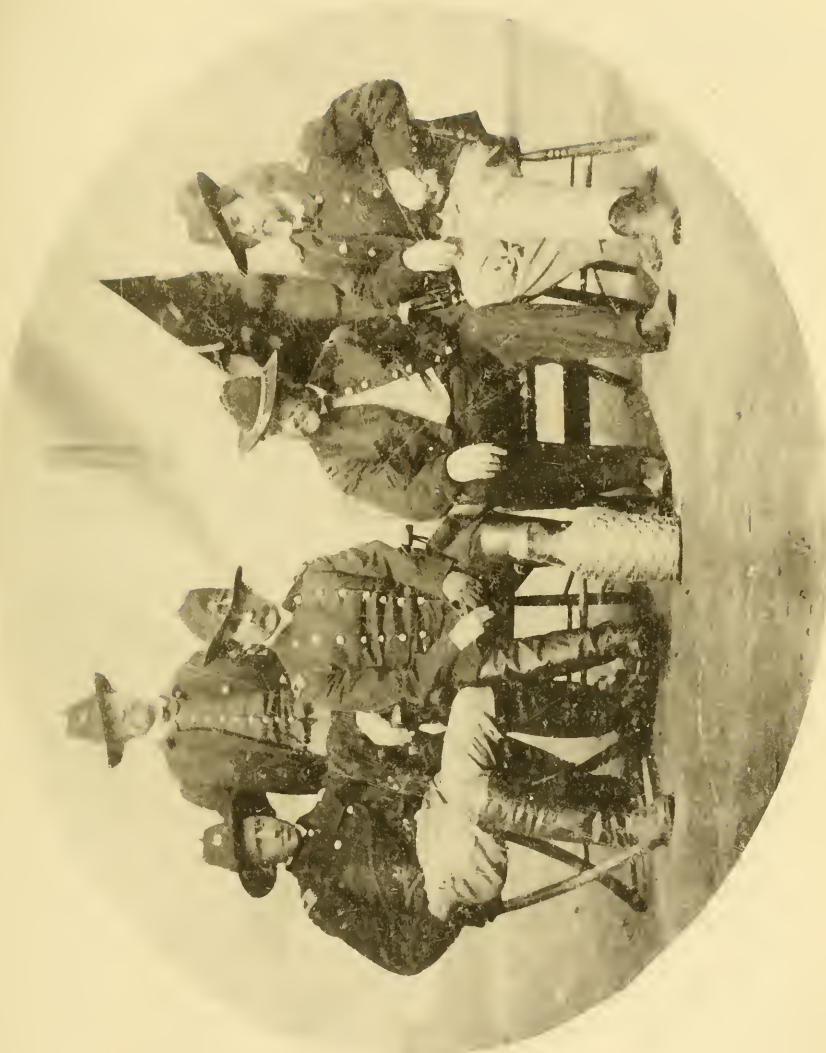
The chief trouble that we have from our men now is caused by liquor. They manage to get hold of it some way, and get drunk. We have very little trouble with them, however, in any way.

I have not touched a drop of liquor or wine since leaving Readville, and don't mean to while I am with the regiment. I don't think it safe for an officer to do so, especially one who has so many lives in his charge. . . .

*Thursday, April 14.* — Court-martial took up the case of Sergeant George Young. Did not finish it. Some of our cases are to come up to-morrow. Day pleasant. Took command of dress-parade this afternoon. The regiment has improved a great deal since coming here. Had a game of whist in the evening with Mr. Lipp and others.

*Friday, April 15.* — Received a letter from Father.

<sup>1</sup> General Grant issued his first order as Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the United States, in March, 1864. His headquarters were with the Army of the Potomac thenceforth, to the end.



LIEUT. COL. WELD MAJ. JARVES DR. OAKES GEN. STEVENSON COL. GRISWOLD  
WHISKEY JUG

GROUP OF OFFICERS AT ANNAPOLIS



Day pleasant. O'Brien was tried to-day for desertion. As I was a witness, I did not sit on the court. Colonel Goodrich, of General Burnside's staff, was here to-day. He had some ladies with him and is going to have them here to-morrow to hear our band.

ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April 15, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . I see and hear no indications of our moving soon, nor have I any idea where we are going. I hope that it will be against Richmond, as I want Lee's army to be destroyed and Richmond taken. We must do both of these things this summer.

Our band serenaded General Burnside the other evening. This afternoon his chief of staff, Colonel Goodrich, came up here with some ladies to hear the band play. They did not stop long, however, on account of the chilliness of the atmosphere. They are coming again to-morrow.

I am not able to drill with the regiment now at all, as I am on court-martial almost all the time, and from present appearances shall continue on it as long as we are here.

We have been having quite pleasant weather lately, giving us a good chance to drill the men and get the camp in good condition. We have had two snow-storms since our arrival, the last one being merely a flurry. The grass around here is beginning to grow green, the trees to bud, and the birds to sing. Everything in fact looks like spring, by far the pleasantest season in the year in the "Sunny South." The big blue-bottles, the pest of a camp, are beginning to show themselves and buzz round with that disagreeable noise and in that blundering, careless way which makes them so unpleasant.

I am thankful to say that we have got rid of two of our

incompetent officers, and are in a fair way of losing another. . . .

We are all sorry to see that the draft has been postponed. I do wish that they would have it in every place that has been at all backward. We need the men very much.

*Saturday, April 16.* — Rained all day. The court simply finished O'Brien's case, and adjourned until Monday, when Porter comes before them. Received a letter from Hannah to-day. Had a final meeting of the Council of Administration. Nothing new. Took bath.

ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April 16, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — Received your note, and am happy to say that I arrived here safely on Tuesday evening. . . .

There is nothing new here. I go to court every day. They are now trying cases from this regiment. . . .

Everything is going on quietly and we are having a good time. The regiment behaves very well, and gives us very little trouble. The incompetent officers are being weeded out, and soon we shall have everything in fine shape.

We had a short visit from General Grant the other day. His looks disappointed me very much. He is not fine looking at all; on the contrary he is a very common-looking person. Still, his looks are of no consequence, if his deeds and actions are successful. . . .

I saw a funny couple the other day riding into town. There was an officer on horse-back, with a lady on behind clinging on to him. It began to sprinkle just as I met them, so the officer took the lady's parasol and opened it. The horse objected, and began dancing, and the female began yelling and the man cried Whoa. I could n't help stopping



and laughing at them. The horse soon quieted down and everything went on well.

*Sunday, April 17.* — Day showery. Had the usual Sunday inspection, which was very creditable to the regiment. Nothing new happened.

*Monday, April 18.* — Court met at 9 o'clock and finished Porter's case. Then began on Jones of F Company. Weather pleasant. Major Chamberlain took tea with us. Sent home my pipe by Adams Express. Three negro regiments came in this afternoon. The corps was organized into brigades and divisions yesterday, but for some reason General Burnside, who went on to Washington last evening, countermanded the order. There are the usual number of camp rumors afloat. One is that the corps is to rendezvous at Newport News. Another that five regiments have received marching orders. None of them are true, I think. By the way, the chief quartermaster says no wagons will be issued to us here. That looks like transportation by water from here.

*Tuesday, April 19.* — Court-martial finished the case of Jones, also McCartney's, and began on McClellan's case. I was called as a witness in McClellan's case. General Stevenson<sup>1</sup> was here to-day, and John Jones. I am glad to say that General S. is to command our brigade, to be composed of the 24th Massachusetts, 10th Connecticut, 56th, 57th and 58th Massachusetts Volunteers. We had a visit from Mrs. General Burnside, Mrs. Richmond and several other ladies. General Ferrero, Colonel Coales and Colonel Goodrich were with them. They waited here some half hour. General S. dined with us. Had a letter from Hannah to-day, and received my photographs.

<sup>1</sup> General Thomas G. Stevenson, of Massachusetts, killed at Spottsylvania on May 10, less than a month later.

ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April* 19, '64.

DEAR FATHER, — I have not heard from home for a week, I should think. What is every one about?

We have had some pleasant news to-day. General Stevenson was here to-day and took dinner with us. He is to have a brigade composed of the 24th Massachusetts, the 10th Connecticut, the 56th Massachusetts, the 57th Massachusetts, and the 58th or 59th Massachusetts. As the new regiments come here, he is probably to have a division.

You don't know what a load is taken off my mind, by having General S. command our brigade, and by having such fine regiments as the 24th Massachusetts and 10th Connecticut in a brigade with us. I feel a thousand times better than I did this morning. . . .

I do not think that we shall leave here much under four weeks. There are to be 65 infantry regiments here in all, and the total number present will be at least 30,000 men. The corps is to be divided into four divisions. General Parke is to have one, General Foster may take another, and the fourth one, composed of colored troops, is to be under the command of General Ferrero.

I am busy all day now on court-martial. We are engaged on cases in this regiment at present.

*Wednesday, April 20.* — Day pleasant. General Stevenson was here in the morning. He takes command of the division temporarily. It is to be commanded by Major General Crittenden. Colonel Griswold is temporarily in command of the brigade. Received orders to be ready to march Saturday morning at 4 A.M. Also to turn in A tents and draw shelter tents. 57th Massachusetts arrived this evening.



Capt. Hiram S. Shurtzoff  
56th Mass. Vols. A dau friend



ANNAPOLIS, MD., *April 20, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — I am afraid that you will not have a chance to see me before we start. We shall probably leave here before the end of the week. I think letters may be addressed Ninth Army Corps, *via* Washington. They will probably reach me, where a great many other of my letters have.

We draw shelter tents for our men to-morrow and turn in our A tents. The officers will likewise have to draw shelter tents. Everything points to an active and speedy campaign, and I imagine that a week from to-day, or perhaps two weeks, may see us in a fight. I feel pretty confident that the regiment will do well, and will be an honor to the state. I most certainly hope so.

I am very glad indeed that we have General Stevenson with us. He is to command our brigade and Major General Crittenden our division. General S. is temporarily commanding the division until General Crittenden's arrival, which gives Colonel G[riswold] our brigade for a few days, and me the command of this regiment.

We leave on Saturday morning at 4 o'clock.

*Thursday, April 21.* — Court-martial adjourned until to-morrow at 9 A.M. Regiment busy all day turning in dress-coats, caps, etc. Ordered five days' rations cooked to be ready by 6 P.M. to-morrow. Had a room hired at Annapolis for regimental baggage, a portion of which was taken down to-day. Mills was detailed yesterday on General Stevenson's staff, and likewise the quartermaster, Lieutenant Shurtleff, was detailed as acting adjutant, and Lieutenant Cartwright as acting quartermaster.

*Friday, April 22.* — Made all our preparations for starting to-morrow. Mrs. Burnside was at camp to-day. Five days' cooked rations were issued. Colonel Griswold

was relieved of the command of the brigade, and Colonel Carruth, 35th Massachusetts, was put in his place, as he ranked Colonel G. Day pleasant.

*Saturday, April 23.* — General sounded at 4 A.M. Left camp at 8.15 A.M. and marched to within one mile of Patuxent River, about 14 miles, where we encamped. As usual with a new regiment, the men overloaded themselves and for the first five miles the ground was strewn with blankets, knapsacks and clothing. The day was excessively warm, and notwithstanding all our efforts, the men straggled a good deal. Captain —— left his company without leave, probably on account of Captain Putnam's place in line.

*Sunday, April 24.* — Left camp about 8 A.M., reveille sounding about 5 o'clock. Marched all day long, the men doing well, especially in the afternoon. The morning march was tiresome, as we had to halt every few minutes. We went into camp about 10 miles from Washington on the Bladensburg Pike, about 9 P.M. Took us a long time to cross a branch near our camp, and when we pitched our tents the rain was falling fast, and everything seemed gloomy and uncomfortable. I luckily had my shelter tent with me, which we pitched with the colors. Wagons did not arrive until 4 A.M.

*Monday, April 25.* — We started about 7 A.M. and forded the stream at Bladensburg. Marched on to Camp Barry [near Washington], where we halted some time. Here we formed in platoons and marched in review by the President, who was on the balcony at Willard's Hotel. He looked ten years older than when I saw him last. Saw Frank Balch. Crossed Long Bridge and camped in front of Fort Scott. Men marched well. Day pleasant though hot. Made about 16 miles.

*Tuesday, April 26.* — We remained in camp all day and

Apr. 25th 1864.

Dear Steve,

Should anything occur to me during this campaign, I want you to send all my effects that you can to my mother

Mrs. Anna Griswold  
Brookline  
Mass.

We are and have been good friends; I am glad you have been with me, and if we don't return together send to ~~the~~ the same address a small black bag you will find hung round my neck -- unopened.

Truly Yours,  
C.C.G.

Letter Col. Griswold left for me in his valise in case of his death





sent in requisitions for ordnance, etc. Had an inspection of all our companies, and a general overhauling of all our baggage, etc., preparatory for a campaign. Gilmore, our sutler, came out to see us. Weather pleasant. General Stevenson was the only general officer present in the corps. I don't like the way things are conducted in the corps. Every one has to move on his own hook, and things seem very loosely conducted. The 24th Massachusetts and 10th Connecticut had been sent to Fort Monroe when we arrived here. Charley Griswold showed me a letter addressed to me in his valise, to be opened in case anything happened to him.

*Wednesday, April 27.* — Received orders to move at 5 A.M. Finally started at about 8 o'clock on the Leesburg Pike. Branched off on the Columbia Pike and reached Fairfax Court House about 6 P.M., where we went into camp. Day warm and dusty, and march very fatiguing to the men. One man from the 57th dropped down dead. Marched 15 miles. Dabney<sup>1</sup> came to see us. Met Lieutenant Colonel Chandler of the 57th Massachusetts.

*Thursday, April 28.* — Started about 7 A.M. and marched to Bristoe Station, about 20 miles, getting into camp at 6 P.M. Day cool and pleasant. Men as usual marched well. General Burnside joined us at Manassas Junction. It really seemed like home to go over this country, which I have been through so many times. Thought of General Porter as we passed over the country, through which we were then campaigning. Saw some of the enemy's scouts at Centreville. Saw Captain Spear, who said we were to relieve the Fifth Corps, who were guarding the railroads.

<sup>1</sup> Lewis S. Dabney, Harvard 1861.

BRISTOE STATION, *April 28, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — Here I am again on the old ground. We left Alexandria yesterday and reached here to-night. The regiment marches well, and I am much pleased with it.

The report is that we relieve the Fifth Corps, which is guarding the railroad at Washington. I don't believe it, although I think it highly probable that the negro division of the corps may be left to do guard-duty. We marched from Fairfax C. H. this morning, and as I feel very tired, I must stop.

*Friday, April 29.* — Left camp at about 7.15 A.M. and marched to Catlett's Station, where I saw Billy Swan<sup>1</sup> and Captain O'Beirne of the 14th Regiment of Regulars. From there we marched to Warrenton Junction, then to Licking Run, some two miles farther. Here we were encamped for the night, having marched about 13 miles. We threw out pickets, etc., to protect ourselves from guerillas, but were not troubled by them. It seems that we are to guard the railroad from Catlett's Station to Rappahannock Station, relieving General Griffin's division of the Fifth Corps. We expect to remain in camp here for a day or two. Weather pleasant. We have been very fortunate in our march, having had but one rainy night for a week.

*Saturday, April 30.* — Left camp about 9.15 A.M. and marched to Bealeton Station, where we took possession of the 4th Michigan camp. Met Monteith on the way up and Batchelder<sup>2</sup> at Bealeton Station. Went up to General Griffin's headquarters and saw Barnard and Davis. Then saw Captain Martin and offered him \$275 for his horse,

<sup>1</sup> W. W. Swan, Harvard 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Both Monteith and Batchelder were with me on General Porter's staff.

which he would not take. Rained a little during the day. Were ready to form line at a minute's notice. Last evening I received documents from War Department in reference to Brown of Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

*Sunday, May 1.* — I was detailed as brigade field-officer of the day. Our regiment was moved out half a mile from the station, and six companies placed on picket with four in reserve. I visited my line three times, it being about five miles long. Stayed with Captain Thayer's reserve during the night. A few shots were fired, not amounting to anything. Day pleasant. Fifth Corps move to the front to-day.

*Monday, May 2.* — Colonel Chandler relieved me as F. O. D. Took a bath and changed my clothes. Most of the day was pleasant, but in the afternoon we had a sort of tornado. Night chilly. Received several letters and some photographs from Black's. George Weld wrote me that he had sent me a horse by the 59th Massachusetts, part of which arrived here to-day.

*Tuesday, May 3.* — Rode up to Rappahannock Station, where I found my horse with the 59th Massachusetts Volunteers. Crossed the Rappahannock on a pontoon bridge, which was built under charge of Captain Slosson. Went to General Meade's headquarters, where I saw Colonel Lyman, Bates, Bache, Riddle, Joy, Mason, and Biddle. Then went to cavalry headquarters, where I saw Colonel Kingsbury. Found General Sedgwick's headquarters about half a mile from here, where I saw the general and Whittier. Saw Henry Dalton and General Wright, and dined with them. Saw the orders issued for the movement of the army, and also General Meade's address to the army. The Army of the Potomac moves to-morrow at 4 A.M. They cross the river at Germanna

<sup>1</sup> The man whom we smashed up for selling liquor to the men. See p. 261.

and Ely and Culpeper Mine fords. We follow at the two first fords. Had a jolly time, and reached camp at 6 P.M. Found that we were under orders to move at a moment's notice. Liked my horse very much indeed. Received a letter from Hannah. Day pleasant, although it sprinkled in the evening and threatened rain for to-morrow.

BEALETON STATION, VA., *May 3, '64.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I am very sorry indeed that you did not find us at Annapolis. We started quite suddenly, and had only about 24 hours' warning. We marched to Washington, and passed in review before the President, who was at Willard's Hotel, and then moved across Long Bridge to camp near Alexandria. We remained there one day, and then moved on to Fairfax C. H., where we camped one night, moving on the next morning to Bristoe Station, passing over country that I have been through so many times. We camped for the night at B. Station, and then moved to Licking Run, two miles beyond Warrenton Junction. The next morning we reached Bealeton Station, where we are now camped. Our regiment is picketing the railroad for about five miles.

The Ninth Corps is to guard the railroad while the Army of the Potomac advances. If they are successful, we shall probably move down to Aquia Creek, and guard that railroad to Fredericksburg. . . .

*Wednesday, May 4.* — Started at about 7 o'clock for Brandy Station. Halted there in the sun for four or five hours. At 4.45 P.M. we started for Germanna Ford. Saw Colonel Marshall just before I left. The regiment marched and marched, but as it was separated, the latter half did not reach the ford until next morning, having marched 27 miles, 6 miles out of our way. We went into

camp at 2 A.M. with about fifty men, constituting all that was left out of four companies. Other regiments were just as bad. Weather pleasant. March the hardest I have ever been on. Saw Colonel Macy to-day and lent him my horse to ride ahead.

*Thursday, May 5.* — Started at daybreak and marched 6 miles, when we joined the remainder of the regiment near Germanna Ford. We soon started again, and crossed the river on a pontoon bridge at the ford. Heard that the army met with little opposition here. Saw some of General Grant's staff, who told us that our army was in position at Mine Run and was to attack this morning. General Grant ordered us to hold the hills and fortifications which command the crossing, which we did. His aide told us that Sherman telegraphed that all looked well, and that he was to attack to-day. Gillmore and Smith attack Petersburg to-day, and we feel of the enemy at Mine Run, where he retreated after the crossing of the army yesterday. Heard cannon and musketry about one o'clock, continuing at intervals during the afternoon. Started about 8 P.M. to march, but were ordered back again. The 10th and 4th Regulars joined us to-day.

*Friday, May 6.* — Started about 3 A.M. and marched on the Plank Road to a point near General Meade's headquarters. From here we were sent to the left and ordered to report to General Birney. All this time the musketry firing was fearful. It was one continual roll, at long intervals broken by the loud booming of a cannon. We went up what was called the Brock Road. We kept receiving orders from Generals Hancock, Birney and others, so that "things were slightly mixed." We found quite a sharp fight going on, the enemy having been driven two miles since morning. The firing was almost entirely from musketry, as we were in the celebrated

Wilderness, where the country is thickly wooded, with a thick underbrush of scrub-pine, briars, etc. Our brigade was filed to the right of the Orange Court House Road, and placed in column of regiments with the left resting on the road. We advanced, being the third line, some half a mile without much opposition. We were engaged in this way about three hours, from 8.45 until 11.45, losing only about six men. At about 12 the enemy flanked our left, and we were sent to oppose their advance. We were posted in a ditch along the side of the road, and on the left. A heavy fire was immediately opened on us, and as some of the men were in confusion from some of the Second Corps running through them, Colonel Griswold ordered the colors forward. Colonel Griswold was shot dead, through the neck, and consequently I was left in command of the regiment.

As the enemy had crossed the road on our left and right, I asked General Webb, who was to the rear a few paces, whether I should not order them to retreat. He said I had better do so. His actual words were: "Get out of there as d—d quick as you can!" We had to try a double quick-step in order to save our colors and escape being taken prisoners. I tried to rally the men five or six times, but as soon as we stopped we got a volley which started us on again. The men did not retreat until I ordered them to do so. They behaved admirably. I was very much astonished that they did not all run when the Second Corps ran over them. Sergeant Harrigan, our color-sergeant, behaved nobly. When we had gone back about 30 or 40 rods, Captain Adams was wounded and left in the hands of the enemy. We reached the road with about 75 men and the colors, — more men than were with the colors of any other regiment. We soon collected 100 more men, and by afternoon the ranks were swelled to 300.

We were on the Plank Road to Orange Court House, where we were engaged, and after the fight we were placed behind rifle-pits on the Brock Road. We were in action about three and a half hours. Saw John Perry just as I was going into the fight. Got a bullet through my boot-leg, while we were retreating. The fire was the heaviest I have ever been under. Several of my men, that I drove out from behind trees, were killed by my side. Trees were cut down by the bullets, and bark was knocked into my face time and again by the bullets. We were not able to get poor Charley Griswold's body. Sent out for it, and also for Zab Adams's, but could find no traces of either. The last words that Charley said to me were, "Poor Bartlett is killed."<sup>1</sup> The result of the day's fight was that we gained ground all along the line, capturing several hundred prisoners. The enemy partially turned our right.

[When we were advancing on this morning we passed several rebels lying on the ground, who had been wounded a little while before. One of them asked one of our men for some water. The man stopped at the brook, got him some water, and then went ahead. As soon as we had gone fifty yards or so, the fellow we had given water to drew himself up and shot one of our men. Some of the others went back and quickly put him out of the world. It was a mean, cowardly thing for a man to do who had been treated as we treated him.

The firing to-day was the heaviest I have ever known or heard. I think the regiment did remarkably well considering that they were a new regiment, and that the old troops whose terms of enlistment were expiring did not behave very well — as one might naturally expect where

<sup>1</sup> General Bartlett was not killed, as Griswold had heard.

troops who were to go out of service the next day were put into a heavy fight. I have every reason to feel proud of the regiment. Griswold's death was a sad blow to me, as I was very fond of him. He was extremely brave and behaved like a gallant soldier. He was shot through the jugular vein while holding the colors, which were covered with his blood.]

*Saturday, May 7.* — We were posted as a reserve for the brigade. Had no fighting in our front during the day. We held the Brock Road. Weather pleasant. Heavy firing on the right. I was placed in command of my brigade, being the senior officer present. All the wagons were sent to Chancellorsville last night. Sent out again to-day and found Colonel Griswold's body, robbed of everything. He looked very natural. Had a coffin made and had Charley buried, as we could not send the body home. We started for Chancellorsville at one A.M.

[We regained the ground we had lost in the morning, and found Griswold's body stripped of everything but the underclothing. I sent back at once to the headquarters wagon and got his valise, and opened a note I found in it, a facsimile of which is printed opposite page 280. Of course I could not find any black bag, but there is a curious sequel to this. Some five years after the War I was at a party in Boston, when a married lady whom I was talking to asked me if I was not with Colonel Griswold. I said I was, and after beating around the bush for some time she finally said, "Do you know whether anything was seen of a locket that he had around his neck?" I said no, it could not be found, but he asked me to get it and send it to his mother. She said, "My picture was in that locket."]





Col. Chas. C. Griswold  
Comdg 56th Mass. Vols.



*Sunday, May 8.* — Reached Chancellorsville about noon, where we found all the trains of the army and the Reserve Artillery. It seems that the enemy retreated during the night (?). We are making for Richmond as fast as we can. Our loss in the late fight [of the 5th and 6th] is from 10,000 to 11,000. The battle is to be called Battle of the Wilderness. Camped for the night about two miles from Chancellorsville. Weather warm and pleasant. Saw Captain Ladd, and dined in his tent with General Stevenson.

*Monday, May 9.* — Started at 3.30 A.M. for Spottsylvania Court House. After numerous halts and losing our way, we got within three miles of the town, when we were ordered to make a forced march and join General Willcox, who was engaged with the enemy. The day was fearfully warm and dusty, and in making the march we lost some hundred stragglers who soon turned up, however. Found General Willcox and reported to him. Was ordered to keep the brigade in reserve. His division, together with Lesure's brigade, was posted on the heights beyond the Nye River, and about a mile from Spottsylvania. Beyond we could see the rebel lines and the rebel troops moving, together with their trains. The corps lost about 200 men in to-day's fight. Sent the 57th and 56th Massachusetts to a point on this side of the river. Headquarters with the Regulars.<sup>1</sup>

*Tuesday, May 10.* — Weather pleasant. Heavy firing began on our right, and continued during the day. Regulars were sent to Colonel Humphreys to keep up the communication with General Meade. The 59th and 56th were afterwards ordered there. An attack was made along the whole line about 5 P.M. We gained ground in

<sup>1</sup> The series of engagements from May 8 to 18 is known collectively as the Battle of Spottsylvania.

front of our corps. The firing on Meade's left surpassed anything I have ever heard. The firing lasted over an hour, but with what success I cannot say. The 56th was afterwards moved over the creek to support a battery. I had my headquarters with them. We all of us felt dreadfully to-day on account of Tom Stevenson's death. Was with him when he died. Had some of my men make a coffin for him. On the left of the road were three or four terraces, and he was lying down under one of them, when a sharpshooter from Spottsylvania fired at him from one of the trees. The bullet penetrated his head, and he died in half an hour. He will be a sad loss to us all.

SPOTTSYLVANIA C. H., *May 10, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I am safe and sound so far, I am thankful to say. We have had the hardest battle of the war, with fearful loss on our side. We were in the second day's fight in the battle of the Wilderness and had a mighty tough time of it. It was by far the hottest fire I have ever been under. Colonel Griswold was killed while behaving most nobly. We were in line of battle along the side of the road, when the Second Corps came rushing over our two right companies, throwing them into some confusion. Colonel Griswold ran up there with the color-bearer to rally the men, and while doing so was shot dead through the jugular vein. I then took command of the regiment, which had to fall back soon on account of being flanked. We had the rebs on three sides of us, and I held on as long as I possibly could, and then gave the order to fall back. General Webb was a few yards behind me, and I did not retreat until he ordered me to. The men and officers behaved splendidly, and I am real proud of them. We are following the enemy up close,

Nye River  
May 10<sup>th</sup> 1864

Col Wells

Comd'g Bn

Please report

with your remaining Regt  
to Col Humphrey ~~with you~~

By order of  
Bryant W. Wells  
Major

Major Jones

Comd'g 53<sup>th</sup> Mass. Inf.

You will report as  
per in accordance with  
above order.



and driving him. We are going to whip them thoroughly, I think.

Henry Abbott is killed and Colonel Macy wounded, not serious. General Stevenson was killed by a stray shot from the enemy this morning while in a comparatively secure place.

Since the third day's fight I have been in command of my brigade, and Major Jarves of the regiment. Imagine me in command of a brigade. Colonel Bartlett is wounded, not serious. Colonel Gould and Colonel Carruth were both sun-struck.

*Wednesday, May 11.* — Quiet most of the day except skirmishing. All the troops were withdrawn from the heights beyond Nye River, at 8.30 P.M., and moved to the rear, to connect with the Army of the Potomac. We immediately moved back again into our old position without any opposition. We were ordered to move at 4 A.M. against the enemy. Rained in the afternoon. Tom Stevenson's body was sent home to-day. John Jones went with it. It made me feel blue enough to lose such a fellow as he was.

*Thursday, May 12.* — General Crittenden arrived last evening and took command of our division this morning. Our whole corps advanced at 4 A.M., Potter's division leading and Crittenden's following. The 1st Brigade of Crittenden's division had the advance of the division. We moved up the Spottsylvania road, swinging our left around so that it was nearly at right angles to the road. We advanced about a mile from the road before we were engaged with the enemy. The movement turned out to be one to connect with Meade's army. I thought that the enemy had retreated, and that we were following him, and had no idea that we were going right into a fight.

Potter was soon briskly engaged, and as they were trying to flank him, I threw forward my right, making almost a right angle with his line. Potter carried the first line of the enemy's pits. I had the 59th and 57th detached, the former to report to Potter and the later to Lesure, leaving me with the 56th. Soon the Regulars joined me, and were posted on the left of three brass guns, with the 56th on the right. Skirmishers and sharpshooters soon began to annoy, and the battery cleared out. About 3 P.M. an order was received from General Grant, ordering the corps to charge the enemy's works. My brigade was out of ammunition, but the 56th advanced, misunderstanding the order. Artillery and infantry soon opened on them, and for some time shells were plenty. Our men were repulsed. Major Jarves was wounded in the heel. Likewise Lieutenant Galucia. Captain Putnam ordered them to fall back slowly. Two thirds of them obeyed, but the remainder ran. I rallied about 80 of them and put them in the front again. We had brisk skirmishing all day. In the night, as we had not formed a junction with Hancock, it was proposed to fall back, but it was effected without falling back. On the right we were very successful, Hancock capturing several thousand men. Rained in the afternoon and night. Had to lie down on a bank without anything but a rubber coat. Felt cold and miserable all night.

*Friday, May 13.* — Our men finished building their rifle-pits. Sharpshooters popping away at us all day. About 4 P.M. the enemy fired a volley at us, and another at 9.30 P.M. We were notified that two army corps were to pass in our rear during the night, and form on our left.

*Saturday, May 14.* — I was relieved this morning of the command of the brigade by General Ledlie.<sup>1</sup> Fifth and

<sup>1</sup> Gen. James H. Ledlie.



Sixth Corps formed on our left. Rumor that they took a battery there.

*Sunday, May 15.* — Little more sharpshooting than usual. A man from E Company was killed by a sharpshooter while standing by a line in rear of headquarters. George Barnard and Davis were over here to see me this morning. Heard that we formed the extreme right, the Second Corps having moved to our left. Rained a good part of the day. Threw up traverses.

*Monday, May 16.* — Remained in the same position as yesterday. Barnard came over with a Boston paper of May 11. Corporal Sherman of A Company slightly wounded by a sharpshooter. We sent out our pickets to feel the enemy this morning. They advanced to within 100 yards of the rebel pits, where they were driven back. The Regulars afterwards went out and lost six or seven men. The enemy were found in force. Orders came for all calls to be sounded as usual, and for all bands to be sent to the front. Had my horses sent to brigade headquarters. Heard of Waldo Merriam's death. Rainy in the morning and pleasant in the afternoon.

*Tuesday, May 17.* — Day pleasant. Major Jarves came up to see us. He goes home on a twenty-days' leave of absence, to get his wooden leg repaired. Sent home a letter by one of the Sanitary Commission to Father. Heard that we were to move over to the left to support the Sixth Corps in the attack to be made to-morrow. Got my blankets from James. Late in the evening found that the plan of attack was changed, and that we were to charge the battery in our front. The change is not very agreeable to me, as we shall get particular Tophet if we go in on our front.

*Wednesday, May 18.* — I was sent for by General Ledlie at 3 A.M. Saw General L. and General Crittenden.

Received orders to move forward into the woods in my front, with the 56th, the 35th Massachusetts acting as the support, and charge the rebel rifle-pits. Moved forward at 4 A.M. When within about 100 yards of the abattis, I ordered a charge, and going on the double-quick we reached the abattis, a very thick one. Here we were under a very heavy cross fire of canister and musketry, and it was impossible to get the men forward. I could not blame them much, for the limbs, and even trees, were cut down like grass, and the place was most decidedly uncomfortable. I sent the sergeant major to General Ledlie with the information that we could not take the works. He returned, but could get no instructions. I ordered the men forward again in vain, and in endeavoring to get up the 35th as a support, they ran away, for which I did not blame them. I then ordered the men to fall back, which they did, forming in front of the rifle-pits. We were ordered into the woods again, and the men ordered to lie down. We were soon ordered into the breastworks again. The 57th Massachusetts and 4th and 10th Regulars were ordered in, but got no farther than we did. We lost 37 wounded, 2 killed, and 10 missing. Two officers were wounded, Lieutenants Maylone and Littlefield. Lieutenant McArdle seriously wounded in the head by a sharpshooter. General Crittenden sent for me in the evening and told me to take charge of the corps picket, as we were to withdraw and take up a new position.

*Thursday, May 19.*—Corps started by 4 A.M. Drew in my pickets by 4.20 without any trouble. None of them were fired at. The corps marched three or four miles to the left, and took up its position on the left of the Sixth Corps, in front of Anderson's house. We began to intrench late in the evening. Had quite a strong position. Day pleasant. Saw Henry Dalton and breakfasted with

him and General Russell. Heard of General Sedgwick's death.<sup>1</sup>

*Friday, May 20.* — Had our rifle-pits all finished this morning, and abattis placed in front. Men had a chance to rest. Heavy fogs during the night. Men were aroused at three A.M., expecting an attack. James came up with horses. Enemy attacked our supply trains on the right, and were repulsed by the Heavies.

*Saturday, May 21.* — Morning pleasant. At noon we received orders to be ready to move at a moment's notice. Our pickets were driven in during the afternoon, and we were sent out to support them. When we came back, we started again for Richmond by a flank movement. Marched all night. Had a heavy shower in the afternoon, which wet me through. Marched about 4 miles before I could get my horse.

*Sunday, May 22.* — We marched until 4 or 5 this morning. We passed through Guinea Station, and halted in a ploughed field beyond it. We passed through the most beautiful and fertile part of Virginia that I have yet seen. The trees were all in leaf, and the corn and wheat well started. The country is rolling, with numerous streams intersecting it. I hear that we are the rear guard, with the trains. The army moves in three columns. Hancock is ahead. Lost my pistol last night. Met Holmes on the march. Day warm.

*Monday, May 23.* — Started at 6.45 A.M. and marched until 7.30 P.M. Very tiresome march, as we had to keep halting and then making a long stretch. Most of the men out of rations. Hancock immediately in our front, fighting for the ford over North Anna River. Hear that he has it. Warren has crossed on the right. Sharp firing there.

<sup>1</sup> He was killed at Spottsylvania on May 9.

Saw Captain Sleeper this evening. Crossed the Mat, Ta and Po rivers.<sup>1</sup>

*Tuesday, May 24.*— Remained on the north bank of the river [North Anna] until about 12 M. We then crossed by a ford. Our brigade formed in line of battle, and about 3 P.M. advanced into the woods. The banks on both sides of the river are steep and woody. We gained the crest on the south side, and formed line in an open field. Our brigade was in three line, the 35th Massachusetts being deployed as skirmishers. We advanced about three fourths of a mile without opposition. The skirmishers soon became engaged, and soon ours were driven back. I then ordered my men to rise and give a left oblique fire, which they did, driving Johnnie Rebel. Came near being hit in the ankle. We then charged to within a hundred yards of their works, receiving grape and canister on the way. Here we remained two or three hours, the sharpshooters picking off our men all the time. Major Putnam received a scalp wound [from which he afterwards died. A brave officer]. Baker of A Company was killed while fighting bravely.

About 6.45 a thunder-shower came up, and during it the enemy charged on our right flank and front just as we received an order to fall back. While I was trying to rally my men, I got a bullet through my coat, scratching me on my side. Colonel Chandler of the 57th was mortally wounded at the same time, and died in the enemy's lines in two hours. We lost 8 killed, 38 wounded and 24 missing. General Ledlie lost three of his staff and his brigade flag-sergeant. Wallace was taken prisoner, Sergeant Cosgrove wounded through both legs. The enemy thought it was an attack on their centre in force. General Ledlie made a botch of it. Had too much ——

<sup>1</sup> These, when united with the Nye, make the Mattapony River.

on board, I think. Rained during the evening. General Crittenden placed me in charge of the brigade, as General L. was sleepy and tired.

[After we were driven back on this day, Chandler stopped me and said, "Weld, what are you going to do?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "I am going to rally my men and try to make a stand." I said, "I will join you." He got about 50 or 60 of his men together; I had my colors in my hand getting my men together, and when I had collected about the same number, General Mahone came up within forty yards of us and gave us a volley. I was turning, calling some of my men back at the moment the volley was fired, and got a bullet through my coat that scratched my side for about three inches and drew blood and raised an enormous welt, from which I was sore for a week or ten days. The same volley seemed to me to knock over all the men I had got together. Chandler was mortally wounded, and altogether it was an unpleasant little time. My only idea was to try and get inside our lines before I dropped. As soon as I got behind the temporary works we had thrown up, I pulled up my shirt and found I was only scratched, and I felt quite happy. At the moment I was hit it felt like a red-hot iron on my side.]

*Wednesday, May 25.* — We occupied the second line of intrenchments. Had a heavy thunder-storm. During the day we rested, while the Fifth Corps advanced their skirmish-line. We were assigned to the Army of the Potomac to-day, and our division temporarily assigned to General Warren, who is on our right. Saw Colonel Theodore Lyman to-day.

[*May 25, written on envelope*]

DEAR HANNAH, — I am glad to inform you that I am safe and sound so far. Had a hard scrimmage yesterday. I came out safely although a bullet went through my coat, etc., and raised a scratch over an inch long. It is the first time that I have ever been wounded or rather touched by a ball. Had my boot torn by a bullet in the Wilderness, which was the nearest I ever came to it.

We go into a real fight every six days. Have been in one the 6th, 12th, 18th and 24th. Next time will be the 30th. I shall be lucky if I get through without being killed. Every one is being killed that I know. We are whipping the rebels well, although it is a work of time.

I see by the papers that we lost our colors. It is a falsehood. We have never lost our colors, and I hope never shall.

*Thursday, May 26.* — We remained in the second line. Received orders to be ready to move about 4 P.M. The whole army is to recross the river, move down on the enemy's right flank towards Hanover Court House. We moved at dark, crossing on a bridge which had been built while we were in the pits. It rained heavily, so that the river rose and almost washed the bridge away. Our brigade moved up to Jericho Ford, holding it until morning.

*Friday, May 27.* — Held the ford until half-past eight A.M., when we were relieved by the cavalry. We then marched down towards Bethel Church. During the day our corps formed the rear guard, marching after the trains. We marched until about 10 P.M., making about 10 or 11 miles, one of the most fatiguing marches I have ever made. We had to halt every few feet. Went

into camp just after striking the Bowling Green Road. Ten stragglers.

*Saturday, May 28, and Sunday, May 29.* — We started at 9.20 A.M., being the rear brigade. Made easy marches until 12, when we halted an hour for dinner. Continued marching until 6 P.M., by which time we had made over 15 miles. We were then bothered for over two hours by the trains in our front. We kept on marching all night, until 6 A.M. in the morning, making about 13 additional miles. We crossed the Pamunkey on pontoon bridges at Hanover town. We passed through Dr. Brockenborough's place and over the road where I came near being captured by Stuart two years ago. We then went into position on a cross-road, and remained there during the night.

*Monday, May 30.* — We moved to the front about noon. We then went into position in the right of the Fifth Corps. Threw up rifle-pits and remained there during the night. Quite heavy skirmishing in our front. Day pleasant.

*Tuesday, May 31.* — We were ordered out to the front, and took possession of some rifle-pits. Remained there but a few minutes as the enemy were found to be in strong force. Had two men shot while moving out, by the enemy's sharpshooters. Went back to our old rifle-pits, but about two o'clock were ordered out again, the 56th being deployed as skirmishers in front of the brigade. Moved forward and took possession of the pits we vacated in the morning. Skirmishers were thrown out 60 paces in front of the rifle-pits. Had some heavy skirmishing for about an hour. Lost two men killed, and thirteen wounded, and one officer. About dark the brigade was withdrawn, the 56th remaining until 12 P.M., when we were relieved.

[I cannot find from my diary exactly when what I am about to narrate here occurred, but it was somewhere within a day or two, if it was not this very day. We were ordered out to attack the enemy, and it was to be in the nature of a surprise as far as possible, so that orders were given that no one should speak above a whisper. All orders were whispered to the men, and we were told, in marching forward, to try and not even break the branches on the ground that we were treading on. It was a beautiful summer's day, birds were singing and the sun shimmering and shining through the trees. Everything as far as nature was concerned was as far removed from the idea or appearance of war as it possibly could be. I do not think that the suspense of going into a fight was ever so trying as it was on this occasion, and that is why I mention it here. It made such an impression on me that it will last the rest of my life. Everything, as I have said, in the surroundings breathed of peace and beauty and quiet and the loveliness of nature. Contrasted with it, we knew that within two or three minutes there would be a fight, and while advancing and waiting for the first shot to come, I had all I could do to keep myself up to my duty. When the first shot was fired, I did not care, the charm was broken, and I was ready to do my duty; but the suspense of waiting for this was perfectly awful.]

*Wednesday, June 1.* — We did not get the regiment into camp until about 2 A.M. We occupy a very unpleasant place. The road passes right in our rear, and a cloud of dust envelopes us night and day. We were under marching orders all day. The enemy attacked the Fifth Corps, and also made a reconnoissance in force in our front. Saw Riddle and Mason in the evening. Hancock moved to the left.



*Thursday, June 2.* — We were under marching orders, and about 3 P.M. moved to our rear. The whole corps marched ahead of us, leaving us as rear-guard. We had not gone far before the rebels attacked us. The whole thing was miserably managed. We checked the enemy, however. Our regiment was in the third line, being in front of Captain Thomas's battery. While there we lost about six men, and Lieutenant Mitchell, wounded by our own shell. We were moved afterwards to the right, occupying some temporary rifle-pits. Had a heavy thunder-shower during the afternoon, just before the enemy attacked. Captain Cowdin, F. O. D., was wounded while falling back. During night, rainy. Dug some strong rifle-pits.

[Our position this day was a most disagreeable one. We were supporting a battery and in front of it, they firing over our heads and we lying down on the ground. The battery was on slightly rising ground, but the shells stripped as they were fired from the guns, and as the firing was unusually bad, it was most destructive to our regiment, as the strips of the shells and shot flew around us right and left. It was bad enough to be killed by the rebels, but to have our own men shoot us was worse. Captain Cowdin never turned up. He was probably killed. The last seen of him he was getting over a wall. He was a good officer and did his duty well, and we were very sorry to lose him.]

Near TOTTOPOTAMOY CREEK, VA.,  
(11 miles from RICHMOND) *June 2, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are stationed here about four or five miles from Mechanicsville, and about 11 from Richmond. We are bivouacking, and may move at any moment. We have had skirmishing almost every day, in

which this regiment has lost some men. Yesterday evening the enemy opened a heavy fire on us, advancing a very heavy line of skirmishers on to the front of our corps, and also on the Fifth Corps. It was more of a reconnoissance on their part than a general attack. They were driven back along the whole line.

Our men are pretty well used up by this campaign. Officers as well as men need rest, and I hope we shall get it before long. A great many of the men are without shoes, and most all of them are in rags. We have communication open with White House now, and I hope that we shall soon have all such deficiencies supplied.

We shall have some pretty hard fighting before we get Richmond. We are gradually working our way to the left towards James River, where I imagine we shall open communication with Butler.

I never knew before what campaigning was. I think, though, that all this army have a pretty fair idea of it now. We have had to march all day and all night, ford rivers, bivouac without blankets or any covering during rain and sunshine, and a good part of the time have been half starved. I know that no one staying at home can have any idea of what this army has been through. Any one who gets through safely may consider himself lucky.

We have lost 300 men in killed, wounded and missing since the beginning of the campaign. The missing amount to about 30 or 40 men, many of them killed and wounded. I have but 250 men for duty now,—rather a contrast to the size of the regiment when we left Readville.

Do you know whether I am to be commissioned as colonel of the regiment or not? No other person, were he commissioned, could take the place, as there are not enough men for him to be mustered. If I am commissioned as colonel and my commission dates the 6th or 7th

of May, I can probably be mustered back to that date, as I have been acting as colonel since then. I had over a minimum regiment on the 7th of May.

I think there is no doubt about our getting Richmond. It will undoubtedly be hard work, but we expect that.

I have not heard from home for a long time. I suppose you have seen Major Jarves. He behaved splendidly.

Give my love to all the family.

*June 3.* — We were held in reserve, and had to march and countermarch all day long. We were finally moved out to support Willcox, who was to make a charge. While we were lying here, a shell came along and grazed my coat sleeve. I had just changed my position, thereby saving my life, for the shell otherwise would have hit me in the back. We were finally moved to form a junction between Willcox and Potter. We did so, and after building rifle-pits retired to our old position, leaving the 39th to guard the pits. I was in command of the brigade part of the day as the general was sick.<sup>1</sup>

[Since this diary was written, I have found out that we formed the extreme right of the army, this right being refused so as to protect our rear. This brought us back to back with our troops right in front of us, our line being curved around like a fish-hook, and we forming the barb, as it were. It also turned us back to the enemy. There was a battery somewhere on our flank that was annoying us, and the rumor was that Willcox was to charge it and we were to support him. Anyway, the men were all lying down, and I was sitting with a cape of my coat thrown over my shoulder, leaning against the roots of an up-

<sup>1</sup> The fighting in these early days of June is known as the Battle of Cold Harbor.

rooted pine tree. Shells and bullets would keep dropping every once in a while, but nothing hot or heavy. I finally got tired and threw my legs from one side of the trunk to the other. It was not more than five seconds after I had done this that a shell fired at our troops on the front of our line, along the long part of the fish-hook, as it were, came over them, and plunged through the roots of the pine tree, just grazing my shoulder and covering me all over with dirt. It dropped right at my feet. Had I not changed my position, I should have been taken square in the back and crushed to pieces. It made me very nervous about shells. Until then I had not minded them much. Sometimes they seem to burst in the air all around you and never do much harm, although occasionally one would be destructive. My men all jumped up, thinking I was killed; but my usual luck attended me and I came out all right.]

*June 4.* — We were under orders to march during the whole day. Finally moved in the afternoon to a position between the Fifth Corps and the Eighteenth Corps. We were placed in reserve under the crest of a hill. Took tea with Captain Wright.

In the field, near BETHESDA CHURCH, *June 4, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER — Your letters of May 26th and 28th were received yesterday, and glad enough I was to get them.

We form the extreme right of the army, and are in strong fortifications. Yesterday our corps attacked the enemy in our front, and drove them about half a mile. The day before, we fell back from our line about two miles in front of our present one, in order to keep up our connection with the rest of the army, which had moved to the

left. While falling back the enemy attacked us, but we held our own and repulsed them. Our brigade was not actively engaged yesterday, being held in reserve. We were started from one end of the line to the other, and then back again, being under heavy shell fire, and scattering musketry. I had a very narrow escape. I was sitting on a fallen tree, when a 12-pounder shell came along very nearly spent, and grazed my coat sleeve. If I had not changed my position about 15 seconds before, it would have struck me in my right shoulder.

The enemy made a heavy attack on Hancock's Corps late last evening, and were repulsed with heavy loss. Things look well, although I have no idea what General Grant's plans can be. I should think that he would endeavor to reach the James River, and join with Butler.

I am perfectly well, although pretty well tired out from this hard campaigning. You have no idea of what the men and officers have had to undergo for the last month. A good portion of the time I have slept on the ground without blankets or shelter during rain and shine. I have not caught cold, and have never been in better health.

Give my love to all the family.

P.S. I received my commission as colonel this morning.

*June 5.*—Were again under orders to move, and did not get off until 6 P.M. We then moved to the rear, throwing back our right, as we form the extreme right of the army, the Fifth Corps moving to the left. Very heavy firing on our extreme left, some ten miles off, I should think. The enemy attacked the Eighteenth Corps a little after dusk, and were repulsed. Saw Ladd to-day.

*June 6.*—We strengthened our rifle-pits, throwing up traverses, etc. In the afternoon the enemy shelled us, and pushed Potter quite strongly. We were under orders

to move to his assistance if needed. Had a slight thunder-shower.

In the field, near COLD HARBOR, *June 6, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . I am thankful to say that so far I have escaped both shell, bullet and sickness, although the campaign has been by far the most severe that I have ever undergone. Our food has consisted of hard-tack and beef, when we could get it, with occasional variations of salt pork. Yesterday, though, my boy foraged some green peas, and I had a regular feast, I can tell you. Our shelter has generally been the "broad canopy of heaven" through all weathers, although I have been able occasionally to indulge in a tent fly. How you would laugh at home to see how dirty, brown and ragged we are. I had to go without a change of clothing for over twenty days, and during that time was unable to take my clothes off, even.

I have had three as narrow escapes as I ever wish to have. The last one was three or four days ago, when a 12-pounder shell that had not exploded, passed close by me, grazing my coat cape.

Everything looks as if we had settled down to a regular siege of Richmond. We shall probably have any amount of digging to do and, I hope, some rest. We can't get hold of our wagons though, which makes it very inconvenient.

I suppose you know that I am commissioned as colonel, Raish as lieutenant colonel and Captain Putnam as major. I am afraid that I cannot get mustered as colonel, as I have not enough men. . . .

*Tuesday, June 7.* — Received orders to move about 10 A.M. Our brigade marched to the rear, taking a position near Allen's Mill. We dug the usual rifle-pits, and





FIFTY-SIXTH MASSACHU





VOLUNTEERS ON DRESS PARADE



made ourselves comfortable. Late in the evening the 37th Massachusetts took position on our left. Day pleasant.

*Wednesday, June 8.* — Had all the men in the command washed to-day, and took a bath myself in the mill-pond. Day pleasant. Had no firing on our line. General Crittenden left us to-day, having been relieved at his own request. General Ledlie takes command of the division, and Colonel Gould of the brigade.

*Thursday, June 9.* — Saw John Jones to-day. He is going back to his regiment. They are with Butler at present. (Got my bundles from Alice.) Day pleasant. Ladd was here to-day, and also General Ledlie.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOL., *June 9, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — We have enjoyed a rest of a couple of days, which is doing our men a vast amount of good. We are all of us completely worn out, both in body and mind. We have now been over 37 days marching and fighting.

From what I can see, I do not think that we shall be in Richmond in much under two months. The papers give too rose-colored a view of matters, and I am afraid that they have raised public expectation too high. We are blocked here for the present, having butted against Lee's fortifications in vain. I do not feel discouraged about it, as I feel quite confident of ultimate, but not of immediate success. I expect daily to see the whole army start for the James River. When once there, inside our fortifications, we can afford to dig and wait. Here, in our present position, I am afraid that delay is dangerous, for Lee will use some such plan as he did against McClellan. We number probably more men than he does, but they are not the Army of the Potomac, which is pretty well used up.

They consist of heavy artillery, dismounted cavalry, etc., of whose fighting qualities I have my doubt. If we only reach James River safely, we can wait for Hunter's forces, or for Crook's, or even a portion of Sherman's, should he demolish Johnston.

Our baggage and commissary stores have all been sent to White House. Possibly this corps may be sent round by water to James River. I hope it will, as it would be a most delightful rest for us all.

Will you please send me \$2 worth of postage stamps, and also enclose twenty-five dollars to me, sending it in different letters by ten and fives at a time. I am entirely out of funds, as we have not been paid for almost seven months.

I am gradually rooting out my bad officers, and filling up their places with tried men. The last few weeks have proved a man's courage and worth pretty effectually. I shall promote some of the sergeants who behaved very bravely.

General Crittenden has been relieved at his own request. He was the ranking major general of the army, with the exception of Burnside and Grant, and felt, quite naturally, unpleasantly at having only a small division under him. I find that he is quite a friend of Uncle Oliver's. He is a fine man, and I am very sorry that he has gone. He went off quite unexpectedly, and I did not know it until he had gone. He told Charlie Mills that he wished to see me very much before he went. I think that he received a letter from Uncle Oliver about me just before he left. I know that he thought quite highly of me.

I have just received a pair of colonel's shoulder-straps from Palmer and Batchelder's. I am very much obliged to the person who sent them to me.

*Friday, June 10.* — All our teams are ordered to White House. I find that our cavalry under Sheridan started two days ago on a raid. I imagine they are going to join Hunter, who is reported to be at Staunton. The reconnoissance made across Bottom's Bridge by the Fifth Corps was a diversion in favor of our cavalry. Was mustered to-day as colonel, to date from May 6. Rebel cavalry drove in our cavalry pickets this afternoon.

*Saturday, June 11.* — Day pleasant. Rode along picket line, and went out towards Mechanicsville road with Colonel Gould. Two women came in and reported the rebels advancing, which turned out to be untrue. Took a bath. Received a large mail to-day, with letters from Hannah, Jarves, Father, etc.

*Sunday, June 12.* — Received the resignations of Captains Thayer and Redding, but they could not be acted on as we were making preparations for moving. Started at 8 P.M. and marched all night.

*Monday, June 13.* — Reached Tunstall's Station about 4 A.M., and remained there until about 2 P.M. We then marched to about three miles from the Chickahominy, where we remained for the night. Had hard marching during day.

*Tuesday, June 14.* — Routed out at 4.30 A.M., to move. Crossed a creek at Pollock's Mills. About a mile farther we crossed the Chickahominy, which divides, running round an island. The branches were not over 25 feet broad. Saw Colonel Spaulding<sup>1</sup> here. We then marched down to within two miles of the James River, near Tyler's Mills. Halted here an hour, opposite Ex-President Tyler's house. Moved on three miles, and went in rear of the Sixth Corps, where we camped for night. Dalton came over, and gave us provisions.

<sup>1</sup> Commander of one of the regiments in the Engineer Brigade.

[We had been twenty-four hours without food. By changing our base from White House over to the James River we interrupted the commissariat somewhat. I do not think I was ever so hungry in my life. We stacked arms in line of battle, and just as we did so a quail flew up. The men had broken ranks, and they gave chase and caught him, and he was given to me and I had him broiled for my supper. Henry Dalton came over also and gave us some hard-tack. Adjutant Lipp caught a box-turtle and had him roasted. Late in the evening we all of us had plenty to eat.]

*June 15.* — We lay all day about two miles from the James River, in the same position that we were last night. Day warm. We received orders to be ready to move at 6 P.M., and after issuing four days' rations of ham and bread, and two of coffee and sugar, we started for the river [James], crossing on a pontoon bridge 2100 feet long. Passed General Meade's headquarters before crossing the river, and saw Bache.<sup>1</sup>

*June 16.* — We marched all last night, and all to-day until 6 P.M., when we went into position behind General Potter, on the left of our line in front of Petersburg. Heard that the 5th Cavalry did well. Col. Henry S. Russell was wounded slightly in the shoulder. We carried their first line of works, and took 18 guns.<sup>2</sup>

*June 17.* — The anniversary of Bunker Hill. We moved forward and occupied the first line of the enemy's pits, they having been taken by General Potter last night. At 2.30 P.M. we were ordered to move over and support Willcox, who was going to charge the enemy's rifle-pits. Willcox charged, and was unsuccessful, being

<sup>1</sup> An aide to General Meade.

<sup>2</sup> This was the beginning of the investment of Petersburg.

driven back. Our division was then formed in line, the 1st and 2d brigades in the first line, and the 3d brigade in the second line. Colonel Gould had command of the first line, giving me command of the 1st brigade. At about 6 P.M. we charged forward, and under a heavy fire, about 200 yards, and took the rebel pits, losing heavily in doing it. We were, as usual, under a destructive enfilading fire. We held the pits some two or three hours, when the rebels charged on us, driving us from the pits into our lines again. Our men were without ammunition, and fell back on that account. We mustered 130 men in the brigade after the fight. During the fight to-day, I saw General Barlow right up in our front line.

[I could hear the rebel officer order his men forward and tell them to keep steady when they charged us. Crawley<sup>1</sup> was killed. We lost just about half the number of men we took into the attack. General Ledlie was drunk and quarrelled with Crawford. I believe that General Ledlie, the officer of whom I am speaking, is dead, and as this diary is never to become public property, it does not seem unfair for me to tell the truth here and to state some facts. General Ledlie was drunk on May 24, at the North Anna. There were several times that he had had too much to drink during the campaign. I think the poor man was a coward and took the liquor to try and fortify himself for the fight. Anyway, in the charge that was made this day, when I found that we were to make the charge, I made all my men take the caps off their guns. I knew from previous experiences in the campaign that, if we made a charge and the men had the caps on their guns, when we got within a few yards

<sup>1</sup> Sergeant-major, recently appointed an officer. I believe he had not received his commission.

of the works the men would stop to fire and then turn and run, and that would be the end of it. The only chance was to keep on the steady jump and rush them right over the works. I told my men what was to be done, and said, "When you get the order to charge, you leg it like the devil. Don't stop for anything, just run as tight as you can"; and they did so, and went swarming over the rebel works, capturing lots of their men, with lots of ammunition and knapsacks and all their fixings. Then came the end, which is always likely to happen when one's commanding officer is incompetent through drink or anything else. After holding the place for three hours, we ran out of ammunition. I sent back messenger after messenger, begging them to send us ammunition. The men were there exposed to a heavy fire, both enfilading and direct from the front, and without ammunition to reply to it. It was dark before we were driven back, and then, as I have said in my diary, I could hear the rebel officer giving the order to his men: "Steady, men, steady!" while they were advancing on us. We had to retreat, as we had nothing to shoot with. When we got back over the plain into the valley from which we had started, — for we were formed in a ravine before making the charge, — I asked for General Ledlie, to whom I was to report, and who was in command of the division. He was asleep on the ground. His adjutant-general went up and kicked him awake, poked him, and said, "Colonel Weld wishes to report." I said, "General, we have been driven back and our men are all scattered, and I don't know what to do." He drew himself up in a hazy-dazey sort of way, and said, "Why Colonel Weld, there are thousands of men all around here"; and then tumbled down in a drunken sleep again. If I had been older and had more sense, I should have preferred charges against him. I think there is less harm



in writing what I am writing here now, because some six weeks later, when we led the charge at the Mine, I am told the same thing occurred. I did not see him there, so I cannot vouch for it, but the evidence before the Committee on the Conduct of the War shows that he was intoxicated in a bomb-proof and never went out to the Mine where we were at all.]

*Saturday, June 18.* — We went into position again this morning at 2 o'clock, joining on to the left of the Second Corps. Remained here all day. The enemy evacuated their line in our front, and the Second Corps and part of the Ninth advanced about a mile. Day very warm. Our loss yesterday was 8 killed, 44 wounded, and 15 missing, out of a total of about 130 present for duty.

*Sunday, June 19.* — Had quite a quiet day, as most of the Sundays during this campaign have been. Remained in our position nearly all day, and then moved 100 yards to the front. Our skirmishers were pushed out beyond the Petersburg & Norfolk R. R. Day pleasant and quite warm.

Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 19, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — By forced marches we have reached this place, getting here before the main part of Lee's Army. We have been quite successful so far, having advanced through two lines of their works in some places, and three in others. Day before yesterday our division charged the enemy's pits in our front, and carried them. Willcox's division had already tried it and been repulsed. The 56th was, as usual, in the first line of battle. I was in command of the brigade, Colonel Gould commanding two brigades. The fire was very hot indeed, but at the order to charge, the men rushed forward over an open field

200 yards wide, and drove the rebels out of their pits, killing a great many and capturing about 70 prisoners and a stand of colors. In about an hour, however, our ammunition gave out, and the enemy charged us, compelling us to fall back. We should have been properly supported and the thing would not have happened. The loss in the regiment was about 60. We went in with a few men over 200. Grant most certainly got ahead of Lee on this move. Lee was fortifying at Malvern Hill, while we were crossing James River, and on our way to Petersburg.

The 5th Cavalry did finely the other day. They charged an earthwork and took it, together with three guns. Harry Russell was slightly wounded in the shoulder.

There was very hard fighting yesterday. Our men took the Petersburg & Norfolk R.R. and now hold it. Petersburg can be shelled from almost any portion of our line. As soon as we get hold of their railroads we shall be all right. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 19, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . Day before yesterday we were in a hard fight. We charged the enemy's rifle-pits in our front, and took them. We formed under the crest of a hill in two lines of battle, our regiment forming part of the first line, and charged over two hundred yards over an open field, carrying the works, and capturing about 60 prisoners. The men behaved splendidly, as usual. I was in command of the brigade, Colonel Gould commanding two brigades. I came out safely, without a scratch, although we were under a very heavy fire indeed.

To-day we are in the reserve resting our men, although we may be ordered into action at any minute. Our men hold the Petersburg & Norfolk R. R., and our skirmishers are in the outskirts of the city. We shall probably gain

the city itself in a day or two, although it will take some hard fighting to do so, as Lee now has his whole force in and around the city. If we get possession of the city, then Richmond must fall in time. Things look better to me now than they have at any time during the campaign. . . .

Thomas of Jamaica Plain has been missing since a skirmish we had on the Chickahominy on June 1. He is probably taken prisoner. Meagher of Jamaica Plain was wounded day before yesterday in five places, the most serious one being in his hand. I understand that all the rest were flesh wounds and that he will recover. He was wounded while on the enemy's breast-works, and behaved very well. Richmond Hayes of Jamaica Plain is safe. He behaved very bravely day before yesterday.

I am very well indeed. Health good in every respect. Spend my nights on the ground wherever we may happen to be, most of the time without any shelter and without any covering or blankets. I find that I can stand almost anything in the way of exposure.

There are about 170 men left in the regiment, 170 fighting men, I mean. Every fight we go into reduces us terribly.

Things begin to look like a siege now. I doubt if much more charging is done. We shall rely on our heavy guns and shovels a great deal. Such a course is absolutely necessary, I think. Grant has wasted a great many of his men in useless charges, and a few days must be given to recuperate and reorganize. I think that the losses since we left Bealeton Station must be very nearly 70,000 men. I may place the figures pretty high, but I think that it is a correct estimate. Of course, when we have time to

collect the slightly wounded and the stragglers, this number will be reduced some thousands. . . .

*June 20.* — We moved in the evening and relieved Barlow's division of the Second Corps, our brigade occupying the first line. Received a letter from Carrie, and Hannah, and one from the major<sup>1</sup> also.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS., *June 20, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — I write to you again to-day, or rather again since yesterday, to let you know that I am still unhurt. We are in the reserve, and have been resting here for two days. A little way from here the spires of Petersburg can be plainly seen, within a mile of us. I hear that the papers report that we hold the city. That is incorrect, although I hope it will not be so long.

There has been no fighting so far to-day, except continual skirmishing. Our pickets are within a hundred yards of the rebels, which makes it rather dangerous to show one's head there.

I saw Frank for the first time yesterday. He is very well, and seems to like his position very much. I saw him again to-day for a few minutes.

Give my love to Mother. I guess I will write her a few lines myself, however.

DEAR MOTHER, — I saw the chaplain of the 3d Maryland Regt. the other day. His name is Breckman, or something of the sort. He knows Aunt Harriet, and seems to think everything of her, and wished me to send her his very kindest regards. He is a great Swedenborgian, and says that Aunt Harriet has given \$100 a year for the support of his paper. I found him a very intelligent and

<sup>1</sup> Major Jarves.

highly educated man, and a very agreeable one, too. Please remember me to Aunt Harriet with my best wishes for her health, and tell her that I saw this gentleman.

I am in a horribly filthy condition. Our baggage we have not seen since the beginning of the campaign. It was put on board a scow at White House, and I suppose is lost by this time. I have a change of underclothes, which I carry in my saddle-bag, but am sorry to say that they are in as bad a condition as those I have on; viz., full of animals. I have them boiled every chance I get, but as the whole regiment is in the same condition that I am, it does not seem to do any good. I don't get any chance to bathe all over, as I don't dare to leave the regiment long enough to find a brook. On the whole, I shall be glad enough when this campaign is over.

Give my love to Henry and Arthur, and tell Henry that I am very sorry that he has broken his arm, and that I hope he will soon get well.

*Tuesday, June 21.* — Remained in the rifle-pits. Our regiment is in a better position than any other on the line. We are troubled very little by sharpshooters. Did not lose a man to-day.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS., *June 21, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — We moved out to the front last evening, relieving General Barlow's division of the Second Corps. The idea is, I believe, to have the Second Corps moved to the left, to prevent a flank movement by the rebels.

There is one thing that I have noticed throughout this campaign. The newspapers have been giving a false and incorrect report of the state of the army and of our battles.

They have claimed great victories, where we have been repulsed, and have not stated our losses correctly. It is perhaps necessary to have such reports go abroad in order to prevent our people from being discouraged, but I don't like to see them.

The only time that Grant has got ahead of Lee, was in crossing the James River, and attacking Petersburg. He did outmanœuvre him there, most certainly, but did not follow up his advantage. The feeling here in the army is that we have been absolutely butchered, that our lives have been periled to no purpose, and wasted. In the Second Corps the feeling is so strong that the men say they will not charge any more works. The cause of the whole trouble, in my opinion, is owing to the carelessness of those high in command, such as corps commanders and higher officers still, who have time and again recklessly and wickedly placed us in slaughter-pens. I can tell you, Father, it is discouraging to see one's men and officers cut down and butchered time and again, and all for nothing.

I don't wish you to think from all this that I am croaking. I feel that we shall take Richmond in time, but hope that some consideration and some regard for life will be shown in doing so. We can't afford to make many more such bloody attacks as we have been doing. The enemy will outnumber us if we do so. We shall have to settle down to a siege of Petersburg and take the place in that way. We have our lines so near the city that it will not be a difficult matter to burn and shell the whole concern out, if necessary.

I have 180 men left for duty in my regiment, and this is a fair-sized regiment.

We are quite fortunate in our position here. We are in woods, with the enemy's line about 300 yards in our

front. The woods screen us from them, so that we can walk around with comparative safety, but on our left the line is outside the woods, and woe betide any man who shows his head. The whistling of innumerable bullets around him warns him of the dangerous proximity of the enemy. The camp that we left yesterday was in the middle of a dusty field, where all the dead on both sides, killed during the charge of the 17th, were buried. The effluvia got to be unbearable finally, and we were all glad enough to change to any position, no matter where.

Can you do anything to help recruit this regiment? If you have a chance, I wish you would put some good men in it, as we need them very much.

My health has been remarkably good during the whole campaign. We have been remarkably fortunate in regard to weather, having had pleasant and dry weather almost all the time.

*Wednesday, June 22.* — Day warm. Second and Fifth Corps moved to the left. In the evening there was quite heavy cannonading on our left and right. Heard that Second Corps lost four guns and 1300 prisoners. Had quite a brisk skirmish on the left of our picket line.

*Thursday, June 23.* — Lost three men on picket. Enemy again opened on us on the picket line. The rebels had a mortar in position, with which they shelled our batteries. Our brigade was relieved and put in the second line, but six companies of our regiment had to remain in the front line.

*Friday, June 24.* — It was reported that Smith was to attack, so all the line was notified to be in readiness to repulse any attack from the enemy, in case Smith was unsuccessful. No attack occurred, however. Day very

warm. Night unusually quiet, there being but very little firing along the line. Nothing new happened.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 24, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are still in our old position in the front line of rifle-pits. Our brigade was relieved last night, and put in the second line, but as there were not enough men in the brigade relieving us to fill up the space we occupied, six companies of my regiment had to remain. We are about as safe here as in the second line, unless the enemy attack us, which I don't think he will do in our front. We have a thick skirt of woods in our front, which hides us from the rebel sharpshooters.

You will probably find James at home by the time this reaches you. He is pretty well frightened, and has not been of much use to me lately on that account. I think on the whole it was best for him to go home. He asked me to let him go, and I made no objection. He paid his own way home, as I had no money with me. Will you please settle with him up to the 22d day of June?

I wish you would send me, every few days, a five- or ten-dollar note in your letters, and charge the same to me. I have four months' pay due me, but until I get it shall be dependent on what I receive from you.

I also wish that you would buy me a knife and send it on to me, as I need one very much.

The weather here is excessively hot. We had a man die of sun-stroke yesterday. We have had no rain for several weeks, to amount to anything.

Please send word to Mrs. Jones that I saw her son this morning. He is an aide on General Turner's staff, and is in good health and spirits.



I am perfectly well, as I have been throughout the whole campaign.

The left of our army is swinging round to the rear of Petersburg. They have captured the Petersburg and Roanoke R. R., which is of great importance to the rebels. I hope we shall gradually close in on them, so that they will have to abandon their line here.

The smell around here from the dead bodies is anything but pleasant. Towards evening it becomes disgusting.

Please give my love to Hannah and all the rest.

*Saturday, June 25.* — The six companies of the regiment were moved into the rear line with the rest of the regiment. Had the first rest to-day that I have enjoyed for a long time. Weather fearfully warm. Went by division headquarters, and from there I went with Colonel Thomas to the 4th Division hospital, where I saw Frank.<sup>1</sup> On the way back, quite a heavy fire was opened on our picket line. Got back to the regiment on double-quick, and found that the enemy had been firing at a working party. Were routed out again during the night by firing on our right. Smith shelled Petersburg with 30-pounders this evening.

*Sunday, June 26.* — Received letter from Father enclosing \$10 and postage-stamps. Also a letter from Hannah, G. White, and General Cowdin. Nothing new to-day. Weather very warm indeed, with no breeze. Quite sharp skirmishing during the night.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 26, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . We are still "in statu quo," neither side doing much beyond a little shelling, and picket firing.

<sup>1</sup> My cousin and classmate, Dr. Francis M. Weld.

I saw Frank last evening at the division hospital. He seems very well and in good spirits.

What is to be our next move no one knows. I hear that a charge is to be made to-morrow along the whole line. I doubt this very much, as I don't think that we can afford to lose the men that would necessarily be sacrificed in such an attempt. If unsuccessful, it would be disastrous in the extreme to us, so I hope that we shan't risk it. We shall have our hands full, in my opinion, to hold our own here, which we shall have to do, in order to save Hunter and Sherman. If we cut off Petersburg from Richmond and keep it so, we ought to wait until we can get reinforcements from Hunter or Sherman. By waiting here, and threatening Richmond, we can prevent Lee from reinforcing Johnston, and let Sherman use him up. Our losses have been fearful since the beginning of this campaign. Since crossing the James River alone, we have lost 14,000 men.

I wish that they would abolish the \$300 commutation, and have a draft, which will bring men, and a decent class of men. We need them now very much indeed.

We are now in the second line of intrenchments, and were it not for the fearfully hot weather, should be comparatively comfortable. The weather is fearful, and at noon it is almost dangerous to put one's head out into the sun.

I don't know what to do about a major. I need some one here to help me, and to take charge of the regiment in case anything happens to me. . . . The one that I wish to nominate, Captain Z. B. Adams, is wounded and a prisoner. . . .

*Monday, June 27.* — Went over to corps headquarters, and saw General Burnside, and got him to accept

the resignations of Captains Redding and Thayer. Received notice of Priest's death. Captain Hollis sent for an extension of his leave for 20 days from the 22d. Had a letter from Raish. In the afternoon we had quite a pleasant shower. No firing of any account during the night.

*Tuesday, June 28.* — Weather cool and pleasant. Had a man wounded, the marker Koernberger, under peculiar circumstances. Moved out to the front line, and relieved the 2d Brigade. We occupied our old position on the right. Had a good deal of skirmishing during first part of the night.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 28, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I am happy to say that I receive a letter from you every few days. Please keep on writing, as all news from home is very pleasant in this outlandish hole. . . .

We are still here in front of Petersburg, making preparations for a siege. I am glad of it, for I don't care about charging any more breastworks just at present. It is rather unpleasant work, although it will do by way of pastime once in a great while.

We are in the second line of rifle-pits, but have to go to-night to relieve the brigade occupying the front line. I lose a few men by stray bullets coming over, but on the whole consider the regiment in quite a good position.

I saw John Jones to-day. He is on General Turner's staff in Tenth Corps. He is very well. Am very well myself, as I have been all along. . . .

The rebels have been amusing themselves this afternoon by throwing mortar-shells at us. We have several going all the time. You don't know how prettily they look at night. You can see a tail of fire after the shell as it

describes an arc in its passage. "Distance lends enchantment to the view."

What sort of a time did you have Class Day? We were almost melted. I never suffered so from heat in my life. Several men were sun-struck. . . .

*June 29.* — Began to make out the monthly muster-and pay-roll, etc. Got hold of our regimental desk and baggage. Quartermaster starts for home to-day, his resignation, to accept promotion, having been accepted. Sent a letter to Father by him. Weather moderately cool.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 29, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are all very busy indeed, making out our returns for the past month. We are now in the front line again, having relieved the 2d Brigade last night. We occupy the same position that we had when here before, by far the pleasantest on the line, as we have a skirt of woods in our front, which shields us from the enemy's sharpshooters. I hear that heavy guns are to be mounted along our line to-night.

Everything remains "in statu quo." There seems to be a head wanting somewhere, if we are going to have a siege. Each corps seems to be working on its own hook, as far as I can see.

I am detailed on court-martial again, and am President of the Court. We meet at division headquarters every day.

I suppose that James has got home by this time. Has he recovered from his fright yet? He was completely disgusted with the army when he left here.

I wish you would please send me the semi-weekly *Advertiser* once in a while, and at the same time enclose a

Buglers a

Baird  
"Carr  
Alden  
Weston  
Nichols  
Waters R. K.  
Martha  
Waters

Benger  
Benger J. C.  
Nichols  
Gallagher Sergt.  
Norton

Sta  
near

Cain  
Curney  
More L B





BUGLERS AND BAND FIFTY-SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS

Buglers and Band

Band

Cann

Alden

Weston

Nichols

Waters R. K.

Martha

Waters

Benger

Benger J. C.

Nichols

Gallagher Serjt.

Norton

Cain

Gurney

More L B

Buglers

Higgins 7

Leary 6

Babry 5

Burges 4

Burison 3

Atkinson 2

Cummins <sup>in night</sup> Bennett 1

Sitting down on fence.  
line. From left to  
right

Station

Near Alexandria





Baud

Buglers  
Stiggins 7  
Leary 6  
Babry 5  
Burgess 4  
Burrisen 3  
Atkinson 2  
Bennett 1

Cannon crew in night

Sitting down in formation  
line. From left to  
right

Alexandria

nice cigar. I find a good many officers get occasional cigars in that way, to help them digest the news.

I think that we shall remain where we are for some time, unless the rebs drive us away, or we take Petersburg. I don't see any likelihood of either event happening yet awhile.

I am afraid that Jarves will not be able to come back to this regiment. I wish him to hold his position, however, as I think he has lost enough serving his country to entitle him to the place, even if he cannot perform any duty.

We lose men every day from the enemy's sharpshooters. I have lost but one or two, having been quite lucky.

What kind of a time did you have on Class Day? We were under almost broiling heat, which killed two of our men on picket. I would have given anything to have been at Cambridge then.

Our quartermaster, Captain Ladd, is going home in a day or two, he having been promoted. He goes home to give bonds, etc. I shall ask him to call and see you all. Please ask him to tea, if he comes. He is a very nice fellow, and is half brother to Mr. Upham of Spencer, whom you know.

Please give my love to all the family. I am perfectly well.

*June 30.* — Sent in our tri-monthly. Captain Howe mustered the companies, but did not finish, as a heavy fire was opened on our right, caused by the Eighteenth Corps advancing their pickets. Soon quieted down, however. Bugler Gallagher was wounded, and during night Sergeant Hanson of F Company was killed by a stray bullet.

[Hanson was lying in a shelter tent, the middle man of three. Any one who knows the size of a shelter tent knows that three men can pack in by lying close together. A bullet came over from the rebs and hit him in the bowels. It skipped the other two.]

Near PETERSBURG, VA., *June 30, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — I send this note by Quartermaster Ladd, who is going home. Am well, and hope you will see Captain Ladd, who will tell you how things are going on here. . . .

Nothing particularly new, except that the rebels amuse themselves more than usual by firing at us. They have put a couple of bullets into the embankment in front of my quarters.

I think that a grand attack will be made in a day or two. I do hope that it will be successful. . . .

*July 1.* — Captain Howe finished mustering the regiment. Hard at work on our monthly return, and muster-rolls. Heavy picket firing during the night. Day very warm. Court-martial begun. Case of McLeod, D Company.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 1, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — I wish you would see Henry Wilson, and ask him to get permission from the War Department to have my band mustered as a brigade band. The state of the case is as follows: The men, twenty (20) in number, were enlisted and mustered as privates, with the promise that they should not perform duty as privates, but should be detailed for a band. The officers agreed to pay them \$25 a month, and the leader \$100 a month. Now that the officers are so reduced in number, it makes

it very hard for them to pay such a large sum to maintain the band, and we wish to have them transferred as our brigade band, there being none for our brigade. I wish you would get him to put the thing through. All that is necessary is to have an order from the War Department, ordering the transfer.

There is nothing new to report, except an unsuccessful charge made by the Tenth Corps on our right yesterday afternoon. I also hear that Wilson's cavalry division was all cut up, and almost captured day before yesterday. I hope it is not true.

I hope that we shall be reinforced soon, and heavily, too. We need them immediately, and every exertion ought to be made up North to forward 100,000 men to us, as soon as possible. If people wish this war to come to a successful issue, they should send us men. The trouble is that every one is willing, "à la Artemus Ward," to have their wives' relations go, but is unwilling to go himself.

I must stop now, as it is getting quite dark.

*July 2.* — Were moved to the second line this evening, we coming about in the centre of the brigade. The 3d Maryland relieved us. Court-martial continues case of McLeod.

HEADQUARTERS MASS. 56TH VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 2, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . I understand that Captain Hollis is engaged. He was engaged to a Miss French of some place, Exeter, I think, and just before the war the engagement was broken off. Rumor says that was the cause of Captain H.'s going to the war. When wounded and going through Washington, he met Miss F. and the engagement was immediately renewed. Romantic,

is n't it? Captain H. is a very nice fellow indeed, and I am sorry that you were not introduced to him at Class Day. . . .

I am very sorry indeed about Major Putnam's death. He was one of my best and bravest officers. So was Lieutenant Priest. Both are a severe loss to the regiment.

We lose a man or two every day from the enemy's sharpshooters. Two nights ago, when everything was comparatively quiet, I heard two fearful shrieks from one of my men. He was lying with two other men under a shelter tent. A stray bullet entered the tent, and wounded him in the abdomen so that he died in a few hours. He was the centre one of the three, and was acting as first sergeant of F. Co., making the seventh first sergeant in that company that has been killed or wounded in this campaign. I tell you it made me shudder to hear these two shrieks breaking the stillness of the night. Wounded men seldom cry out. I have had men knocked over close by me time and again, but have never had anything affect me the way this did.

We shall probably remain here almost all the summer, from what I can see. The weather is fearful, hotter than anything I have ever experienced. Occasionally we get a slight shower or a cool breeze, and then I feel as if I were in Paradise. . . .

Night before last there was a fire in Petersburg, probably set by our shells. I could plainly hear the fire-bells ringing. The fire burned all night. . . .

*July 3.* — Chelec of C Company wounded in the head. A man from the heavy artillery was killed while passing by, near my quarters. Rumors are that we charge on the enemy's pits to-morrow morning. Sharp picket firing all night. John Jones was here to-day.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 3, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We were moved into the second line of rifle-pits last night, although we did not make much by the exchange, for in our present place we are only about 100 yards from the first line, and in an open field, so that the rebels have a fair view of us. There was a man killed about fifteen feet from my quarters this morning, and another one wounded, both by the enemy's bullets.

It is now about 6 P.M., and I see no indication of any move on our part to-morrow. I think we shall have a quiet time of it unless the rebels attack us. . . .

Our Q. M. (now Captain) Ladd has resigned his position in the regiment, in order to accept promotion. I asked him to call on the family and think he will do so. He is a very nice fellow indeed.

I wish I were at home to protect you from the robbers. I think that this war will and has brought a precious set of scoundrels round. I am afraid that when some of the regiments are mustered out, some of the men will find it so hard to settle down to civilized life that they will take to robbery, etc., by way of amusement.

*Monday, July 4, 1864.*

We still remain quiet. All last night the enemy kept up a tremendous popping, in order to prevent us from moving or massing troops. Several of the bullets struck my shanty, which, by the way, is a very nice little place. It consists of two rows of logs placed one on another, with dirt thrown up on the outside. It is proof against any bullets the enemy have. On the inside it is dug down about 18 inches so that we feel quite safe here. All the officers have to live in this way. It is the only way they

can live with any approach to safety. When one ventures out too much, the sharp *zip* of bullets admonishes him of his danger.

The Sanitary Commission has been doing a great deal of good lately. They have been issuing tomatoes and saurkraut to the troops, as well as to the sick. Occasionally lemons are dealt out. These fresh vegetables have a wonderful effect on the health of the men. They prevent scurvy and keep the men in good condition. I imagine that an immense supply of these articles must have been sent down here, for the headquarters of the various generals have generally absorbed a great portion of the stuff sent by the Sanitary. . . .

*July 4.* — Court-martial adjourned after finishing case of McLeod. Went over to General Burnside's quarters to see Captain Rathbone. Had a man from G Company slightly wounded.

*July 5.* — We were to have attacked yesterday, with Ferrero's division <sup>1</sup> in front, had things been ready. We moved to the front line, taking our position on the right of the battery.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 5, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . Sergeant Ford is a very good soldier. He had a piece of a bayonet shot into his leg in the battle of the 24th on the North Anna. . . .

*July 6.*

We moved out to the front line last night, and now occupy a position where we can see all the enemy's works.

It is rather dangerous work to show one's head here, for the enemy are very sharp, their sharpshooters popping at us all the time. I had a man killed this morning

<sup>1</sup> Ferrero commanded a negro division.



by one of them, and any number of bullets are floating around loosely all the time. We hear that Ewell is up near Harper's Ferry, and that some of the Sixth Corps have gone up from here to help oppose him. . . .

I am busy now every day, or rather every morning, on court-martial. I believe I told you that I was President of a C. M. We hold our meetings at division headquarters. By the way, Charlie Mills wished to be remembered to both you and Alice.

My house, or place where I hang out at present, is a hole about ten feet long and six wide, dug into the side of the hill. On top there is a layer of logs, and on the sides logs. All the officers have to live in such places, if they care about living five minutes. The men are all in holes or pits dug down into the ground, where they are safe unless a bomb-shell happens to come along. A man in the 3d Maryland had a piece of shell from a 10-inch bomb knock his canteen to pieces, out of which he was drinking at the time. Pleasant place to live in, is n't it?

I have nominated Zab Adams for major, and shall send the letter on to-night. I do not suppose that he will be able to join me for some time. I wish I could get some definite news from him.

I suppose you know that Duncan Lamb is commissioned as a captain in the regiment. He has not yet reported for duty. . . .

*Wednesday, July 6.* — McAndrews of D Company was killed this morning by a sharpshooter. The rebels have a rifle-pit on our right, from which they enfilade our line completely during the night. I had ways dug for the men.

*Thursday, July 7.* — Court-martial tried the case of Captain Howell of the 179th New York. Had the ditches

deepened, and whole place improved. During night there was quite heavy picket firing.

*July 8.* — Court began on case of Lieutenant Knickerbocker. Day very warm indeed. We were moved into the second line at night, being the second regiment from the right. Captain Lamb reported for duty. Had brisk firing on our right, which extended down the line, the enemy opening on us with artillery.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 8, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — I spend every morning now at division headquarters, where the court-martial, of which I am President, meets. We usually have a session of three hours every day. We are still in the front line of rifle-pits, but are to be relieved, I think, to-night. We have to keep very close to our works here, as the enemy have a rifle-pit on our right, which completely enfilades our line. We have to have traverses every 20 feet to cover the men. The men are protected from a front fire by a deep ditch, deep enough to cover them completely when standing up. I will give you a profile view of it.



When the men have to fire, they get up on the "banquette" which exposes them only as far as their head and the upper part of the body is concerned. When loading they step back into the ditch, so that they are completely covered, when not actually firing. The officers' quarters

are just in rear of the ditch, where they have to dig holes and put up logs to cover themselves. A traverse runs at right angles with the rifle-pit from the "interior slope," and protects the men from a flank fire. They are usually made of logs and dirt thrown up so as to form an embankment. A traverse naturally divides the rifle-pits into different sections, and in order to connect these different sections I have had a deep and narrow ditch dug parallel with the rifle-pit. From each section another narrow ditch runs out and connects with the one parallel to the pit. The men can now travel round in comparative safety. Before I came here, it was very dangerous indeed to go from one section to another.

It is pretty well decided, I think, that anything that is done here in front of Petersburg, will have to be done by our corps. We are nearer the enemy's works than any other corps except the Eighteenth, and they cannot advance any nearer the city, as the position in their front is commanded by the enemy's batteries on the other side of the Appomattox. In front of our division we can certainly do nothing. If we attempt to charge, we shall be cut to pieces. Our only hope lies in General Potter's front. He is mining under a battery of the enemy, and as soon as the mine is completed, 10,000 pounds of powder are to be placed in it. As soon as it is exploded, the negro division is to charge. Our brigade is to be the next in order, followed by a brigade from Willcox's division, and then Potter's division.

I see by the papers that Ewell has gone up to Pennsylvania. I hope that his raid will have the effect to increase volunteering. We need more men here very much indeed.

General Franklin is at City Point, I hear. His corps is on the way to join us from New Orleans, and is expected here in about six days.

I received the knife which you sent me, and am very much obliged to you for sending it. It is just the sort of a knife that I wished for.

I asked Hannah to buy me a small wooden inkstand to carry in my pocket, and a gutta-percha penholder. Please have them sent to me by mail as soon as convenient.

Captain Lamb joined us this morning. He is from the 2d Heavy Artillery, and is a gentleman and a very nice fellow. I nominated him to be captain. He was formerly second lieutenant in Frankle's regiment. He is a brother of Miss Rose Lamb, who lives on Somerset St., Boston.

I have nominated Captain Adams of my regiment to be major. As he is wounded and a prisoner, I don't expect to see him for some time. Still, he is a brave officer and a gentleman, and I did not think it would be right to skip him.

I almost wish that the enemy would go up into Penn., and transfer the seat of war there. I think that it would have a beneficial effect on our people, and would make them realize the necessity of crushing the enemy in this campaign.

I wish you would ask Alice to write me. I have heard nothing from her for a long time. I had quite a pleasant letter from Hannah this morning, dated July 3. . . .

The enemy have not shelled us much in our present position. They have shelled the troops on both sides of us, but have let us alone so far. I don't know how long they will continue to leave us free from bombs and such things.

The Sanitary Commission is doing a great deal of good in distributing fresh vegetables among the troops. It has saved them from a great deal of sickness. The dry weather, too, has been a godsend to our men. I don't know what we should do if we had much rain. The men

would die off like sheep, as they have to be in the trenches all the time. Fever would thin our ranks fearfully in case we had rainy weather of long continuance.

Love to all the family.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, *July 8, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . You ask me what rifle-pits are. A rifle-pit proper is a small hole dug for sharpshooters or pickets. It is detached and separate from any other pit, and holds from one to three men. The term is commonly used, however, as synonymous with breastworks. I give you a profile view of one properly constructed. When the men fire, they stand on the place marked "3 feet." That is called the "banquette." When they are not in action, they go down 2 feet lower, and are pretty well protected. When we are at all exposed to a flank fire, traverses are built. They are mounds of earth running at right angles with the main rifle-pit. They have to be built quite high and thick in order to resist artillery. Where I was the last time I was at the front, we would have to trust to our legs and a kind Providence to protect us whenever we went anywhere from the pits. The enemy would shoot at us regularly. In most cases narrow ditches are dug, with the earth from the ditch thrown up towards the enemy, leading to the rear. The men can walk in these ditches with comparative safety.

Yesterday as our regiment was moved to the second line, I went out on a travelling expedition. I called on General Barlow first. He had just received the notice of —'s dismissal from the service. It seems he asked the hospital steward to give him something to make him sick. It is too bad, especially as his brothers have done well.

He had a great deal better have been killed. From General Barlow's I went to General Hayes's, my old colonel. He commands the brigade of Regulars in the Fifth Corps. I then went to the 20th Massachusetts, but could see no one that I knew. I went to the Second Corps hospital and found John Perry, and had a very pleasant time. John Perry will probably go home with the 20th. Their time is out to-day, and fifty of them go home. We were moved into the second line last evening in anticipation of an attack from the enemy, which did not come off.

I saw Frank Weld last evening and gave him your message. Tom Sherwin was with him. . . .

*Saturday, July 9.* — Court continued the case of Lieutenant Knickerbocker, and then adjourned till Monday. John Jones came over to see us to-day. Went over to Fifth Corps headquarters in afternoon, and then to General Turner's headquarters, where I took tea. Made arrangements with John to go to Point of Rocks in the morning.

*Sunday, July 10.* — Jones took breakfast [with me], and then we started with Captain Sealy for Point of Rocks. We rode by General Smith's headquarters, and reached the Appomattox. The country we passed through was very fertile indeed. We could see Petersburg and the batteries on both sides of the Appomattox. Crossed the Appomattox at Point of Rocks on a pontoon bridge, and went to the Tenth Corps headquarters, where we met Captain Hutchings. With him we went to Jones's Landing on the James River, where we found Quartermaster Thompson. Had a pleasant time here, and then went out on a tug to the gunboat Mackinaw, which was anchored off Aiken's Landing. We met Captain Beaumont here, and dined with him, and then rowed across to Aiken's

Point. This was the place where I was exchanged two years ago. After remaining here a little while, we went back to Thompson's, and from there rode home. Day very warm. Roads very dusty. Regiment moved to the rear.

*Monday, July 11.* — Court finished case of Lieutenant Knickerbocker, and then adjourned till Wednesday. Rode over to General Griffin's headquarters, and then to General Meade's. Dined with Bache, and saw General Meade and had a pleasant chat with him. Rained on the way home, the first we have had for a long time. Had a very pleasant time. The regiment moved to the second line.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. V.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 11, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — . . . Yesterday morning I made use of the adjournment of the court-martial (it being Sunday) and started with John Jones for Point of Rocks, near which are the headquarters of the Tenth Corps. We went to see Quartermaster Hutchings, and found him there alive and well. On the way I passed General Smith's headquarters, Eighteenth Corps, and had from there quite a fair view of Petersburg, and the surrounding country. I could see the Appomattox, and the enemy's batteries on the other side. The view is really a very pretty one. The country is fertile and broken, being a constant succession of hills, sometimes wooded, and again in some places under cultivation.

We crossed the Appomattox at Point of Rocks, on a pontoon bridge. On the other side we saw an enormous tower, over a hundred feet high, built by General Butler as a signal station. From here we had a ride of about three miles to headquarters Tenth Corps. Here we found Captain Hutchings, and in company with him rode over to Jones's

wharf on the James River, where Quartermaster Thompson of the 25th Massachusetts is stationed. Here I indulged in a glass of iced milk, which was a great luxury, I can assure you. As we approached the James River, we had a most beautiful view of the banks on both sides. The valley of the James is probably the most fertile portion of Virginia. On the opposite side of the James we could see enormous fields of wheat already ripe and ready to be gathered. In fact, all the land that is under cultivation is planted with wheat or corn. On the other bank, I could see Aiken's house and Landing. I recognized it immediately, it being the place where I was exchanged almost two years ago. From Jones's wharf, we went on board a tugboat, and steamed up to the Mackinaw, a gunboat commanded by Captain Beaumont, formerly in command of the Nantucket. When I was introduced, he asked me immediately if I was any relation to Dr. Weld, and wished to be remembered to him. The tugboat that we went out on is called the Linda. There are four of them, called torpedo boats. They have a long pole lashed to their bow on which a torpedo with 150 lbs. of powder can be placed. As soon as the enemy's ironclads make their appearance, these four tugs fix their torpedoes on and bunt into her. The gunboat Mackinaw was lying right off Aiken's Landing. After dining with Captain Beaumont, we went on shore with him to see Mr. Aiken's family and place. Aiken himself has just been arrested. We found his daughter, 14 years old, with two little brothers and two small sisters, the sole occupants of the house. It is a fine brick mansion with a park for deer on one side and numerous negro shanties, etc., on the other side. During an engagement the other day, between the enemy's boats and ours, a hundred-pound shell exploded close by the house, denting the bricks in



nine or ten places. The little girl was very polite indeed. She was strong Secesh. I could not help pitying her though. Only think of the poor child being exposed to the insults of any stragglng soldiers or sailors who might come along.

We rode back home again in the moonlight, having passed a very pleasant day. It is the first time that I have been able to get away from the regiment since the campaign began.

We have received orders to begin besieging Petersburg in front of the Fifth and Ninth Corps. We shall have a hard time at it, I am afraid.

The Sixth Corps have gone to Washington to fight the rebels who invaded Maryland.

Our regiment is in the rear now, resting for two days. To-morrow we go to the front again.

Tell Father to be careful what he says about General L. or any other general. It may get me into trouble if he is not so. General L. has resigned, and will probably leave us in a day or two. He has always treated me kindly and I don't care about saying anything against him.

Love to all. The flies bite so, I can't write any more.

*Tuesday, July 12.* — Lieutenant French was wounded in the side to-day. Also a man named Kurtz in A Company, in the face. We moved to the front line in the evening. One of the color-guard was killed while we were moving out. Lieutenant Lipp and Captain Fay went to City Point.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 12, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . Lee seems to be playing a bold game. The rumors are that all his old army have

gone up into Maryland, and that Beauregard's men are left in our front. If true, I suppose we shall have another campaign in Maryland and Penn. One consolation is that our men fight much better there than they do here.

Please tell Hannah that I received the letter she sent by Colonel Bartlett this afternoon. It was forwarded by him. He apologized for not being able to deliver it in person.

Will you please collect any money that may be due me from my bond or railroad shares, and divide it between Hannah and Alice. They can use it to help pay for going to the sea-shore, or in any other way they see fit. Now that things are so high, I imagine that it will be acceptable to them. I enclose the orders for the money.

I received a letter from —— yesterday. I cannot like her. It seems to me that she likes to parade her sufferings to every one. I am sorry for her, although I must say that I dislike her as a woman extremely.

We move out to the front line to-night and remain there four days.

I went to General Meade's headquarters last night, and saw all my friends there. I then went into General Meade's tent with Captain Bache, and called on him. He remembered me, much to my astonishment, and we had quite a pleasant conversation for 15 minutes.

I saw George Barnard and Tom Sherwin yesterday. Both were well. . . .

*Wednesday, July 13.* — Heard accounts from Washington. Enemy shelled us from mortars during day. Day warm.

[Every evening the rebs would fire about a dozen mortar-shells at us, about dusk. We could see the lighted



NON-COMMISSIONED STAFF, SIXTY-SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY

Non Commissioned Staff.

Commissary Sergeant Richardson

2. Pr " " Ellis

Hospital Steward Martin

Principal Musician Hartland (Band Leader)

Serjt. Major Whetings

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Principal Musician Bullocher

from left to right

fuse going way up in the air, then stopping, and then coming down, and could tell pretty nearly where it was going to fall. Before their shells had reached the ground, our batteries would respond with an equal number, and return the compliment.]

*Thursday, July 14.* — Shelled again to-day. Troops were up all night expecting an attack, as a deserter came in and said that a great many more would come in if we would throw up rockets. We saw rockets thrown up, but whether the deserters came or not, I don't know. Day pleasant.

*Friday, July 15.*—Had four men wounded, among them Lieutenant Littlefield. Went over to see Colonel Bell, 4th New Hampshire. Enemy seem to have left Washington.

[Littlefield was sitting in a bomb-proof trench, with his back towards the enemy, way down out of sight. A bullet from the rebels came over, and striking an oak sapling on the other side of the trench, was thrown back by the rebound of the tree and hit him in the side of the head, making quite a bad wound.]

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 15, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — I don't know whether this will reach you or not, as all communication with Washington seems to be cut off.

There are various rumors afloat about what we are going to do, but without any foundation as far as I can see. I dare say that we may fall back in order to save Washington, although there is nothing certain.

I do hope that we shall not lose Washington. Things look squally there most certainly. I am perfectly well.

*Saturday, July 16.* — Went to court-martial as usual. Moved out in the evening to the rear. Saw John Jones in the evening. Day warm. Night chilly. Several shells burst near our quarters.

*Sunday, July 17.* — Rode over to see General Barlow and General Hayes. Also saw John Perry. In the evening Tom Sherwin, Frank Weld, Captain Phillips and Captain Davis came over to see me. About nine o'clock we were moved to the second line, as it was reported that the enemy were massing in our front, and were going to attack us in the morning. No attack was made, however.

*Monday, July 18.* — We were moved to the rear and were inspected together with the 57th and 100th Pennsylvania. We then marched in review before Captain Hovey. In the evening we marched to the second line again and took position on the right of the 57th Massachusetts, who were on the extreme left.

*Tuesday, July 19.* — We had a rain-storm to-day, which lasted through the night, making us all very uncomfortable. Enemy were pretty quiet through the day. Raish arrived last night. Saw him to-day, and went with him to see General Burnside.

*Wednesday, July 20.* — Rain continued at intervals. We moved into the first line at dark, taking position on the right of the battery. Several shells came near our quarters. In the afternoon rode over to division hospital, and to General Meade's headquarters, with Raish.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., July 20, 1864.

DEAR HANNAH, — I received two letters from you at Beverly, dated on the 14th and 15th inst. I judge that you must be having a very pleasant time. . . . I think Miss Gardner would like to be out here. She might charge

over some field where men had been fighting, and nearly step on many a poor dead fellow. It is the most unpleasant part of a fight to see some poor fellows horribly mutilated and dead lying by one's side.

Raish Jarves arrived here yesterday. He will probably be put on court-martial. I went up with him to see General Burnside, who was quite kind to us. . . .

The rebels are getting a splendid range on us with their mortar-shells. They are beginning to throw them into the trenches, which makes it slightly uncomfortable, as you can well imagine. They send a piece through my shanty occasionally. At night it is really good fun to watch them. You can see them gracefully ascending until they almost seem to stand still, and then down they come faster and faster, and finally explode. As a general rule, they do but little damage, for it is very difficult to get an accurate range with them. Just as I had written this, along came two mortar-shells, and burst within 40 feet of my shanty. Pleasant life we lead here, I can assure you. Yesterday we had our first rain for six weeks, and uncomfortable enough it made us, I can assure you. The trenches were half full of mud and water, as well as all the officers' quarters. I slept last night in a perfect mud-hole, half drenched myself. To-day we have a regular dog-day. Hot and sultry, a day that makes one feel dirty and sticky all over.

I am still on court-martial. It keeps me busy about three hours every morning.

The men had a rumor that I was appointed Provost Marshal of Alexandria, but I cannot find that there is any truth in the report.

We have had several false alarms in regard to the enemy attacking us. They are undoubtedly massed in our front,

expecting an attack from us. They may attack us, however, some foggy morning.

We move out to the front line this evening. We have four days on the front line, and four days on the rear, two of the latter are passed in the rear and two in the second line. . . .

*Thursday, July 21.* — General Bartlett arrived at division headquarters. Saw Jones there. The enemy shelled us heavily during afternoon and evening. An attack was expected on Willcox's front. Day pleasant.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 21, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — General Bartlett arrived here today, and takes command, I believe, of our brigade. I should not be surprised if he received the command of the division, in case General Ledlie's resignation is accepted, which, by the way, we hear nothing of. I hope that we shall have General Bartlett, as he is a good soldier and a pleasant fellow.

We are now on the front line again, in a pretty fair position. The men have to keep well under cover, however, in order to avoid the fire of the sharpshooters. The shells from the enemy's mortars go over us, almost entirely. The second line is much more dangerous in this respect than the first. Colonel Jarves reached here day before yesterday. He is probably going on some court-martial, until he gets stronger.

There was a rumor that I was appointed Provost Marshal of Alexandria or of some other place. I don't suppose there was the slightest truth in the story.

The Nineteenth Corps have arrived at Bermuda Hundred. They are to go into position on the north bank of



the James, and I hear are to make a strong demonstration there. We hear good news from the Sixth Corps, that they have whipped the enemy severely at Snicker's Gap, and taken some prisoners.

Things remain unchanged here. I hear nothing said about attacking, and see no indications of it in our front. On the contrary, everything looks like remaining here quietly some time. All the regiments whose time is out on or before the 25th of August are to be sent to Washington to perform garrison duty. I don't think that anything of the kind would be done if we intended to resume active operations immediately.

Under this new call for 500,000 men, I hope to get some men for my regiment. Please send me any that you can lay hands on.

I went over to General Meade's headquarters yesterday, and saw all my friends there. It is real pleasant to meet some of my old friends out here. In the Ninth Corps I have but few, most of my acquaintances being merely those whom I have met on this campaign.

I am busy every morning on court-martial. We meet about 10 A.M. and adjourn at 1 P.M. The remainder of the time I am with the regiment, attending to business there, or reading and writing.

Please tell Thomas's father that we have received no information in regard to his son. He probably, to tell the truth, went to sleep on the picket line, and when the men fell back during the night, did not wake up, and was taken prisoner. He is not much of a loss to the regiment, although I am sorry for his parents. Has John Meagher's son reached home? I suppose he will be furloughed from the hospital. . . .

As usual, I am enjoying perfectly good health. The regiment is in a pretty fair sanitary condition, consider-

ing the exposure they have to undergo. I lost one man named Swan yesterday, killed on picket. . . .

We have had two rainy, foggy days in the trenches, and unpleasant enough they were. They are the first we have had for the last six weeks. To-day, we have a nice cool breeze, and a pleasant sky overhead. The trenches are drying up, and will soon be inhabitable again. . . .

*Friday, July 22.* — The 2d Brigade were reviewed by General Ledlie. Sharp firing on our left in the afternoon. Court-martial adjourned immediately on account of review.

*Saturday, July 23.* — Day pleasant. Firing quite heavy, and had to get up several times. Nights foggy. Enemy shelled us quite vigorously. Colonel Jarves came out to the front line, and dined. Set the men to work on bomb-proofs.

*Sunday, July 24.* — Men worked on bomb-proofs, and completed them as far as the logs would go. Captain Galucia and two officers of the 57th wounded by a shell. Saw Charlie Amory to-day. Went to see Jones with Raish. Moved to the rear at dark, in old position. Began to rain just after we got there. Sky came down in the middle of the night. On the whole did not enjoy the night much.

[Captain Galucia used to come to me almost every morning with a long face and a piece of a shell in his hand, saying, "Colonel, that fell near me last night." It got to be quite a joke, and I said, "Galucia is sure to be hit by a shell some time, they seem to trouble him so much." In telling this story I do not mean to reflect on his courage at all, as he was a brave man and always did his duty.

Sure enough, when he was officer of the day, he was standing with two other officers in front of a bomb-proof underneath an arbor made of green boughs, when a bomb-shell came over and dropped right into the middle of the arbor. They all tumbled down just as the shell exploded. One of the officers was cut right up the back as if with a knife. The other one was killed, and Galucia had the toes of both his feet pushed back. He suffered from the effect of the wound the rest of his life.]

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 24, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — . . . A shell from one of the enemy's mortars exploded in front of the headquarters of the 57th Massachusetts to-day, and wounded three officers. One of them was a Captain Galucia of my regiment, who was on his tour of inspection as brigade officer of the day. He is wounded in both feet, though not very seriously.

General Bartlett is in command of our brigade now. He is going to have Charlie Amory as his adjutant-general. I saw Charlie to-day, looking very well indeed.

We move to the rear line to-night. I have had my men at work constructing bomb-proofs, since they have been on the front line.

Next Tuesday we are to have a review. General Ledlie is to review our brigade. . . .

We hear very good news from Atlanta to-day. I should not wonder if it made the rebels desperate, and forced them to attack us here. They will get thoroughly whipped if they try it here. The mornings, however, are favorable for a sortie, as they are extremely foggy. . . .

Please ask Hannah to send me Miss ——'s photograph.

*Monday, July 25.* — This morning weather cleared off, and we prepared for our review. Had dress-parade.

*Tuesday, July 26.* — Line was formed for our review at 9.30. Men looked well and the affair on the whole was a success. Ended at 1.30 P.M. We moved to the second line at dark.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., July 26, 1864.

DEAR HANNAH, — I received a letter from you this morning dated July 22d. . . .

I am now in a most delightful situation, sitting under the shade of some large trees near General Burnside's headquarters, with a delightfully cool breeze blowing. We are now enjoying our two days in the rear, but unfortunately they end this evening, making it necessary for us to go back to the second line of works.

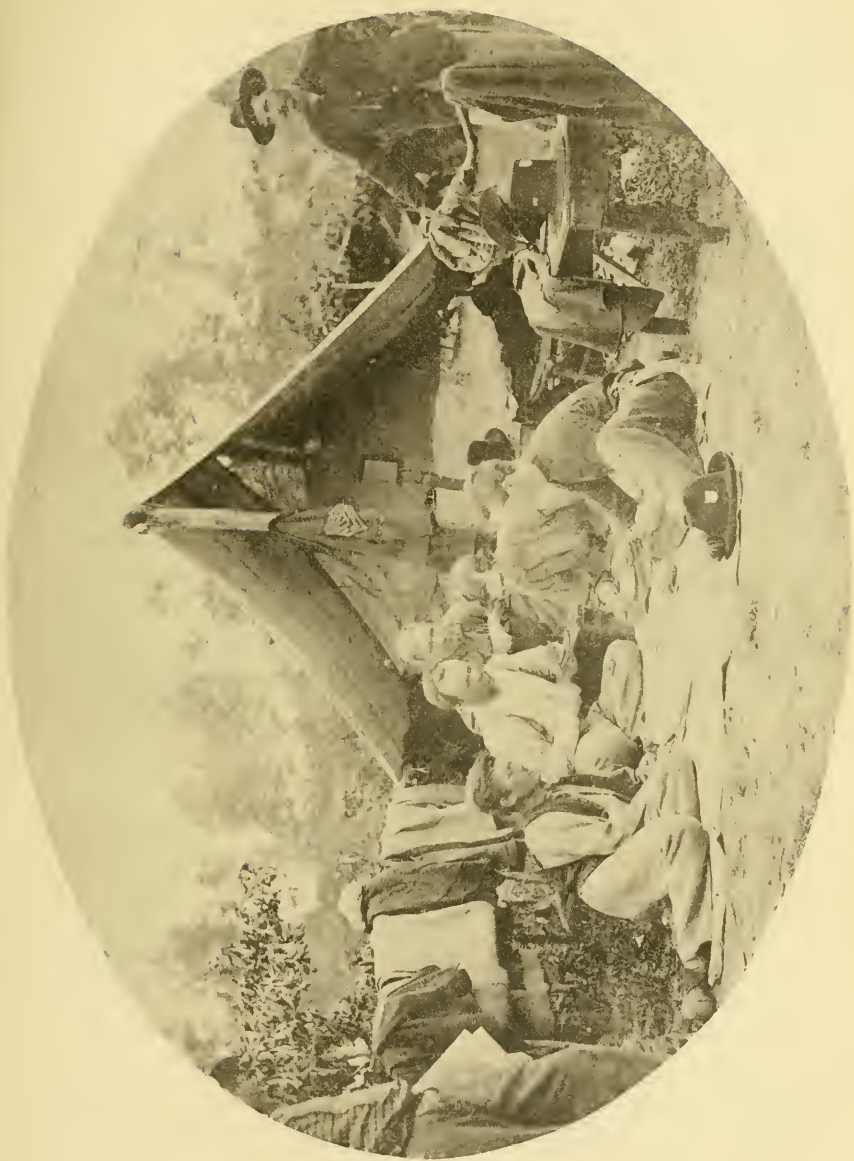
Our brigade was reviewed this morning by General Ledlie. We had quite a decent review considering the situation we have been in.

My box arrived yesterday with everything safe. I invited John Jones to dinner, and just as dinner arrived, General Bartlett came in, so that we had quite a sociable time of it. Your candy and ginger came in as a dessert, and quite a welcome one it was. The cigars were very nice indeed. To-day I opened the cracker-box, and treated myself and friends to them. They were hard and dry, and tasted remarkably well.

I had a letter from Eliot Furness<sup>1</sup> a day or two ago, asking me to try and get him a position as field officer in one of the negro regiments under General Burnside. He said he wanted to get it so that he might be married. He is at present with General Gordon at Memphis, Tennessee.

That mine that I told you of is finished and I expect

<sup>1</sup> William Eliot Furness, a classmate.



NON-COMMISSIONED STAFF, FIFTY-SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS



that it will soon be blown up. It extends under the first and second lines of the enemy. I understand that two or three tons of powder are to be placed in it. Imagine what a cheerful time the enemy, who may be above it when it is blown up, will have. . . .

*Wednesday, July 27.* — Went down to City Point. Saw General Benham, Doctor Dalton, and others. Day warm, with some slight showers in the afternoon. Heard a rumor that the corps was to move. Mine ready.

*Thursday, July 28.* — We moved to the front line.

[We had heard for some time that there was a mine being dug in our front, and that it was to be exploded soon. Dates differed, and we could get very little accurate information. At times I began to think that they were merely the usual camp rumors. It afterwards turned out that the mine was dug by Lieutenant Colonel Pleasants of a Pennsylvania regiment which was largely composed of coal-miners; there were four tons of gunpowder inserted in this mine.]

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 28, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I enclose a beautiful ambrotype of two illustrious officers of Uncle Sam's Army. One of them is Major Hovey (just promoted to Major A. I. G. of General Ledlie's staff) and the other is your humble servant. This work of beauty and art was taken at City Point, Virginia, yesterday. I went down there on a pleasure trip with Major H., and had quite a pleasant time. I stopped at General Benham's headquarters, which are at the Point, to see Channing Clapp. He was not there, so I resolved to beard the lion in his den, and see the general himself. So in I went, and shook hands with him.

He was very polite, and asked after Uncle Oliver. We had quite a long talk on war matters, etc., in which the old gentleman showed his usual amount of conceit. He bid me good-bye very pleasantly.

I then went to General Grant's headquarters, to see Mr. Dunn and thank him for bringing me that box, but could not find him. Please thank Father and receive my own thanks yourself for the contents of the box. We also went down to the wharf at City Point, where we saw the usual amount of ships, steamers, sutlers' shops, etc., which always congregate at the depot of supplies for an army. Near here we had our pictures taken, each one costing two dollars. About a mile from City Point we came to the army hospitals, in a fine location, with the grounds well laid out and neatly policed, etc. They have two engines there which pump the water up from the river into a tank. From this tank the water is distributed all over the grounds to large wooden tubs. All the streets are watered by regular watering carts, so that the grounds are free from dust, and the air cool and pleasant. Dr. Dalton is in charge of the whole machine. We stopped and called on him, and had a very pleasant time. He is Henry Dalton's brother, and is a very smart man indeed. After leaving the hospital we rode for home, or rather for the second line of rifle-pits in General Burnside's front, having passed a very agreeable day. On reaching my regiment, I found that we were under orders to be ready to move, as an attack was expected on our left, the Second Corps having moved from there to the extreme right, the other side of James River. Hancock had a fight there, capturing 4 guns and some provisions. You will learn the particulars by the papers before this reaches you.

The mine is all finished, the powder in, the fuse all ready, and nothing wanting to make it go off except a



lighted match, which will be applied, I think, to-morrow morning. Our brigade moves to the front line to-night, so that I don't know whether we shall be in the scrimmage or not. I rather think we shall get into it, however, before the day is out. It will make some noise, as there are to be five (5) tons of gunpowder placed in it.

I hope that the attack, or assault, will be successful; for if it is, we shall [have] Petersburg in our possession. . . .

*Friday, July 29.* — Charlie Amory came as brigade adjutant-general. We were called up to General Bartlett's headquarters and told that the mine was to be sprung, and our division was to lead in the charge. We were told that we were to press on through the mine to the hill beyond, called Cemetery Hill. We were relieved about 10 P.M. by colored troops from the Eighteenth Corps, and moved to the rear. About 2 A.M. we moved to the front through Willcox's covered way, and got into position about 4 A.M.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near PETERSBURG, VA., *July 29, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — We are now in the front line of works, having moved there last night. Being in the front line may save us from being in a charge, which I think will take place to-morrow. I think that the mine will be exploded to-morrow morning early. We have expected it to come off for the two past mornings, as the powder has been placed in it, and the thing is ready to be lighted. To-day General Burnside has had all his division generals up at headquarters, making preparations, I suppose, for to-morrow.

You remember that man that I had to shoot at Annapolis. He threatened, so I was told, all sorts of things. I paid no attention to them, but called the man up, and

gave him a talking to. He is naturally a smart man, and has had a very good education. I treated him just the same as I did the other men, and tried to reform him, by showing that I had confidence in him, and that I was not going to help pull him down. He behaved very well, and rose to be first sergeant, until a few days ago, when he got hold of some whiskey, and began to fall into his old ways again. I had to reduce him to the ranks again, which made him feel very badly. I send you a note which he wrote me yesterday, marked private. Please have it filed away, and don't let any one see it, as I wish to keep it among my papers. I think that he will keep his word, and will not touch anything while in the regiment.

I am still on court-martial and have to go every morning to division headquarters.

My health is good, as usual, much better even than when I am at home. I only feel the need of a little rest, from the constant wear and tear on one's nerves, which every one feels here.

Please send me some stamps in your next letter, as I am entirely out of them.

General Hancock has moved to the other side of the James River, where he captured four cannon, and several prisoners. The cavalry have also gone out, no one knows where, but I imagine to get in rear of the rebels who are now in the Valley. . . .

*Saturday, July 30.* — We were formed in column of brigade wings, the 2d Brigade leading, under Colonel Marshall. General Bartlett commanded our brigade, Colonel Gould having the right wing, and I the left, consisting of the 21st Massachusetts on the right, the 56th Massachusetts in the centre, and the 100th Pennsylvania on the left. We were in position about three quar-







SETTS VOLUNTEERS



ters of an hour before the mine was blown up, and while waiting my feelings were anything but pleasant. The officers and men were disappointed and discouraged at having to lead, as we had heard all along that the negroes were to do this, and we had no confidence in Ledlie. He had failed us on several occasions, notably on June 17. At 4.30 A.M. the mine was blown up. It was just early dawn, light enough to distinguish a person a few yards off. The explosion was the grandest spectacle I ever saw. The first I knew of it, was feeling the earth shaking. I looked up and saw a huge mass of earth and flame rising some 50 or 60 feet in the air, almost slowly and majestically, as if a volcano had just opened, followed by an immense volume of smoke rolling out in every direction. The noise was very slight indeed, considering that there were nine tons of powder exploded. The men of the division were stampeded at first, but were soon rallied. We charged, having to go by the flank, as we could only get over in one or two places, and entered the enemy's pits under a moderately heavy fire. We found an immense hole here, formed by the explosion, some 30 feet deep by 100 long and 40 wide. We were ordered to go to the right of the crater, and here I endeavored to re-form my regiments. The scene inside was horrible. Men were found half buried; some dead, some alive, some with their legs kicking in the air, some with the arms only exposed, and some with every bone in their bodies apparently broken. We held the enemy's line about three or four hours, capturing some 500 prisoners. When we had been there about four hours, the negro troops charged over, filling our pits and crowding us so that our men could not use their muskets. They made a charge on the enemy in our front, which was repulsed and followed by a counter-charge, driving the negroes head over heels on to us,

trampling down every one, and adding still more to the confusion. Several negroes were shot down close by me. I was taken prisoner and sent to the rear, where I found several of my men, together with Captain Fay. While on the way, I had to climb a breastwork exposed to our men's fire. I saw the rebs run up and shoot negro prisoners in front of me. One was shot four times. We were taken to a place about half a mile from Petersburg, and kept there until evening. General Bartlett, Colonel Marshall and Captain Amory arrived about 4 P.M., in a squad that was captured later. We were moved still nearer the city, and camped in an open lot there. Charlie Amory had his boots stolen from under his head while asleep. He was using them as a pillow.

[These notes are written fifty years after the event, but it seems to me as if the whole matter was as vivid and clear as if it had happened yesterday. We started down late that evening and got into the covered way, which was a zigzag trench leading up to our rifle-pits. The rifle-pits had strong abattis trenches and wires and everything else, including chevaux-de-frise, to impede any of the enemy who were charging us. Orders had been given that the trenches were to be filled up with sand-bags, and the abattis removed for a space of 200 yards, so that a regiment could march forward practically in line of battle. This was not done, for when we charged we had to go by the flank, not more than four men at a time, a space only about eight or ten feet having been filled up, and none of the abattis removed. This delayed the advance very much and undoubtedly had a great deal to do with losing us the battle this day. The mine was planned to be blown up at half-past four, but the fuse went out and they had to send men in to unpack the stuff which had been put



around the fuse to prevent the force of the powder blowing out the tunnel, which took some time, so that it finally blew up at about half-past six or seven. The minute the mine exploded, a hundred and forty of our guns opened fire from the lines in the rear, shelling the Confederate lines all around on both sides of us. It was a magnificent sight and one never to be forgotten. I never shall forget my mortification while waiting for this mine to blow up. The troops were all standing in line, ready to charge, and bullets fired by sharpshooters and pickets kept zipping over us all the time and the men kept ducking. They were not to blame for this, as the orders were, when we were in the rifle-pits, invariably to duck if they saw a puff of smoke from the other side. This was absolutely necessary, as we lost men every day from their curiosity in peeking up to see what was going on. The minute a cap appeared it was the target for a dozen sharpshooters. Of course we were all nervous, standing there waiting for a charge which we were very uncomfortable about, owing to reasons which I have explained later on, and the men kept ducking as a bullet passed by. I said, "Steady, men, that bullet has gone by you by the time you hear it." Just then a bullet, which I am convinced was specially meant for me, went whizzing by me and I at once ducked. Every one laughed and I did not blame them, but a more mortified man than I was never lived.

When the mine did go up, it looked as if this immense cloud of timber, dirt and stones and everything was going to fall right down on us and we involuntarily shrank back. We at once got over this and started to make the charge. When we got to the pits, as I have said, there was no getting over except by a flank. Instead of going over about in line of battle, we moved by the flank through this narrow space, and before I could get over, the firing

had become very hot and the dust was knocked up all around my feet all the time as I went over. The neglect to fix the works in our front also had another very bad effect. It broke the regiments all up. The men went over by the flank, scattered along as they could get through, and with almost no organization. As soon as we got into the crater, I did all I could to get my men together, and in some sort of shape for a fight. By that time it was almost impossible to do anything. We were as badly off then as we were in our own pits. There was no head. Our division commander was off on the other side and did not come over with us. General Bartlett was a cripple and had his wooden leg broken, and it was almost impossible to get anything done. I came near having my head knocked off by grape-shot two or three times. Finally the rebels charged on both our flanks. I was packed in there in the midst of the negroes. It was a perfect pandemonium. The negroes charged into the mine, and we were packed in there like sardines in a box. I literally could not raise my arms from my side. Finally, when the Confederates charged, those of the men nearest the rifle-pits next our line got over the line and got away. Luckily most of my men I had formed there, so that they were able to get away and protect our colors.

I got cut off and took refuge in a bomb-proof, as I could not run away, being surrounded on all sides. Pretty soon the rebels yelled, "Come out of there, you Yanks." I walked out, and the negro who had gone in there with me, and Captain Fay came out also. The negro was touching my side. The rebels were about eight feet from me. They yelled out, "Shoot the nigger, but don't kill the white man"; and the negro was promptly shot down by my side. They then grabbed my sword and my hat. "Come out of that hat, you Yank!" they yelled; and one

of them cried, "What do you 'uns come down here and fight we 'uns for?" Then they told me to get over our embankment in their rear, which formed their second line, and I scrambled up, the bullets from our own men striking the dirt on all sides of me. I got over the embankment all right, and was walking to the rear, when I saw a negro soldier ahead of me. Three rebels rushed up to him in succession and shot him through the body. He dropped dead finally at the third shot. It was altogether the most miserable and meanest experience I ever had in my life. You could not fight, you could not give an order, you could not get anything done. Out of the nine regiments in my brigade I was the only regimental commander left alive. The others were all killed outright or mortally wounded. We were sent back about a mile to the rear and camped on a hill that night.

My diary for the year 1864, during the Wilderness Campaign, was carried in my boot-leg and so escaped seizure when I was captured at the mine.]

## CHAPTER VIII

PRISONER OF WAR — LETTERS FROM COLUMBIA — EX-  
CHANGED — END OF THE WAR

(*From Horatio D. Jarves to Stephen M. Weld, Senior*)

*August 2, 1864.*

MY DEAR MR. WELD, — What was a little uncertain about Steve has been cleared up, and we have had definite news from him. One of our officers conversed with the captain who took him. It appears he and some few men were so run over and trampled upon by the colored troops in their stampede that they could n't move until too late. It was in between two traverses of the rebel first line. The rebel captain says that Steve and the few men with him held out to the last, and was finally "taken like a soldier with his arms in his hands," by an overwhelming rush of rebs. He was unhurt, and took it good-naturedly. His enemies could n't help admiring him. I send you a lot of letters which have come for Steve, and have taken care of his things. I will take measures to send home his horses as soon as possible.

With regards to all your family,

I am yours truly,

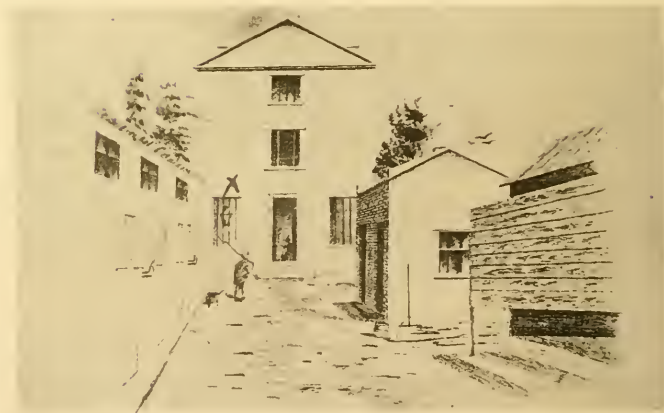
H. D. JARVES.

*Sunday, July 31.* — We started this A.M. and marched through Petersburg, the officers being sandwiched in between the negroes. Colonel Marshall and I were allowed to march with the white troops. We were placed

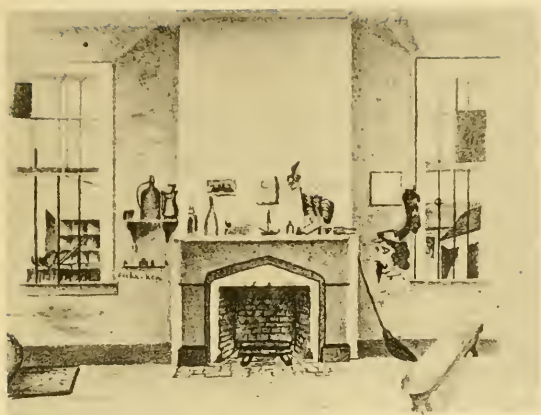




JAIL—COLUMBIA S. C. SEEN FROM MAIN STREET



REAR OF JAIL AND YARD



ROOM IN JAIL WHERE NAVAL OFFICERS, CAPTURED  
IN ATTACK ON FORT SUMPTER, WERE CONFINED



TOWN HALL, COLUMBIA, S. C. NEXT DOOR TO JAIL. MARKET UNDERNEATH;  
ON BALCONY AT NIGHT, WATCHMAN CALLED THE HOURS.





on an island in the Appomattox. Rations were served out late in the afternoon.<sup>1</sup> Spent the night here.

PETERSBURG, VA., *July 31, '64.*

DEAR FATHER, — Am well and uninjured. We start for Andersonville, Ga., to-morrow.

*Monday, August 1.* — We started at 4 A.M. and marched to the depot of the Petersburg & Danville R.R. where we were put on cars, and started off for Danville at 6.30 o'clock. All along the road we saw traces of Wilson's raid. At Burkesville Junction we were delayed until late in the evening, on account of a train having been thrown off the track.

*Tuesday, August 2.* — Reached Danville at about 6 A.M., it being distant about one hundred and forty-eight miles from Petersburg. We were placed in tobacco warehouses, which constitute here, as in every other place, the military prisons. We have very poor quarters and rations, being thrust into a lousy, dirty room, badly ventilated, and with no conveniences for washing, etc. Passed a very unpleasant day.

*Wednesday, August 3.* — Remained in the same place. Had a shower which cooled the air somewhat. General Bartlett went to the hospital yesterday. He seemed almost worn out. He is no better to-day. Heard that we were to move to-morrow to Columbia, S. C. Had our usual ration of coarse corn-bread and bacon, and an extra one for to-morrow.

*Thursday, August 4.* — Started for Columbia to-day at 6 A.M. Reached Greensboro, about noon, and remained there until 6 P.M. It was election day in North Carolina, and this town is looked upon as rather Union in its feel-

<sup>1</sup> Got wormy bacon, raw onions, and hard-tack, and it was fine.

ing. Some of the inhabitants seemed to sympathize with us somewhat. Distance from Danville forty-eight miles. Started at 6 P.M. for Charlotte. The engineer and conductor were both drunk, having been celebrating the day (election day); the cars (old cattle cars) were nasty and dirty, the track, a single one-strap rail, in bad condition, and the train an hour behind time. We were to meet the train from the South at a turn-out some miles ahead, and taking everything into consideration, we had about as lively, exciting and unpleasant a ride as I ever hope to indulge in. The train went faster than I have ever been before, so much so that the cars would actually jump from the rail, and yawn and open everywhere. Our destination on this heat was Charlotte, one hundred and ten miles.

*Friday, August 5.* — Reached Charlotte early in the morning, where we drew one day's rations. I got hold of a raw onion here, and had a good meal on that, a hard-tack, and some wormy bacon. It tasted good, for I was hungry. Started again for Columbia, one hundred miles distant. We passed through sorghum, cotton and corn-fields, — many of the latter, few of the two former. Reached Columbia at 7 P.M., and were immediately surrounded by friends of the South Carolina regiment that was blown up in the mine, anxious to learn about their friends and relatives. Were marched to the jail, and from what I could see of the town should think it a very pretty one. Passed Wade Hampton's house. There were beautiful shade trees planted along the street we were marched through. Was quartered on the lower floor in a room with several others.

*Saturday, August 6.* — Did not sleep any last night. The bed-bugs and other vermin crawled over me in thousands. I looked like a man with small-pox, from the

number of my bites. Tried a table in the room, but found it as bad as the floor. We found several naval officers here, who were captured at Fort Sumter. They have been here almost a year. Everything was in confusion and turmoil. Had bacon and corn-bread served out to us twice.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Aug. 6, 1864.

DEAR FATHER, — We arrived here yesterday. Am perfectly well. We are treated quite well here. I think we shall remain here for some time. Please write Lieutenant Lipp, my adjutant, and ask him to have my valise, bedding and baggage, and any papers belonging to me that he may find, sent on home. I wish my horses to remain with the regiment under the charge of my servant, Loud.

Love to all the family.

(over)

P.S. Please send me a 20-pound sterling bill of exchange. It is the safest and best way of sending money. Make it payable to my order. Try and send it through Major Anderson of General Foster's staff. I know him and think he would be able to get the money to me quicker than any one else. General Foster is in command at Hilton Head.

We are in the jail at Columbia, S. C., and have very fair quarters and are well treated.

*Sunday, August 7.* — The navy officers and the old army residents moved downstairs. Ensign Porter gave me his bedstead, and we moved upstairs to their old rooms. We formed messes and tried to regulate things so as to live decently. Everything so far has been in confusion. No decent man could get anything to eat, and the place has been a perfect pig-stye. Colonel Marshall has now taken command with Charlie Amory as his assistant

adjutant-general and Captain Fay as commissary. We had nine officers in our mess, — Colonel Marshall, Lieutenant Colonel Buffum, Major Filler, Captain Fay, Captain Amory, Lieutenant Sterling, Captain Stuart, Colonel White, 31st Maine. We all have a room together. Bed-bugs tormented me as usual.

*Monday, August 8.* — Nothing new. We heard of the fleet passing Fort Morgan. Spent the morning in the navy room and had a very pleasant game of whist. Weather very warm. We are let out three times a day into a yard at the back of the jail, at 6 A.M., 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. Two privates escaped last night by going down into the sink and digging out.

*Tuesday, August 9.* — Heard of the surrender of Fort Gaines to Powell at Mobile. Some of the officers refused to recognize Colonel Marshall as commandant. Troubled all night by bed-bugs. Had some trouble with Corporal Patterson, who was drunk and wanted to run me through.

*Wednesday, August 10.* — Colonel Marshall was appointed commandant of the prison by order of Captain Senn. Had a game of whist with the navy. Nothing new from Mobile.

*Thursday, August 11.* — We had quite a shower to-day. Usual routine gone through with. We wake up at 6 A.M., and go out into the yard for half an hour, where we wash ourselves, etc. Have a good supply of water luckily, from a hydrant. We then go back to our rooms and have an inspection of our clothing, which takes a good hour. About nine o'clock we have breakfast. At ten we are let out into the yard for an hour. Then we have until three o'clock to read, loaf, and enjoy prison life. At three we dine, and at four are let out again for an hour. In the evening we play whist, etc., and retire when we feel like it.

RICHLAND JAIL, COLUMBIA, S. C., *Aug. 11, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — Charlie Amory is here with us. He is well and unwounded. He was captured with General Bartlett. He is in our mess, which consists of Colonel Marshall, 14th N. Y. A., Colonel White, 31st Maine, and Lieutenant Colonel Buffum, 4th R. I., all of whom were captured the same time I was. When the enemy charged us on the 30th ult. I was in the second line with my regiment. We were so closely packed in the rifle-pit that I could not move an inch, nor could my men fire a shot. The enemy carried the first line and for some time amused themselves by shooting at the crowd I was in. I was luckily not wounded.

We are very kindly treated indeed, and I am not at all troubled except by certain little animals, which inhabit beds, and give out an unpleasant perfume when killed. They are especially fond of me.

Please send me a 20-pound sterling bill of exchange, payable to my order. I think you can send it through Major Anderson or Major General Foster, commanding at Hilton Head. If not, you can send it via Fortress Monroe. Try and get a small box through to me containing 2 shirts, 2 pairs drawers, 2 pairs stockings, and a small box of mercurial ointment. Also 6 packs cards, some needles and thread and buttons, etc., and anything else you can think of. Address me Prisoner of War, Columbia, S. C. . . . Am in good health.

Captain Fay is here, well. Sergeant Ford was also taken prisoner, unhurt.

*Friday, August 12.* — Had our usual mess of watermelons, which we are allowed to buy of outsiders every morning. A change was made in the mess arrangements

so that each one buys his own extras. Porter of the navy<sup>1</sup> came up in the afternoon.

*Saturday, August 13.* — Four or five of us clubbed together and bought a pack of cards for sixteen dollars Confederate scrip. Weather warm. Nothing new. Our jail is the county one. On the first floor the navy officers are kept, and deserters and conscripts; on the next floor the army officers, and on the third floor the criminals and runaway negroes. Also on the same floor General Grant's brother-in-law, named Dent, captured, I believe, on some cotton speculation in Louisiana or Mississippi. On the left of our jail is the lock-up and the town market, and the court house beyond. Every Sunday morning we are regaled by the cries from negroes being whipped in the lock-up, for various offences. The drunkards in the lock-up entertain us nightly by hideous yells and cries, and in the day-time by repentant and seedy countenances. In the lock-up yard are various pigeon-houses inhabited by every variety of doves. We spend much of our time watching them. Just beyond the yard of the lock-up is the court house and town hall, and under them the market. We get nearly all our food from there by purchases made through the sergeants. On this court house is a square tower with clock, etc., and around it a railing and walk where the watchman every quarter of an hour throughout the night calls the time and says, "All's well." He is there more particularly to give notice of any fires, etc. Back of our yard the rebel Treasury is located, and from windows we daily see the blue-back notes hung out to dry. On the right of the jail is a small house and shop kept by a Union man. The navy officers came

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant B. H. Porter, commanding flagship Malvern, killed at Fort Fisher, together with Flag Lieutenant W. S. Preston. Both were fine brave fellows.

By order of S. F. Newbury

Seven Volumes \$102.50

Supplements do. " }  
New Year 2.50 } 16.73  
Gift Volumes 3" 3.87

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Total Proceeds

\$85.77

Exo of Nathl. Mayden

Calcutta 19. 1864





near escaping through there last Christmas by digging a tunnel. They were unfortunately found out the night before they planned to escape.

*Sunday, August 14.* — Unusually dull, as we did not like to play cards and had nothing to do. Some of the navy officers came up in the afternoon.

*Monday, August 15.* — Played whist in the navy room. Had a drunken sergeant on guard who would not allow any one to come in with watermelons, etc. It is reported that Secretary Stanton has resigned.

*Tuesday, August 16.* — Inspector of Prisons was here to-day. He said that we were much better off than the Charleston prisoners. Asked if our rations were sufficient. Had our usual games of cards to-day.

*Wednesday, August 17.* — Usual routine of prison life. At night the air was terribly close, and one finds it a relief to see daylight. What with bed-bugs and foul air the nights are unpleasant. They found a tunnel our men were at work on to-day.

*Thursday, August 18.* — While we were playing whist to-day, Colonel Morgan, brother of the rebel general, came up to see us. He has just been released. Porter came up to see us. Weather very hot, as usual.

*Friday, August 19.* — Went outside the prison to-day for the first time. Lieutenant Eichberg sent for me to pay me the money for my watch. It was sold at auction for \$102, of which I got \$85, the balance being for commissions, etc. Afternoon and evening cool. Had a general clearing out of bed-bugs. Had the usual number of watermelons. Some letters were received from the North to-day by flag of truce.

*Saturday, August 20.* — We amused ourselves with draw poker and whist. Hot as the devil during the day. Night cool, consequently did not suffer much from bed-

bugs. Major Filler's bed was taken downstairs. Went outside the prison to get some money from Lieutenant Eichberg. We have to pay \$5 per pound for butter, \$2.50 a dozen for eggs, 50 cents for small loaf of bread, \$4 for watermelons, \$1 per dozen for small apples, etc.

*Sunday, August 21.* — Went down to the navy room and spent most the day with them, and dined there. Read most of the day and finished *Waverley*.

*Monday, August 22.* — Heard bad news from Petersburg with regard to General Hayes's capture.

*Tuesday, August 23.* — News better to-day. Learned that our forces hold the Weldon R. R. Captain Senn said that he would give us a room by ourselves as soon as possible.

*Wednesday, August 24.* — The air of the prison is perfectly stifling all day and most of the night. I spend most of my time killing bed-bugs, etc. I am afraid we shall all have fevers if we remain here long.

*Thursday, August 25.* — We had the room used by the conscripts downstairs assigned to us field officers to-day. We scrubbed it up with sand and brick, and moved down. It is on the corner and is much cooler and pleasanter than our old quarters, and we have much more liberty allowed us. Lieutenant Preston<sup>1</sup> of the navy received permission to give his parole for 30 days and endeavor to get exchanged for Lieutenant Glascelle.

*Friday, August 26.* — Passed the most comfortable night we have as yet had in the prison. Captain Amory is a little under the weather. He walked in his sleep. There are nine of us in the room: Colonel Marshall, Colonel White of the 31st Maine, Major Filler of Pennsylvania, Lieutenant Colonel Buffum of Rhode Island, Captain Amory and Captain McChesney.

<sup>1</sup> See note on page 364.

*Saturday, August 27.* — Nothing unusual occurred. Night chilly.

*Sunday, August 28.* — Captain Williams (afterwards lost on the Oneida) left prison to-day and went to the hotel, under charge of a son of Commander Ingraham, Confederate Navy, who is ordered to take him to Charleston. He is then to be released on parole for 45 days, to effect an exchange of all navy officers. He came down to see us in the evening before leaving.

*Monday, August 29.* — Rumors about that we have suffered a defeat on the Weldon R. R. with a loss of six thousand prisoners, and that Sherman had retreated. One of the men in the yard escaped, and a tunnel was found leading from their barracks.

*Tuesday, August 30.* — News from the Weldon R. R. turned out to be untrue. Lieutenant Preston was taken sick with fever and sent to the hospital.

COLUMBIA, S. C., *Aug. 30, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — I send this letter by Chaplain Fowler. He goes home to-morrow.

We are all well. Chaplain Fowler lives in Cambridge, and will endeavor to see you.

Love to all friends. Please have the following list of men from my regiment inserted in the paper for the benefit of friends. They were taken with me on the 30th July.

Captain W. W. Fay	Sergeant Dwelley
Sergeant Ford	Private Smith
Sergeant Halloran	Private Moriarty
Sergeant Fletcher	Private Deering
Sergeant Morse	

There are 12 more whose names I cannot recall. All the privates were left at Danville.

*Wednesday, August 31.* — Nothing new in a war way, except Sherman's movement at Atlanta. Chaplain Fowler of Connecticut left for Richmond to be exchanged. Sent my pipe home by him.

*Thursday, September 1.* — Had our room washed and cleaned. We take turns at this, and will soon make good scrubbers. We get some sand or clean dirt from the yard, and scatter over the floor, then throw some buckets of water in, and then set to with bricks and scrub. We fenced off one corner of the room with a blanket, and made a bathroom of it, using half an old barrel for a tub. Usual routine gone through with. Captain Senn comes in twice a day, — morning and evening, — and counts us to see if we are all there.

*Friday, September 2.* — Captain McChesney went out into the town on parole. Our table and chairs came to-day. Cost \$40. Received news of McClellan's nomination on a peace platform, which will kill him.

*Saturday, September 3.* — Heard news of a great victory in Atlanta. Five thousand prisoners captured, together with all the siege guns. Such news make a prisoner feel jolly. Had quite a heavy rain to-day. Five weeks since we were captured.

*Sunday, September 4.* — Nothing new, except that Atlanta is certainly captured, but no mention made of the number of prisoners. Had nothing to do as it was Sunday. Read *The Monastery*. Night warm.

RICHLAND JAIL, COLUMBIA, S. C., *Sept. 4, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We are quite comfortably situated here, considering our position as prisoners of war. Eight of us have a room together, about 18 feet by 15. It is on the ground floor and on the corner, so that we get plenty of air, and manage to keep quite cool and comfortable

during this hot weather. The occupants of the room are Colonel Marshall, 14th N. Y. H. A., Colonel White, 31st Maine, Lieutenant Colonel Buffum, 4th R. I., Major Filler, 55th Penn., Captain McChesney of a N. Y. regiment, Captain Amory of Jamaica Plain, Lieutenant Sterling, A. D. C. to General Terry, and myself. Our rations are corn-meal, bacon, tobacco and salt. We have plenty, and are allowed to buy anything that we wish outside.

I wish you would try and have a box sent on to me. Send cards (6 packs at least) and clothing and books. Also send me a bill of exchange for 20 pounds sterling. Captain Williams of the navy will tell Father what I wish. Please write and give me the news. Also any information you may have from my regiment. . . . Send your letter by way of Port Royal.

*Monday, September 5.* — Had our usual number of watermelons and dumplings. Had a very heavy thunder-storm, together with hail. Room was quite wet, as we have no window-sashes. Had a heavy thunder-shower in the evening.

*Tuesday, September 6.* — Encounter between Colonel Marshall and Major Filler. Was in the navy room in the evening. Night quite cool.

*Wednesday, September 7.* — Captain Amory bought a mattress which was full of bed-bugs. Day hot and close.

*Thursday, September 8.* — Had the mattress taken apart and cleaned. Day pleasant.

*Friday, September 9.* — Scrubbing day, but as Lieutenant Sterling was unwell, had the ceremony postponed. Charlie Amory received a box and letter from Major Anderson. The box contained clothing, and Charlie

gave me a pair of drawers and a shirt, which were very welcome.

*Saturday, September 10.* — Had rations issued to us. Sorghum flour and six pounds of bacon were the amount issued for eight men for ten days. Next time we are to have no more meat. Day pleasant. Six weeks since we were captured.

*Sunday, September 11.* — Day close. Can't help feeling homesick Sundays.

RICHLAND JAIL, COLUMBIA, S. C., *Sept. 11, 1864.*

DEAR FATHER, — I suppose you have heard from Captain Williams by this time that I am well. In case he is unsuccessful and has to return here, please send \$100 in gold by him. If he does not come back, please forward a bill of exchange for 20 pounds sterling to Major Anderson of General Foster's staff, and ask him to get it to me. I am very anxious to hear from you all at home. Have heard nothing since my capture, which was six weeks yesterday. Have managed to get along very comfortably since I have been here. Our rations are good and in sufficient quantity, and we have obtained money to buy extras by selling our watches.

Captain Amory is well. He received a box of clothes day before yesterday from Major Anderson. He very kindly furnished me with a shirt and pair of drawers, so that I manage to keep a clean suit of underclothes with me.

We all of us expect a general exchange of prisoners this fall. It certainly ought to be done for the sake of the enlisted men, who have no money and no means of getting any.

In our new room we have got rid of all vermin. An agreeable riddance, I can assure you.

. . . Please give me any news you may have in regard to my regiment.

*Monday, September 12.* — Nothing new. The day passed as usual.

*Tuesday, September 13.* — Received letters from home. One from Father and one from Alice. It is a great relief to find that all are well and that they have heard from me. Also received a letter from Mr. Kidder. In the evening the navy officers heard that they were to be exchanged.

*Wednesday, September 14.* — Dr. Marks<sup>1</sup> called to see me and said he had received a letter from Father. Lent me \$200 in Confederate money. Had an agreeable call from him.

*Thursday, September 15.* — Mrs. Crane's son was drowned to-day. Nothing new about exchange. Subscribed to the *Charleston Courier* for one month.

*Friday, September 16.* — Wrote to-day to Dr. Marks and Mr. Saunders for reading matter. By the way, whenever any one comes to see us, we always have to have a rebel officer present, so that the conversation is naturally rather constrained. Received several books from Dr. Marks, with some writing paper and a bottle of coffee.

*Saturday, September 17.* — Received a pair of blankets from Mr. Saunders, as did Charlie Amory. Went over to the navy room and had a drink of whiskey, the first I have tasted for six months.

*Sunday, September 18.* — About 9 o'clock the corporal of the guard came in and asked whether a Colonel Weld was here. The same thing happened in the evening. Could not find out what it was for. Had a rainy day. Shaved by the barber, who is a negro. He is allowed to

<sup>1</sup> He had a son at Father's school.

come in every morning and shave any one who can pay for it. Had the navy officers in our room in the evening. Day passed rather more quickly than last Sunday. Finished *Aurora Floyd*.

*Monday, September 19.* — Found that the officer who called yesterday thought the corporal was the Provost Marshal, Captain Hampton. He received a letter from General Ripley, commanding post at Charleston, asking whether my "status," as Captain Senn called it, was good. He rather thought it was, on inquiry. Day cloudy. Began *Mistress and Maid*. We heard that men were being sent away from Andersonville.

*Tuesday, September 20.* — Sent a letter to Alice to Mr. Kidder at Wilmington. A Mr. Eastby (?), mentioned in Father's letter, called to see me. He is going to send me some underclothing. Had a drunken Frenchman singing to us all night in the lock-up next door. Had a fearful noise all night from the prisoners in the third story. Lieutenant Barclay spent the night here. He leaves for Richmond in the morning. Sent a letter to Hannah by him.

RICHLAND JAIL, COLUMBIA, S. C., *Sept. 20, 1864.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I send this letter by Lieutenant Barclay who is going to Richmond to-morrow to be exchanged with the sick and wounded. For the last few days I have had a good many visitors. First Dr. Marks came and lent me \$200, and afterwards sent me books, writing paper, etc. Then a Mr. Saunders came with a pair of blankets for Captain Amory and a pair for me. He furnishes me anything I want, at Mr. Kidder's request. Then last Sunday an officer called to see me, but was not admitted as the officer of the day was not present. This officer came to see if I was comfortable, at the request of General Ripley of Charleston. To-day a Mr. Eastby came



at Mr. K.'s request to see if I had everything I wanted. So you may feel certain that I am as comfortable as a prisoner can be.

None of the money that Father sent has as yet reached me. I can obtain what I want from Mr. Saunders.

We spend our time here reading and playing cards. It is rather stupid and dull at times. Next door to us is the city lock-up and the City Hall. At night we are amused by concerts, etc., from bands and glee clubs in the hall, and also by drunkards in the lock-up.

Ask Father to let me know what the prospect of a general exchange is. If it is not good, I wish to try for a special exchange.

Captain Amory and I are both well. Love to all the family. Write as often as possible.

*Wednesday, September 21.* — Day pleasant. About 50 men from Wilmington arrived here to-day. 30 of them were deserters. The men in the barracks would not let the deserters in, so they had to sleep in the hall. Rained during the night. Dr. Marks wrote to Captain Senn, to see if I wanted anything.

*Thursday, September 22.* — Day cloudy. Dr. Marks called on me this morning. One of the deserters was roughly handled by the men. They tore his clothing off, and robbed him of his money. He did not meet with much sympathy. Had our usual concert in the night from drunkards in the lock-up.

*Friday, September 23.* — We had a rainy day. Went upstairs to see the officers there. Heard of the victory in the Valley. The deserters were sent away to-day.

*Saturday, September 24.* — A new officer arrived at the navy room. He was captured at Plymouth last February. The navy made some egg-nog, of which we had our

share. Day cloudy most of the time. Scrubbed out the room. Spent the evening in the navy room, singing, etc. Had quite a scene in jail to-day. A rebel deserter was brought in. He was captured in the street, his two sisters being with him. When he was brought into the jail the sentry tried to keep the sisters out, but they shrieked and screamed and fought, and finally dodged in under the guard's bayonet, and joined their brother amid the applause of the surrounding multitude.

*Sunday, September 25.* — Wrote a letter to Father, enclosing it in one to Mr. Kidder. Shall try to have it run the blockade. Finished *Hopes and Fears*. Weather delightful. More like an autumn day at home than anything we have had yet. Navy officers hear that they are to be exchanged October 1.

RICHLAND JAIL, COLUMBIA, S. C., *Sept. 25, 1864.*

(Oct. 11. Am very well and in good spirits. [*over*])

DEAR FATHER, — Have heard nothing from home except the letter written on 29th ult., enclosing one from Alice. I am going to send this letter by a different channel, and think you might answer through the same way. Your letters would then come with more certainty.

Dr. Marks called again to see me this week. He seems in very feeble health and I am afraid will not live long.

The navy officers will probably leave here next week. I shall send letters by them.

Am well and comfortable. Captain Amory the same.

Time passes rather slowly here. We have nothing to do except reading and card-playing. In the day-time we walk about the yard, and amuse ourselves with an occasional game of quoits. I usually write you twice a week, and hope that you receive most of the letters. We are

allowed to subscribe for the papers, and have the news from Richmond and Charleston. The prisoners confined here are almost all of them in good health. Indeed, there have been no very serious cases of sickness since we have been here. Both Captain A. and myself are well provided with everything, so that you need not feel anxious on account of our health. . . .

*(Written on back of letter)*

DEAR FATHER, — As the navy officers start to-morrow I thought I would send this note by them. As you see from the original date, it is some time since the ink part was written. We are all well here. A Mr. John Caldwell called here last Friday and offered to cash my draft on you for any amount. So you see I am all right. I shall give him a draft for 50 dollars in gold, which will last me some time, although I have to pay some borrowed money out of it. Almost all the officers in the Southern Confederacy are now confined in a stockade about two miles from this town. They were sent here from Charleston. I hear that the privates in C. are dying at the rate of 100 a day from yellow fever. They are so worn out by their imprisonment that they are fit subjects for any epidemic. Tell Hannah that her letter of Sept. 16th reached me about two days ago. Was very glad indeed to get it. In future when writing me you had better put care of Captain Senn, who commands our guard. Ensign Tillson of the navy will probably deliver this.

An outbreak occurred among the prisoners brought from Charleston the other day. Several managed to get away. . . .

*Monday, September 26.* — Captain Senn's letter in reply to the article "Outrage" in the *Carolinian*, appeared

in the *Guardian*. Last night chilly. Weather to-day delightful. Some more car-jumpers <sup>1</sup> brought in.

*Tuesday, September 27.* — The *Carolinian* came out with a long letter in reply to Captain Senn. Renewed our subscription to the *Carolinian*. Major Filler sent a petition to Secretary Seddon that he be allowed to go to Washington to effect the exchange of prisoners here.

*Wednesday, September 28.* — Navy officers expected news in regard to their going to Charleston for exchange, but received none. Some more car-jumpers and men who escaped from Florence arrived here to-day. Some of them got within 30 miles of Newbern. Several hundred escaped at Florence. Bought myself some stockings and a shirt. Clean clothes came in to-day.

*Thursday, September 29.* — No news for the navy as yet. Good news still from Sheridan, and gold reported down to 200. More escaped prisoners brought in. Wrote to Mr. Saunders for money. Had my letter to Father, which was to run the blockade, returned me to-day. Captain Senn on as officer of the day.

*Friday, September 30.* — Meade received a letter from home, saying that Captain Williams had called, and said that the exchange had been effected. Day pleasant. In the evening 100 sailors came up from Charleston. They are to go on to Richmond to be exchanged. Major Gist was here on an inspection tour. He said that the exchange would be resumed in a few days. Wrote to General Ripley and Dr. Marks.

*Saturday, October 1.* — Lieutenant Bell escaped last night, and was brought in this morning. He wandered round the town and played billiards. He got on a train, but was put off by the conductor. About 100 sailors and

<sup>1</sup> Prisoners who had escaped from the cars, and were recaptured while trying to get back to the Union lines.

some officers came up from Charleston. They are to wait here and go on with the navy officers to Richmond and be exchanged. Rained during the night. Had our room scrubbed out. Had a fire in our room in the evening. Lieutenant Sterling received a letter.

*Sunday, October 2.* — Two officers escaped last night. Their names were Williams and Peirce. Wrote Father and finished *Pelham*. Day passed very slowly. Had a skirmish with cornbread in the evening.

*Monday, October 3.* — Rained hard all night. Morning dark and gloomy. Cleared off for a little while during the day. Dr. Marks called to see me. Said he sent me a basket of books, which did not reach me. Is going to write to General Ripley for me. Received particulars of the fights near Petersburg and Richmond.

*Tuesday, October 4.* — My Charleston paper of yesterday came this A.M. It is the first time I have received it since subscribing. Lieutenant Gear received an order to go to Richmond, probably for exchange. Had a concert at the City Hall. Sent a letter by Lieutenant Gear.

*Wednesday, October 5.* — The men dug a tunnel and were all going last night. Lieutenant Belcher was officer of the day and discovered the affair. Had another concert this evening. Captain Senn told me Dr. Marks had written General Ripley about my exchange.

*Thursday, October 6.* — Wrote a letter to Alice, to go by Lieutenant Ware. Had a heavy rain in the afternoon. A Mr. Caldwell called with a letter from a Mr. Coleman, 80 Wall St., New York, and offered to cash any of my drafts on Father. He lent me \$50 for temporary use. Some more car-jumpers came in. Nothing new in papers.

*Friday, October 7.* — Wrote to Mr. Caldwell for some money and sent it by Captain Senn. Captain McChesney was sent for by the commandant of the post, and ques-

tioned as to any intended outbreak amongst us. As there was none intended, no information could be given. Four cannon were fired towards evening. Some officers from Charleston came by here in wagons about noon. Spent most of the day mending my trousers. Day rainy and cloudy.

*Saturday, October 8.* — Weather was quite cool towards morning. Had a fine day. Room scrubbed out. An officer from Charleston came to the prison to-day with letters for Charlie Amory and me. Five for Captain A., and one for me from Hannah. All well at home, and was glad enough to get it. Second one I have received.

*Sunday, October 9.* — Last night was the coolest of the season. Managed to keep pretty warm. Dr. Marks called in the morning and gave me a copy of the New Testament in Greek, and promised to send me a comforter. Sewed my blankets together with paper between them. Quite chilly so that we had a fire all day.

*Monday, October 10.* — Three officers were brought in last night who escaped from the depot. There are now 1400 officers at the stockade, some two miles from here. We are now kept locked up all the time, I suppose from fear of an outbreak. Gave the letter I was going to send by Lieutenant Ware to one of the hospital stewards who is going to Richmond to-morrow, to be exchanged, with the sick and wounded. Doctor examined several sick to-day and sent them off to be exchanged. Captain McChesney was sent to the hospital to-day. Heard that our privates were dying at the rate of 100 per day at Charleston, of yellow fever.

*Tuesday, October 11.* — The navy officers received orders to go to Richmond this A.M. They were the happiest set of men I have ever seen. In the afternoon we sang "Auld Lang Syne," etc. All day they were busy giving

AMERICAN  
MONEY  
J. A. M.  
1864

\$ 50 -

Columbia, S. C., Oct 12, 1864

Pay to the order of

John Caldwell

for

of Dollars in gold, and charge to account

Yours Respectfully,

W. T. Walker

To Hon S M Weld

Boston Mass

Alvord Street

J. A. Witty  
Pay S. G. Davis Cashier  
or order for Collectors  
J. M. Cyleby Cash

J. G. Davis



away blankets, etc. I sent a letter to Raish and one to Hiram. Had our windows fixed to-day by boarding the upper part, and putting a sliding board for the lower sash. Day pleasant. Last night cold. Filler went with the navy.

*Wednesday, October 12.* — Navy went about 5 A.M. We were not allowed to see them off. Meade kindly sent me his hammock. It seemed dreadfully dull all day, and we missed them very much. They were almost all of them very pleasant companions. Mr. John Caldwell was here to-day, and I gave him a draft in triplicate on Father for \$50 in gold. He exchanged it at the rate of 24 for 1, making \$1200 in Confederate money. I paid him back the \$55 which I borrowed, and he returned me my receipt for the same. I lent Charlie Amory \$50 and paid Colonel Marshall \$50 and took \$45 myself, leaving \$1000 in the hands of Lieutenant Belcher. Colonel Marshall had a chill in the afternoon.

*Thursday, October 13.* — Lieutenant Kramer tried to get away last night, but failed. Saw the two-headed negro girl<sup>1</sup> at the City Hall window, where the man brought her at our request. She has two bodies joined back to back, and she played on musical instruments, etc., with both sets of hands at once. Wrote Major Forbes. A major of the 17th Maine was in here this afternoon. He came from the stockade, and goes on to Charleston for exchange to-morrow. 20 officers sent on from Charleston stopped here last night, on their way to the stockade. Day pleasant. Drew \$500; \$100 to Colonel Buffum, \$150 to Colonel Marshall, \$50 to Colonel White, \$50 to Major Filler, and \$150 to Captain A.

*Friday, October 14.* — The two-headed girl continued on exhibition. Two lieutenant colonels, one from Rich-

<sup>1</sup> The girl was afterwards on exhibition at the North, in Boston among other places.

mond, and Colonel Pickett of Hardee's staff were here to-day. They thought the prospect good for an early exchange. Nothing new. Hood's famous march to Sherman's rear does not seem to have amounted to much so far.

*Saturday, October 15.* — Had the room scrubbed out. Put up my hammock. Doctor told Captain Amory he was to be exchanged. Day pleasant.

*Sunday, October 16.* — A dull, homesick sort of a day in jail. Every one seems to feel blue. Lieutenant Gill on as officer of the day. He has just returned from leave. Weather pleasant. Southern papers begin to feel rather blue about Hood. As usual, they made great boasts about what he was going to do, and are now much disappointed.

*Monday, October 17.* — Played the usual number of games of cribbage. In the afternoon a Mr. Garesché called and showed me a letter from a Mr. McLane of New York, requesting him to see that I received the full value of the enclosed draft. No draft was enclosed and the amount of it was not stated. Mr. G. was very kind and offered to supply me with money or anything else I needed. Received three letters: one from Hannah, the 28th ult., Father, the 30th ult., and Miss — —. They made me jolly for the rest of the day. Wrote to Dr. Marks and Mr. Garesché about Wharton Greene.

RICHLAND JAIL, COLUMBIA, S. C., Oct. 17, 1864.

DEAR FATHER, — If a friend of Colonel White's of the 31st Maine deposits any money with you, please place it to my credit. I have let Colonel W. have some money which I draw from a Mr. Caldwell here by giving a draft on you. I have already drawn on you for fifty dollars in gold. Will see that Captain Amory is provided with as much money as he may need. We are both perfectly well.

We have been amused for a couple of days looking at a double-headed girl on exhibition at the City Hall next door to us. She is a negress, and looks like two women strapped back to back. You see we have our amusements down here as well as up North. The navy have all left here for Richmond, to be exchanged. I suppose you have received the letters that I sent by them by this time. Have not received the box that you said was sent me. Captain A. had a box sent by Major Anderson, which has not yet reached him. Have only received two letters since I have been here. Please write as often as possible, and send by way of Charleston and Richmond. Mr. Caldwell exchanged my draft on you at the rate of 24 for 1. If you get a good opportunity, send me some Boston papers. Love to all. . . .

P.S. Have just received two letters from home, one from you and one from Hannah. Yours of Sept. 30 and Hannah's of Sept. 28. A Mr. Garesché called to see me to-day. He had a letter from a Mr. McLane of New York, who requested him to see that I received the full value of the enclosed draft. There was no draft enclosed. He was very sorry about it, and wished me to write and stop the payment of the draft. Please stop payment of all the drafts you have sent me, so I can draw all I wish here from Mr. Caldwell. All the drafts sent to me have undoubtedly been taken out of the letters. Mr. Garesché was very kind, and offered to supply me with money or anything else I needed. He evidently knows nothing of the draft and never received it. Shall write Colonel — about it. . . .

*Tuesday, October 18.* — Captain Amory received his box from home, with several Northern papers and books. Gave me a shirt and a pair of drawers, which Major

Anderson sent me. There was a large meeting in town last night to consider Mr. Boyce's letter. Had a drunkard in the lock-up who amused us. I was measured yesterday for a pair of shoes, to be finished by Saturday, by one Flannigan. Colonel Marshall received a letter saying he would be exchanged.

*Wednesday, October 19.* — Dr. Marks called to see me, and showed me the answer in regard to his application for my exchange. Day pleasant. Nothing new.

*Thursday, October 20.* — Received a letter from Mr. Garesché, saying that he had taken steps to find out Colonel Greene's residence. Captain Amory received a letter from his mother and one by mistake from Ned Boit, intended for William Amory's son, alluding to Charlie Bowditch. Lieutenant Belcher brought in a list of names from Richmond, of officers who had money there, in the hands of Quartermaster Moffatt. Mine was among them. A man escaped to-day by jumping over the fence behind the privy. Day pleasant.

*Friday, October 21.* — Lieutenant Eichberg was on to-day, the first time for a long while. Had half-sashes of glass put in to-day. Each pane was made up of four or five pieces.

*Saturday, October 22.* — Medical Director came to see Colonel Marshall, with a note from a lady, and some money. Day has been windy and chilly. Begins to look decidedly like winter, or rather autumn. Received news of Sheridan's victory in the Valley. Captain McChesney came back from the hospital this evening. All the officers who have been able to be moved, have been sent away from hospital. Did not get my shoes.

*Sunday, October 23.* — No additional news from the Valley. Weather pleasant. Day as dull as usual. Wrote Father and Livy. Captain Senn is going to put another

mess of 14 in our cook-house. Sent Dr. Marks's books to Captain Senn's house.

*Monday, October 24.* — Colonel Marshall asked Lieutenant Belcher whether Captain McChesney has asked him for an affidavit. He said he had not. Some conversation occurred between Colonel Marshall and Captain McChesney. Received a letter from Captain Chute of the 59th at the stockade. A Mr. Thomas Pauvear called to see if he could do anything for me. He said a Mr. Sprague of Boston asked him to do so. Day pleasant.

*Tuesday, October 25.* — Caught cold to-day and was unwell this evening. Had fuller accounts from the Valley. The double-header was on exhibition again to-day.

*Wednesday, October 26.* — Captain Amory had a letter from Mr. Campbell, saying that all special exchanges were at an end, but that a general exchange would soon take place. Rebel officers have been trying to enlist some of our men, so we sent Captain A.'s letter out to them. They cheered on hearing it read, which brought Captain Senn out. Drew \$200. Lent \$50 to Sterling and \$50 to Colonel White. Men began digging on a new sink. Captain A. received a letter from Captain Belger, saying that Lieutenant Amory had gone North, and that Major Forbes was at the stockade. Leaves are beginning to fall quite fast now.

*Thursday, October 27.* — Wrote to Alice. Had a rain-storm all day long. Some officers from the stockade came up to see us. One was Major Reynolds of Colonel Marshall's regiment. Sent a note down to Major Forbes by them. Cheering in the evening from the crowd assembled to see the double-header. Five of the men jumped over the fence, were caught, and put in irons on bread and water for ten days. The guards were taken out of the yard to-day. Ten deserters went out of the yard to-day, sup-

posed to have enlisted in the Irish Brigade now forming to do provost-duty in Richmond. The men mugged the corporal as he was taking their things out of the yard.

*Friday, October 28.* — Day pleasant. Heard of fighting at Petersburg. Wrote to Mr. Caldwell for another check. Rumors in the afternoon of heavy fighting at Petersburg. Inspectors from Richmond were here and Lieutenant Colonel Means, commanding stockade.

*Saturday, October 29.* — Received a £5 bill of exchange, and letter dated Aug. 17. Came from Captain Moffatt of Richmond, quartermaster. Officer arrived here last night, captured at Atlanta. Says things are going all right there.

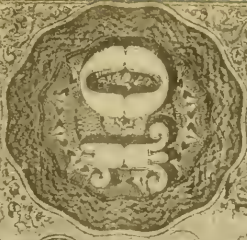
*Sunday, October 30.* — Three months to-day since I was captured. Day very dull. Nothing additional from Petersburg.

*Monday, October 31.* — Rumors that \$29,000 came to the stockade yesterday. A lieutenant of artillery came here with a letter from a gentleman in Richmond inquiring how I was. Wrote to Dr. Marks and Mr. Kidder. Day pleasant. The five men who escaped and were put in the lock-up on bread and water, escaped again. Johnny Bull fired at them and recaptured three. Two escaped.

*Tuesday, November 1.* — Colonel Bedel went down to the stockade to-day, to get any letters or money which might be there for our officers. He found that all such things had been sent back to Charleston. He wrote to the provost marshal for it. Day pleasant. Mr. Caldwell called and cashed my draft on Father for \$50 in gold. He gave me \$1200 in Confederate money. I gave Captain Senn \$900, making \$1000 now in his hands. A draft for £5 for me was among the letters sent back to Charleston.

*Wednesday, November 2.* — Baker, our former waiter,

**N E J**



THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA  
1862



TWO YEARS AFTER THE  
DECLARATION OF  
INDEPENDENCE  
1862

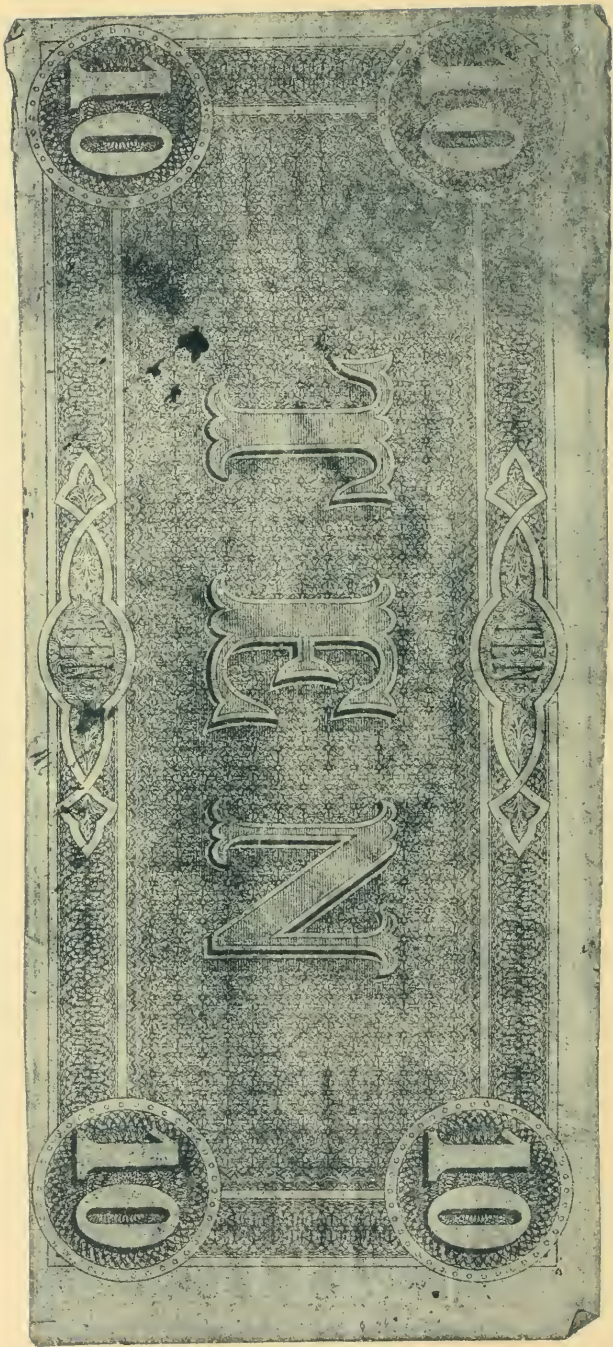
CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA

THE GREAT SEAL OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA

10

*Will pay to the order of*  
*John C. Smith*  
*of the City of Richmond*  
*Virginia*

Printed by E. M. & Co. Richmond, Va.

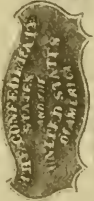
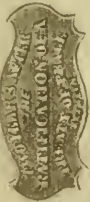
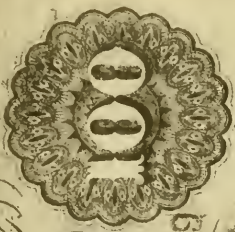




Richmond

REDEEMABLE

Feb. 17th 1862



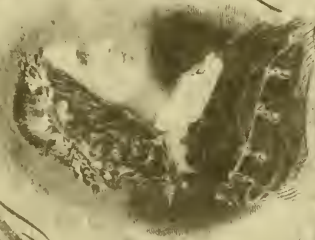
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Shelburne

Amherst

SERIES II



Will pay to the

bearer on demand

ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS

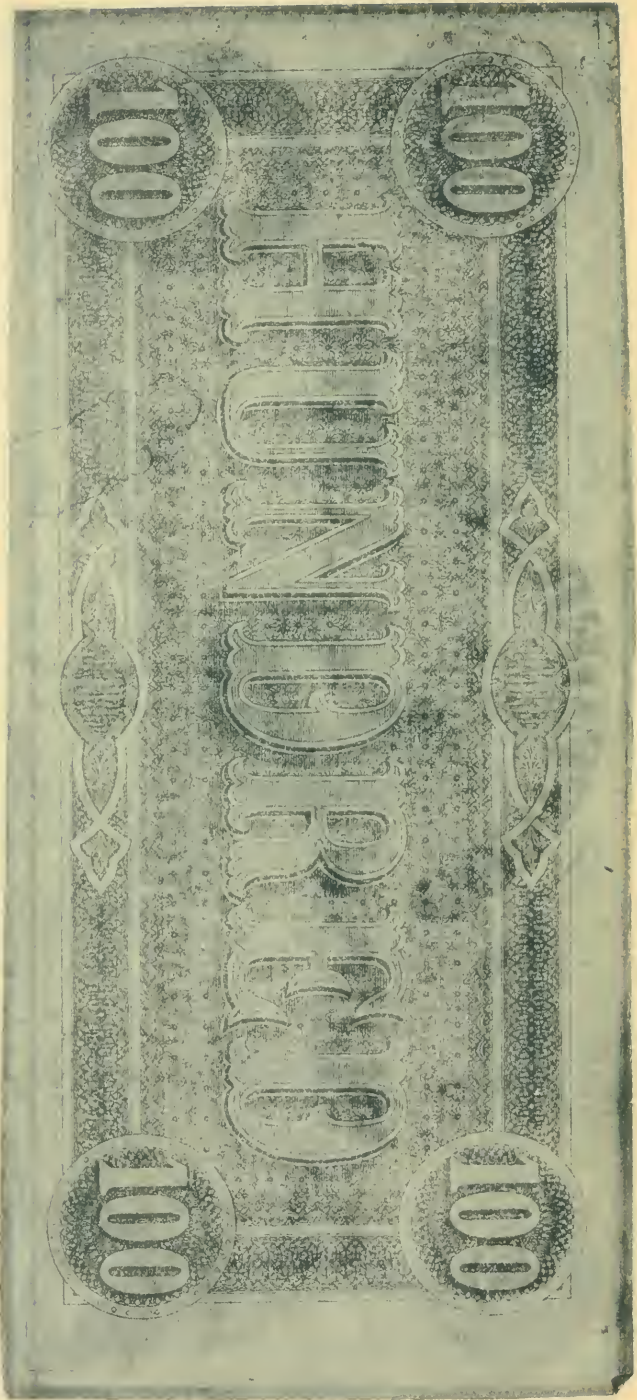


THE REGISTER

Keating & Ball, Cal. Jun 84

FOR TREASURER

*Handwritten signature*



100

100

HINDENBERG

100

100

was tried by the provost marshal and found guilty of stealing. Wrote to the postmaster of Charleston for my draft of £5. Received a letter from Mr. Garesché. He said he had been unable to find the address I wanted. Had a chilly rainy day. Sent yesterday for the *Savannah Republican*. There was an order in the paper making Captain Senn commandant of the post, during the illness of Major Greene.

*Thursday, November 3.* — Rain-storm continued, making it cold and gloomy. Wrote Mother. Nothing new. This evening during the storm the officers upstairs had a plank run out from the window on to the roof of the adjoining house. It remained there an hour and a half before the sentry discovered it. He fired five or six times at it. The officers were luckily afraid to try it. Sergeant White was on as officer of the day.

*Friday, November 4.* — Johnny Bull on as officer of the day. Cleared up during the night, but rained again during day. No war news.

*Saturday, November 5.* — No letters. Day pleasant. No news. Bought butter at \$8 per lb. Weather chilly.

*Sunday, November 6.* — Dull as usual here. Johnny Bull on as officer of the day. Weather warm. Major Greene reported dangerously ill of pneumonia.

*Monday, November 7.* — Day warm and pleasant. Bought a five-pound bale of Killickinick for \$30. Captain Paine heard he was to be exchanged. Captain Hatch, assistant agent of exchange, was in the city last night. Had the room scrubbed out. Sent letter to Father.

*Tuesday, November 8.* — Election day up North. A vote was held amongst the officers and men. Among the officers Lincoln had 67, McClellan 7. Among men Lincoln was 9 votes ahead. Day cloudy and hot. A regular dog-day. Received some books from Dr. Marks. Some

officers were brought in who had escaped from the stockade. Captain Senn said there was a letter for me.

*Wednesday, November 9.* — Lieutenant Gill sent in a letter for me and one for Captain Amory. Mine was from Dick Milton. Heard that several letters were sent to us from the stockade. Mackentire, who took the oath of allegiance to the South and who pretended to be an officer, was put in among the other deserters. He is accused of robbing a citizen.

*Thursday, November 10.* — News came this morning that McClellan was elected. Not believed. Confederate gunboat Florida said to be captured. Colonel Means was here, and had some conversation with Colonel Bedel. Several had letters, but none for me. Day pleasant.

*Friday, November 11.* — This morning the news is that Lincoln is reelected. Hope it is true. It is probable that we shall be sent to the stockade, and the jail used as a hospital. Wrote to Mrs. Greene and Mrs. Garesché. Day warm and pleasant. Grew cooler in the evening.

*Saturday, November 12.* — Lieutenant Belcher brought me a letter from Father, containing £5. It was the one he sent me through Major Anderson. A Captain May of the blockade-runner Night Hawk called to see me. He came from Wilmington, and brought me a bundle of clothes from Mrs. Kidder, as well as a note from Mr. Kidder and Miss Sue. Gave me the address of Mrs. Greene. He offered me any money that I might need, etc. Wrote to Mrs. Greene at Warrenton, N. C. Day warm and pleasant.

*Sunday, November 13.* — Wrote home. Answered Miss K.'s letter. Day pleasant.

*Monday, November 14.* — The men received orders this morning to get ready to leave by 10 o'clock. All of them were sent off at that hour. The yard has seemed de-





LIEUT. CADWELL      CAPT. SHURTFLEFF

LT.-C

HEADQUARTERS FIFTY



DR. SOULE

LIEUT. MAYLOAN

VOLUNTEERS, ALEXANDRIA





served all day. Captain Martin, Assistant Adjutant-General of the stockade, was here to-day. Had a box for Colonel Buffum. Maria brought us a chicken pie, for which we paid \$30.

*Tuesday, November 15.* — Received a letter from Lieutenant Read of the C. S. N., saying that he would do all he could for my parole, etc. Drew \$100 from Captain Senn, leaving \$400 due me. Mr. Caldwell called with a note from Mr. Felton. Day pleasant. We are allowed to go out into the yard whenever we choose, now that the men are gone. Received a letter from Mr. Garesché.

*Wednesday, November 16.* — General order in the paper putting Colonel Means in command of the district. Expects to go to the stockade soon. Day quite warm. Lieutenant Belcher on as officer of the day. Captain McChesney went over to the stockade to stay. Colonel Crooks, 22d New York Cavalry, came over here in his place.

*Thursday, November 17.* — Colonel Ashworth of the 1st Georgia Union Cavalry was put into our room to-day. He has been very badly treated. He is from Dalton. We made him as comfortable as possible. Day pleasant.

[Colonel J. H. Ashworth, 1st Georgia Cavalry (Union), was captured in Gilmer County, Georgia, November 5, 1864. He was twice robbed of all his clothing and money by the rebels. Information in reference to Colonel A. can be obtained from James G. Brown, Dalton, Ga., appointed Chief of Scouts by General Thomas, U. S. A.

Colonel A. captured, on or about November 1, Lieutenant Colonel Harp, 1st Georgia State Cavalry, in Pickens County, Georgia.

Eighteen of Colonel A.'s men, regularly enlisted in the U. S. service, were captured with him. Twelve of these

men, to the best of Colonel A.'s knowledge, were taken out two days after their capture by some guerillas near Gatesville, Ga., under Captain Tom Pope Edminston, and shot. Six of these men who were killed had never belonged to the rebel service. The remainder had taken the oath of allegiance and regularly enlisted in the U. S. service, under direction of General Steedman, U. S. A.]

*Friday, November 18.* — Received a letter from Hannah, dated October 23. Contained news of Colonel Amory's death. Charlie had four letters. All came by way of Charleston. Also received a letter from Mr. Kidder in reference to my exchange. Several officers who escaped from the prison camp were brought in here last night. Among them was Major Reynolds of the 14th New York Heavy Artillery. Gave us an interesting account of their adventures.

*Saturday, November 19.* — Heard of Sherman's advance from Atlanta. The officers who came here last night were sent back to the stockade. Began to rain this afternoon. One of the men who escaped on the way to Florence was brought in here.

*Sunday, November 20.* — Day rainy and gloomy. Wrote Alice. Colonel Ashworth was quite unwell.

*Monday, November 21.* — Major Filler escaped this afternoon. He told us that he was going to try and leave. When we were let out in the afternoon, he went into the men's barracks and hid underneath the floor. We dressed up a dummy in bed, so that when Captain Senn counted us over he thought we were all there. Filler escaped through a tunnel during the night, with some men. Day rainy. Sherman reported near Macon. Received a letter from Dr. Marks, giving me Colonel Greene's address. Lieutenant Gill officer of the day.







FIELD AND STAFF FIFTY-SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS

ild and Staff

ount

ff

Ar.

m.

left to right.

*Tuesday, November 22.* — Day cold and cloudy. Major Filler was missed this morning while we were at breakfast. Lieutenant Belcher came in here and tried to find out how he escaped. They are very much puzzled about it. We told them that he had escaped up the chimney. Sherman reported at Union Point.

*Wednesday, November 23.* — We bought 37 pounds fresh beef at \$2.50 per pound, for our Thanksgiving dinner. Last night very cold; the ground froze and ice formed. They have not yet found out the way Major Filler escaped. Very cold in the evening, as we had no wood.

*Thursday, November 24.* — Thanksgiving up North. We had our dinner of course. Some canned turkey, roast beef, turnips and potatoes formed our repast. In the evening we had pumpkin pies. Received 3 letters. One from Alice, one from General Peirce and one about Sergeant Dwelley. Milledgeville captured by Sherman.

*Friday, November 25.* — Nothing new from Sherman. Order from Wade Hampton with reference to his soldiers on furlough. Weather a little milder. Captain Senn was relieved from command of the post yesterday, and on duty here to-day. He showed us the order in regard to getting money, which he says will prevent us from getting money from Mr. Caldwell. Wrote to Alice. Dirt taken out of the yard.

*Saturday, November 26.* — No news from Sherman. Wounded officers from the Macon hospitals arrived here yesterday, and report A. P. Hill's corps arriving at Charleston. Belcher on. All the militia is being sent forward to Hamburg.

*Sunday, November 27.* — To be marked with a white cross. Over two hundred letters received here to-day, all old mail. I received four, one from James, one from

Howland, Frank Balch and O. B. L. Day quite warm and pleasant.

*Monday, November 28.* — Colonel Means came here to-day with Dr. Spencer. Dr. S. is to examine the officers for exchange. He told Colonel Marshall that he was to go. Received a note from Major Chambliss and Miss Currier, a cousin of Colonel Greene's. Day pleasant. Wrote to Mr. Caldwell about my exchange.

*Tuesday, November 29.* — Captain Martin came here to-day; says there is a large mail for us. Wrote to Major Chambliss, Miss Currier, and Father. Rumors that Sherman has cut the railroad between Augusta and Branchville. Saw the female soldier who was brought here some days ago. Captain McChesney is said to be colonel of the foreign legion. He has not been heard of at camp since he went from there to town.

*Wednesday, November 30.* — Lieutenant Belcher on. Mr. Caldwell came to see me and gave me strong hopes of an exchange. Captain Senn came with him. Day warm and pleasant. No letters received. Nothing definite from Sherman. His cavalry reported at Waynesboro.

*Thursday, December 1.* — Day warm and pleasant. Captain Senn on. Nothing new from Sherman. Scrubbed out our room. Had permission from Captain Senn to make an application to go to camp for letters.

*Friday, December 2.* — Lieutenant Gill on, as officer of the day. Mr. Caldwell came to see us. Spoke to me about Dr. Spencer. My rheumatism does not get any better. Day pleasant. One hundred of Sherman's men brought in. All confident and in good spirits.

*Saturday, December 3.* — Sherman reported at Millen. All of us anxious to have Dr. Spencer come. Made my application to go to camp. Day pleasant and warm. Belcher on.





OFFICERS OF THE FIFTY SIXTH MASSACHUS



# Field and Staff

Lieut. Cadwell Adjutant

Capt. A. B. Shurtleff

Lieut Col. James

Col. S. M. Weld Jr.

Dr. Soule

Lieut. Malone Q. M.

From left to right.

2  
Office.

Officers standing up.

1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. E. H. Emerson  
Capt. Abijah Hollis  
" John H. Jeffrey  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. James A. Littlefield  
Capt. Warren B. Salucia  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Edwin A. Wallace  
1<sup>st</sup> " J. W. Mayhew

Officers sitting down.

1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. W. H. Cadwell  
Capt. H. S. Shurtleff.  
Asst. Surgeon Horatio S. Soule  
Lieut. Col. Horatio S. Jarvis  
Col. S. M. Weld Jr  
Capt. James W. Canturight  
Capt. James McCardle

*Sunday, December 4.* — Day pleasant. Nothing new. Captain Senn on. Wrote home. Bill Forbes was brought in, having been recaptured.

*Monday, December 5.* — Major Milton and Dr. Spencer were here to see me. Told them about my rheumatism; were here some time. Day pleasant. Application to go to camp refused.

*Tuesday, December 6.* — Lieutenant Belcher on. Men sent off to Florence. Day pleasant. Rumors of a fight with Sherman.

*Wednesday, December 7.* — Rained a little in the morning. Cleared off during the day. Received news of Hood's defeat at Franklin. Wheeler whipped by Sherman. Exchange resumed at Charleston.

*Thursday, December 8.* — Day passed as usual. About 5 P.M. Major Griswold and a Mr. Isaacs came into the room. They had a list for exchange with them. My name was on it, thank God! Colonel Marshall, Colonel Buffum, Sterling, Captain Norris and Sherman were also on the list. Had a regular scrape-down all night. All of us were sorry for Captain Amory, whose name was not on the list.

*Friday, December 9.* — We bought ourselves some rations and started for the depot at 10.30 A.M. There were eight in all. We reached the depot about 11 o'clock and had to wait there in the cold until 3.30, when a party of 185 officers came from the camp. Major Forbes was among them. Started immediately for Charleston in a drizzling rain. Stopped at Kingsville for refreshments. Charge \$10, or your brains blown out. As the box cars were very cold I managed to get into the conductor's car, where there was a fire.

*Saturday, December 10.* — Reached a station about 15 miles from Charleston at 6 A.M. Got breakfast there

through the influence of the conductor. Charge \$500! Reached Charleston, where we were with a Colonel Hatch. He told us we were to go to the Pavilion Hotel, as it was doubtful if we could get to our boat on account of the fog. Were taken to the hotel. Colonel Hatch called the colonels in and gave us a drink of whiskey and made us a speech, etc. As the fog soon cleared up, we were sent down to the boat, a blockade-runner. Saw the effect of the shells on the city, which, by the way, is very old-fashioned looking. Almost every house in the lower portion has a shell-hole in it. Were taken out and transferred to our boat, the *George Leary*. Saw all the fortifications, etc. Day rainy and misty.

*Sunday, December 11.* — This morning it was pleasant and clear, so that I had a chance to see Morris, James and Sullivan's Islands. In the afternoon, about 5 o'clock, we were transferred to the *United States*, a propeller. These were chiefly field officers. Rebel flag-of-truce boats were out again this afternoon.

*Monday, December 12.* — We are fairly on our way. Started with a fair wind and a clear sky about 8 A.M. Bumped on the bar three or four times. Wind was from the west, so that we had all our sails set. Passed *Frying-Pan Shoals* this evening.

*Tuesday, December 13.* — Fair day. Passed *Hatteras* about 4 P.M. Could see the lighthouse. Hardly any one sick.

[For some reason or other I stopped keeping a diary regularly after my release. I suppose that I was so glad to be getting nearer home that I did not care about writing any more. Anyway, we were landed at New York, and I went home. I had got leave of absence from Annapolis, so did not have to stay there. I remember getting



HEAD-QUARTERS, CAMP PAROLE,  
NEAR ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND,

*March 21*, 1865

SPECIAL ORDERS, }  
No. *83*

(EXTRACT.)

\* \* \* \* \*

Pursuant to instructions received from the War Department, A. G. O., dated

*March 21 1865*  
Washington, D. C., Dec. 5th, 1864, the following named Officers, having been declared exchanged, will immediately

join their respective regiments for duty:

*[Handwritten scribbles and signatures at the bottom of the page]*



Join their respective regiments for duty.

*Adj. Gen. Mass Reg.*

The Quartermaster's Department will furnish the necessary transportation.

*F. D. Small*  
By order of **ADRIAN R. ROOT**

Col. 94th N. Y. V.  
*Regt. 1st Div.*  
Commanding Post, &c.

*A. H. Fox*

Captain 7th N. D. Art'y.  
ADJUTANT

*Capt. 24th Mass Inf. Regt.*  
*1st Adjt. Camp Parole.*



off at the station in Jamaica Plain, and my father coming to meet me, expecting to find a skeleton. I suppose I was rather thin, but I was pretty well on the whole.

I add, as a sort of supplement, some notes which I made in the autumn of 1885; also a few letters which I wrote home immediately before and after the close of the war.]

DEDHAM, *November 7, 1885.*

On arranging and looking over my books and papers for my "den," I found this diary. Enclosed in it were the following notes, written on a sheet of letter-paper. I had been paroled the December before this, and had just been exchanged. April 1 I at once started for the front to join my regiment, but too late to join in any more fighting. It seems to me appropriate that the beginning and ending of my military life should be written in the same book. When I am dead, it may interest my grandchildren to read these notes of a young boy, for I was only nineteen and three-fourths years old when I started on the Hilton Head Expedition.

*Sunday, April 2, 1865.* — Left Washington at 3, in the boat for City Point. Had a very pleasant sail down the river. Colonel Jarves and Captain Shurtleff were with me. Met Colonel Forbes on the boat.

*Monday, April 3.* — Reached Fortress Monroe about 7.30. A.M. Several officers came on board. Among others Colonel Cutting of General Burnside's staff. Heard that an attack had been ordered on Petersburg by the Sixth and Ninth Corps. Colonel Jarves was left here. Reached City Point at 3 P.M., when we heard the glorious news of the capture of Petersburg, and the evacuation of Richmond. Saw thousands of prisoners who had been captured by our army, many of them guarded by marines

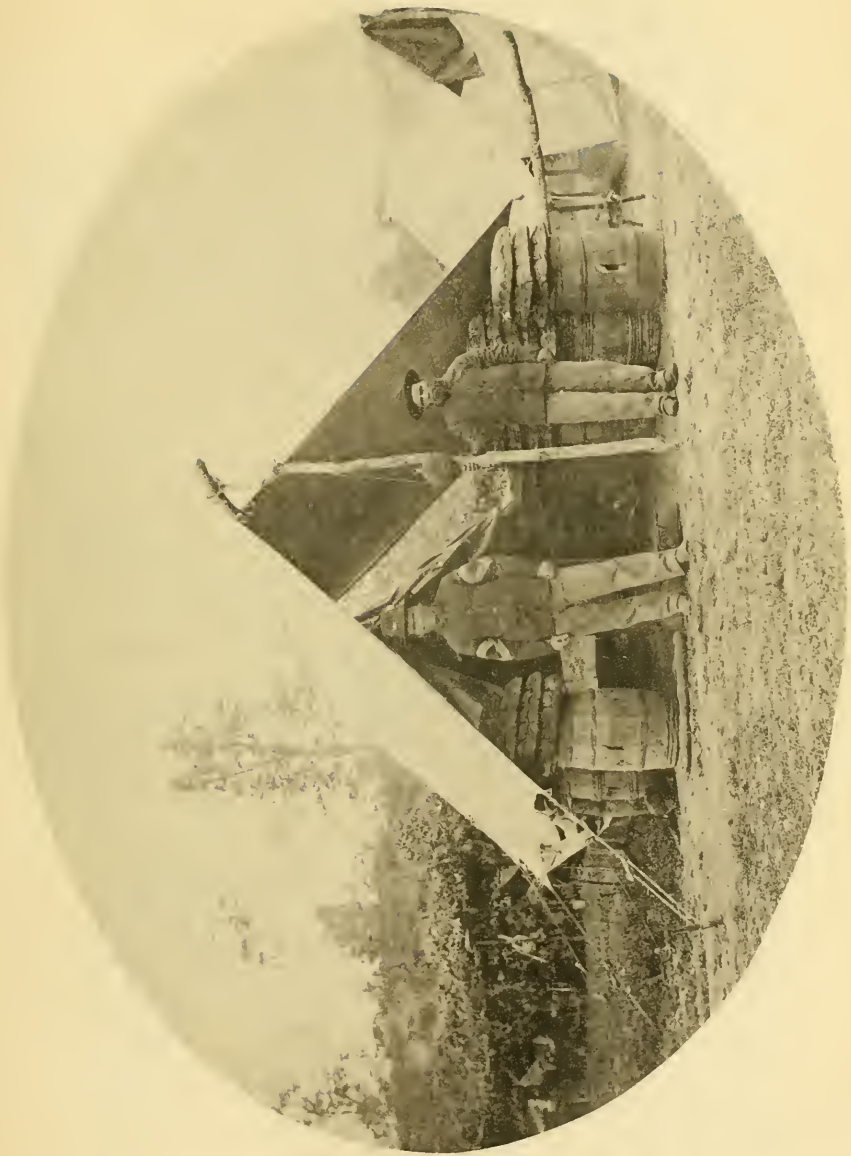
and sailors, who seemed to enjoy their duty hugely. Took the train for the front, and by General Warren's advice got out at Meade Station. Sent my things into Petersburg by a mail wagon. Crossed our lines through Fort Stedman and went to General Willcox's headquarters in Petersburg. Could find out nothing about our division. Saw the quartermaster sergeant, and took his horse. Left Captain Shurtleff with baggage. Rode about 8 or 9 miles and met our train. Stayed over night with Lieutenant French.

*Tuesday, April 4.* — Started to join the regiment. Went about 3 miles, and found General Meade's headquarters. Saw Generals Webb and Macy, and all the staff. Found that my regiment was but a little way in rear. Went back and joined them. Met with quite a pleasant reception from officers and men. We marched about 2 miles and then halted. Saw Loring and Van Buren. Marched till about 7, and then went into camp. Routed out at 9, and marched to Ford's Station, where we picketed the railroad. Got to bed about 4.45 A.M. Had about an hour's sleep.

*Wednesday, April 5.* — Men relieved from picket about 12 noon, and started on march again. Weather very warm and hot. Had a very disagreeable march, halting every few minutes, until we reached Wellsville, about 31 miles from Petersburg. Went into camp for the night.

*Thursday, April 6.* — Went to corps headquarters. Started about 12 o'clock, and moved through Black and Whites. About two miles beyond went into camp. Started again about 7, and reached Nottaway Court House, where we were sent to guard a bridge.

[My notes end here. The following letters carry the record to the end of my military life.]



COMMISSARY SERGEANT AND QUARTERS

Commissary Sergeant  
and  
Quarters

son Sergeant Rufus Richardson  
with <sup>son</sup> Samuel Williams

Song (Sketch)

WELLSVILLE STATION, South Side R. R.  
31 miles from PETERSBURG, *April 8.*

DEAR HANNAH, — Our corps is guarding the railroad and wagon trains. We are to guard this railroad permanently from Petersburg to Burkesville, so I understand. My regiment was in the battle on Sunday at Petersburg and charged the works. They were very fortunate, only losing 14 men killed and wounded. They did splendidly. I did not start from Washington until Sunday and reached my regiment on Tuesday morning. Met with a very gratifying reception indeed. Saw several of General Meade's staff. General Lee and remnants of his army are supposed to be between the Appomattox and the James River on their way to Lynchburg. General Grant has his headquarters at Burkesville, about 20 miles from here, and General Meade is some 15 miles to the north of B. The opinion seems to be that General Lee will be cut off, but I doubt it.

Am perfectly well.

Am sorry to say that I find my blue mare is dead. After Colonel Jarves left, she was ridden by every one, contrary to his express orders, and was used up. I feel quite badly at losing her. . . .

BURKESVILLE, VA., *April 18, 1865.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We are now camped with the brigade about half a mile from the above place. I have got a tent up, and am quite comfortable. My Q. M., who is a — and is only acting as Q. M., furnishes me daily with chickens, ducks, geese, eggs and butter. He wishes to be appointed Q. M., but I don't think I shall give it to him until he has found all the poultry in the country.

I went to corps headquarters last evening, which are close by us, and saw several of the staff. General

Parke, who commands our corps, told me that he saw General Meade the other day, and that General M. expressed a desire to see me. I imagine the mine affair is what he wished to converse about. I shall go up there in a few days and see him, if he would like to gaze upon me.

I am quite busy now, drilling my regiment, and fixing the camp. The regiment is in good condition and discipline. Captain Adams, who is acting as major, tents with me. We have a nice floor to the tent and bedsteads put up made out of poles, so I think on the whole we are as comfortable as could be expected.

Captain Lipp is with the regiment. He cannot perform any duty, as he is very lame indeed. I am trying to get him a staff position, but if I am unsuccessful he will have to resign. . . .

What a fearful thing the assassination of the President was! The feeling is very strong in the army about it. If it turns out to have been done by the sanction of Jeff Davis or any of his crew, but little mercy will be shown to any of them. We have not had any particulars yet.

CITY POINT, *April 24, 1865.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I received several letters from you last night, several of them complaining of my short letters and my want of enthusiasm for Lee's surrender. To tell the truth, we none of us realize even yet that he has actually surrendered. I had a sort of impression that we should fight him all our lives. He was like a ghost to children, something that haunted us so long that we could not realize that he and his army were really out of existence to us. It will take me some months to be conscious of this fact.

In regard to the brevity of my epistle, I can only say that I have nothing to tell about.



Sergt.	Carroll	
Sergt.	Underwood	B Co
"	Seager	H Co
"	Rayne	I Co
"	Dr	C. Co
Orderly	Copeland	
Sergt	Mahoney	D. Co
"	Lawrence	E Co
		F Co





FIRST SERGEANTS FIFTY-SIXTH MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS

AT REGIMENTAL POST OFFICE



I have got a splendid mule, which I am going to take home with me, if I can. He is the finest animal I have ever seen.

Last Thursday we received orders to move to City Point, and from there to Washington. Part of our corps has already moved and we are waiting for transportation. We shall probably move to-morrow, having reached here yesterday afternoon. Last Wednesday, the day before we moved, I went up to General Miles's headquarters. First I went to Second Corps headquarters and then with Charlie Whittier to General Miles's. While there, about forty negroes came in from Danville. General Miles ordered the band out, and told the negroes that he would hang every one who would not dance. About seven refused to dance, saying they were church members. The rest went at it tooth and nail, gray-headed old men and young boys. I never laughed so hard in my life. From General M.'s we went to General Barlow's, who commands the 2d Division. We amused ourselves with a galvanic battery which General B. has for his health. From there we went to General Meade's headquarters, where I had a very pleasant talk with General M. Saw Theodore Lyman, who is probably home by this time. He was very kind to me indeed, and gave me several articles of clothing which were very acceptable. Had a very nice time there indeed, and had a very pleasant reception from the staff. When my men saw me on my arrival, they gave me 9 cheers and then 9 more, etc., etc. I tell you this because you asked me.

We had quite hard marching, making 63 miles in a little over 3 days. The story is that we are going to Texas, that we are to be sent home for 6 months to be disbanded by that time, in case we are not wanted, etc., etc. No one seems to know what we are going to do. If we have a

good camp in or near Washington, perhaps I will let you come down there.

ALEXANDRIA, VA., *May 1, 1865.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We arrived here last Thursday and are now encamped about two miles from the city. We have quite a pretty camping ground on a hillside, directly south of Fairfax Seminary, and in sight of the different forts. We are on a Mr. Fowle's place, whose house is quite a pretty one, more like our modern country residences around Boston than any I have seen.

We had quite a pleasant passage up from City Point on the steamer Montauk, a propeller. We had only our regiment on board, all of whom behaved themselves and gave us no trouble. We had the most delightful weather. I was quite unwell all the way, and until yesterday did not feel like myself again. I had a sort of bilious fever, something like what I had three years ago at Yorktown. I am perfectly well now.

In regard to losing my valise, I will tell you all I know. When I got off the cars at Meade's Station, I gave my valise and bedding to an ambulance driver to take to General Willcox's headquarters at Petersburg. When I sent for my things, my valise was not to be found, and no one knew where it was. The first thing I heard of it, was a note from a captain in the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, saying that it had been picked up in the woods near City Point by some of his men, rifled of its contents. He has since sent it to me. My scarf-pins were taken, amongst other things.

I spent part of Sunday in Washington with Father. He starts for home this morning.

From all that I can learn, we shall be mustered out of service in a few weeks. We shall probably remain here until that takes place.



COLORS AND COLOR RANK FIFTY-SIXTH MASS.: ALSO COLORS OF  
TWENTY-FIRST MASS, WHO WERE WITH US TEMPORARILY  
PREPARATORY TO DISCHARGE





I saw Lane Brandon, one of my classmates, among those prisoners captured with Ewell. I think I did not write you of this. He seemed quite pleasant although rather blue. . . .

We are having a cold chilly day here.

Johnny Hayden came to see me day before yesterday. He is stationed at Alexandria.

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near ALEXANDRIA, VA., *May 25.*

DEAR HANNAH, — We had our big review day before yesterday, and everything passed off splendidly. We started from camp on Monday morning at 6 o'clock, and marched over Long Bridge to Washington. I met William George, Uncle William and Mr. Andrews in W. and again in the evening, when they came to my camp. We marched beyond the Capitol about a mile, and bivouacked there for the night. Saw Harry Townsend here. In the morning we started about ten o'clock and marched by the Capitol and up Pennsylvania Avenue. The scene when marching up to the Capitol was splendid. It really seemed as if the statue of the Goddess of Liberty were alive and looking down on us with triumph and pleasure. The Avenue was crowded with ladies and gentlemen, and with the long column of troops looked splendidly. Where the reviewing officer was stationed there were thousands of people, and it almost bewildered me to see so many faces gazing on the show. We marched down to Long Bridge, where I left my regiment, and came back to see the rest of the troops. Our corps looked better than any other as far as I could see, and every one that I met told me the same thing. The 56th were in first-rate trim, and I flatter myself looked as well as any of the regiments about there. I came back to camp late in the evening, and found

William George and Mr. Andrews bunked in in Colonel Jarves's and my tents. They went off yesterday morning, and had quite a pleasant time I imagine.

I expect to have a dinner this afternoon for several of my class, and for any visitors that may come along. I expect the governor may be here.

Bill Perkins has been camped near here, but has now moved across the river.

*May 26.*

Had a dinner party last night. John Hayden, Charlie Whittier, Lawrie Motley, Walter Thornton, Charlie Horton and Charlie Amory were present. We had a jolly time, and enjoyed ourselves very much indeed.

I am appointed on a board to examine officers below the rank of colonel, who desire to remain in the service. From what General Griffin, our division commander, told me, I imagine that I shall have very little trouble in remaining in the service myself, if I desire to do so.

We are having a heavy rain-storm to-day. . . .

HEADQUARTERS 56TH MASS. VOLS.,  
Near ALEXANDRIA, VA., *June 1, 1865.*

DEAR HANNAH, — I have received several letters from you lately, but have been so busy that I have had no chance to answer them. I am President of a Board for Examination of Officers in this brigade who desire to remain in service, and consequently have my hands full.

There was a review of the Second Army Corps day before yesterday, which I attended. I saw the Loring's there, but did not speak to them, as I did not know whether they would remember me. Also saw Miss Schenck, who told me that she had just come on from Boston, and had met you there. After the review was over there was a grand spread at Second Corps headquarters. Charlie

Whittier is A. A. G. on the said staff, so I was an invited guest there. They had a long row of tent-flies stretched so as to make a tent over a hundred feet long. The sides were made of firs and green branches. Outside were hung two enormous American flags, while numerous regimental and state colors were planted in the ground all around the headquarters. Inside the tent were two rows of tables, and meat, bread, cake, strawberries and ice cream in profusion. Also punch of the kind called claret and rum, which I, of course, did not touch. I saw President Johnson and Secretary Stanton there. Also Generals Hancock, Meade, Humphreys, and numerous others. Saw most of Meade's staff, and among them General Macy. When I got back to camp, I found George Weld. He was on his way back from Richmond. He spent the night with me, and went home the next day.

I am going to send out for Charlie Griswold's remains in a day or two. I have received two or three letters from Mrs. G. who is very anxious to have them sent home.

I think that the men who are left from the 36th Massachusetts will be sent to my regiment. The 36th goes out of service as a regiment in a few days.

I have two hens in camp, who lay every morning under the head of my bed. They are quite tame and seem to enjoy camp life very much.

My garden in front of headquarters is the admiration of all the passers-by. It is really quite pretty and I feel quite proud of it. I manage to secure a new flower almost every day. To-day I got hold of a very fine fuchsia.

Young William when he was here offered to sell me his plantation down in South Carolina. I don't like the idea of going down there to live; and unless there was a prospect of getting rich speedily, I should not want to

take hold of it. I can probably remain in service as colonel if I wish, but I don't think I shall do so. . . .

HEADQUARTERS, 2D BRIG. 2D DIV. 9TH A. C.  
Near ALEXANDRIA, VA., *June 15, 1865.*

DEAR HANNAH,—. . . Last night three of the men who have been committing these robberies around here were caught. Two of them proved to be Mosby's men. It has not been safe to travel at night between Washington and Alexandria for some time. . . .

[While my memory still serves me, it is perhaps well to recall a few incidents of the end of the campaign. I remember we marched on to Burkesville Junction. While there we were given several hundred prisoners to guard. Late in the afternoon we heard news of Lee's surrender. The Confederates who were prisoners refused to believe it. One officer, a lieutenant colonel, made quite a flowery speech to me. He said, "Sooner shall the sun cease to bury herself in the Occident than Robert E. Lee surrender." Many of them however said they were glad of it, and that they were going to make the best of it.

We marched back to City Point by easy stages, and from there were sent by transports to Alexandria, Virginia, where we remained until we came home, some time in the end of June or beginning of July. Our life there was a quiet and pleasant one, though made somewhat uneasy by the fact that the men were expecting to be discharged and did not see the necessity of much discipline. While we were waiting there, the grand review was held in Washington. I remember we were marched over and camped for the night near the Capitol, and then marched up Pennsylvania Avenue and by the Treasury Building. My men appeared very well. They wore the tall felt hats

which gave them the appearance of being larger than they really were. We had a very pretty camp two or three miles out from Alexandria. Some of the men who had a taste for gardening made quite a pretty little garden in front of headquarters. On one occasion at Alexandria we gave a big dinner, at which things were rather lively. I remember a colonel, a friend of mine, got pretty tired and went to sleep in my tent, and dropped his lighted cigar in a box of ammunition. Luckily it did not go off. The ammunition was kept under my camp-bed in case of trouble, but we never had to use it. Here we passed a quiet, pleasant time until we were sent home.

We landed at Readville, and were discharged as soon as we could be mustered out. This ended my campaign.

In justice to my regiment I feel that I ought to state here that in *Regimental Losses in the Civil War*, by Lieutenant Colonel Fox, three hundred regiments are mentioned as having done well enough to be called the "Fighting Regiments of the War." The 56th Massachusetts was one of these.]

## CHAPTER IX

### MY LIFE SINCE THE WAR

WHEN I finally returned home after the War, I found that my father had bought stock in a small silk mill in Roxbury, called the Boston Silk and Woolen Company, and also in a felting mill at Norfolk, Massachusetts, called the Elliott Felting Mills. He said that he had taken this stock in order to have a place for me when I returned, and although I did not at all fancy the job, — for I thought it very doubtful if it could be made a success, — I took hold and did the best I could.

The Silk and Woolen mill my father finally sold out at quite a loss. The felting mills failed after my father's death, which occurred in December, 1867, and the mortification was almost more than I could bear. The whole of my share of my father's estate was about fourteen thousand dollars' worth of the stock of this felting mill. Some good friends, among them Mr. Nathaniel Thayer, whose father had been exceedingly kind to my father, and the Hon. T. Jefferson Coolidge, who has always been a most liberal and loving friend to me, took hold and advised me to buy a cotton mill which was connected with the felting mill. I bought it for, I think, twenty-five thousand dollars, borrowed from my friends, and went to live at the City Mill, Norfolk, leaving my wife and children with her mother. I literally had not a cent left in the world.

After the mill had been running about a month, a freshet broke down the dam of the pond, two miles above



Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Executive Department

Boston. January 4<sup>th</sup> 1865.

To

Col. S. M. Sheld. Jr.

N. Roxbury, Mass.

Colonel:

The inauguration of the Executive Government of this Commonwealth



Friday next at 11 o'clock. It will give  
me pleasure to see you on this oc-  
casion, if it should be agreeable to  
you to be present.

I have the honor to be

very respectfully your Obedt. servt.

William D. Bartlett

Governor of Massachusetts.



Head Quarters Second Army Corps,

May 20th, 1865.

MAJOR GENERAL HUMPHREYS AND STAFF request the pleasure of your presence at a Review of the Second Corps, to take place on Tuesday next, at 2 P. M.

Orderlies will be posted on the pike to indicate the location of the Head Quarters of the Corps and of the Review ground, near Bailey's Cross Roads.

Should the day be stormy, the review will take place on the first fair day after Tuesday.

*Chas. Whitten*  
*a. g.*

*Col. Colwell*  
*Col. James*  
*Capt. Shurteff*









By Command of Brig. General J. G. Griffin:

*J. G. Griffin*

Assistant Adjutant General.

Col. J. H. Alden.

20<sup>th</sup> March 1861

Canada 27<sup>th</sup> May 1861





13 York - Hankey Cal.

his own state.

Under the impression the report was true I wrote to your father. We must have been surprised, but could not have considered it but as the expression of a devoted and admiring friend. You may



Black Hawk, Cal  
June 24th 65

My dear Colonel,

To say that pleasure  
was, alone, what I experienced to day on  
receipt of yours of the 6th inst, would be  
great injustice to you as it would come  
about the first of May, Captain Abbott (now  
with me) received a letter (in which you were  
mentioned as among the killed in the late  
or last battles of the Army of the Potomac -  
Sorrow was not what I felt, but grief, deep  
grief, (not merely at the loss of a friend, but  
at the loss of one ~~whose~~ in time, from ~~his~~ <sup>your</sup> ~~integrity,~~  
integrity, principles & energy must stand for-  
ment among the many of his own age from  
his own state.

Under the impressions the report  
was true I wrote to your father. We must  
have been surprised, but could not have  
considered it but as the expression of a  
devoted and admiring friend. You may

imagine my feelings to know you were  
the thing.

Remember me. Kindly to your father  
& family - and accept from me for me all  
the best wishes

Yours truly  
S. A. M.

Dr. S. M. Wells



Head Quarters, Second Division, Ninth Army Corps,

Fair Alexandria, Va., July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

His Excellency  
John A. Andrew }  
Governor of Mass. }  
Governor

Col. S. A. Wells,

56<sup>th</sup> Mass. Vol., has served with dis-  
tinguished ability in my Division.

And I take great pleasure in recommending him to your favorable consideration, as a gallant valiant plished soldier, and a gentleman of the highest character & standing.

I have the honor to be  
With very great respect  
Your obt. Servant.

A. G. Griffin

Brig. Genl. U.S. Army.





Dear General  
20th

61

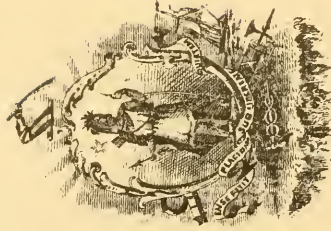
My dear General  
I must see  
Mr. Harlet + + + + +  
take ~~great~~ great pleasure  
in doing all - can  
in me - it affords me  
great happiness to say  
that you freely speak  
to him as my friend  
as of my young officer  
in our army -

Very respectfully  
A. E. Burnside

Carlisle -







COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

Adjutant General's Office

BOSTON

January 2. 1866

Brig' Genl, Stephen M. Veld Jr  
Newbury Mass  
Genl.

I am directed by His Excellency  
the Governor to enclose unfiled in the President's

partake of the hospitalities of the State and to be  
present at the parting of His Excellency with the  
Old Corps.

The guests will assemble at the State  
House at 5 o'clock P.M. The dinner will be  
served at 5:30 P.M. at 4 o'clock time shall remain  
speech.

Respectfully Yours

Wm. S. Johnson

Adjutant General



the mill, which supplied the water-power. The pond broke loose and swept down the valley. About a quarter of a mile away, where the old New York and New Haven R. R. (or New York and Erie, as it was then called) ran across the valley on a high embankment, the water had made up behind this embankment. On going up there that evening, I saw and heard the stones shooting out from underneath the culvert, which was the ordinary channel of the brook, in such a way that it was evident to me that the embankment must soon give way. I sent a man on horseback to signal the station above to stop the New York express, which was due in an hour or two, and then turned my attention to the mill, and tried to have a channel dug to let the water through when the embankment gave way.

It was all in vain. The whole embankment washed out, and down came the flood and swept the mill away — absolutely destroyed it.

I do not think that any physical misfortune that ever happened to me, affected and unmanned me as that did. But it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. I went to work at once to see what I could do to earn a living, and to try to pay off my debts — the money borrowed to buy this mill.

Mr. George Dexter sent for me and said that he wanted a salesman to sell cotton which his brother-in-law, Mr. Blagden, bought in New York and sold to the mills. I started with them, and in about a year Mr. Dexter retired, and I went into partnership with Mr. George Blagden, a most charming and delightful man, and a liberal and good friend. Both he and Mr. Dexter were always as kind to me as men could be. After a while Mr. Blagden became a partner in a brokerage house in New York, and left me in sole control of the business.

I took in as my partner Mr. Blagden's former clerk in New York, Mr. Charles W. Ide. The partnership continued for several years, with great success, until my sons went on to New York to assist Mr. Ide.

One evening Alfred came home and said to me: "Papa, I have some awful news for you. Mr. — has stolen three hundred and twenty-six thousand dollars from the firm."

Luckily I was in very good health, else I could not have withstood the shock of having an old friend treat me in that way, to say nothing of the set-back necessarily caused by such a terrible financial loss.

I went at once to Mr. T. Jefferson Coolidge, Jr., President of the Old Colony Trust Co., of whom I was borrowing quite a large sum of money. I told him the facts in the case, and said that I was prepared to turn over all my property to the trust company, or to do whatever he thought best. He said: "You keep right on." He went to his father and borrowed fifty thousand dollars. He then asked what I had for collateral. I said: "I have no quick assets, but property which I estimate roughly at about four hundred thousand dollars." "Well," said he, "it would never do to have this thing come out. Father will lend you fifty thousand dollars without any collateral and I will let you have four hundred thousand on whatever you have got. I have confidence enough in you to know that you will pull out."

I doubt if many men have had such confidence placed in them, or have received such magnanimous treatment as I received then, and have received all my life. By good luck I was able to pay both Messrs. Coolidge in two years. I wish here to enjoin upon all my children and grandchildren always to keep alive in their hearts the remembrance of my debt of gratitude to the Coolidges,



and to do everything in their power to help any of their descendants.

I have had several losses in business since, but never of sufficient importance to shake my credit or to cause me many moments of uneasiness. I went into the Planters' Compress Company and lost half a million dollars there in my endeavors to improve the method of baling and handling cotton. The patents held by the Planters' were obtained by Mr. George A. Lowry, and I wish to say here that I believe that no process of baling cotton will ever come anywhere near the process invented by Mr. Lowry in effectiveness. We did not make a success of it owing to the very large and powerful vested interests in the old-fashioned square compress, which we found it impossible to compete with. This loss I made up largely from the various branch houses established all over the world in my endeavors to make the Planters' bale a success.

I suffered also another large loss of some two hundred and twenty-four thousand dollars on forged bills of lading of Steele, Miller & Company. This probably will be largely reduced by the decision of the Court, which should bring the loss down to about one hundred thousand dollars.

I have had no serious losses since this bill of lading matter. On the contrary, my business has prospered and everything has gone well. We have opened a house in Bombay and contemplate opening one in Japan. I feel that at my time of life I am entitled to a rest, and I am endeavoring to stay away from the office as much as possible. During the last four or five years I have been abroad shooting, one year in Scotland and three years at Rockingham House, Boyle, Ireland. All of these outings I have enjoyed exceedingly, and I feel that they have prolonged my life.

I have been exceedingly fond of shooting all my life. I have had a great many fine dogs, and have enjoyed them very much. When living with my mother-in-law, Mrs. Alfred Rodman, at Tiota Woods, Dedham, one fall, sometime in the seventies, I was going to bed one moonlight evening and had almost wholly undressed, when I heard my hunting-dog, who was in a dog-house about fifty yards from the house under some pine trees, barking violently. I always made it a principle to have my dogs mind. I called out to him to keep quiet, to charge. He still kept on barking. I turned to my wife and said, "I am going to give the dog a whipping to make him mind." I slipped on my trousers and coat, and as I was going out I took a pistol, thinking that possibly some cat was annoying the dog and I would shoot her. I went out and gave the poor dog a whipping, and was turning to go back to the house when I thought I heard a noise back of the farm-stable, about a hundred yards beyond where the dog was. It was a bright moonlight night, and I thought I would walk down and see what was the matter. I jumped over the stone wall that ran behind the barn, and as I did so saw two men going out of the cow-barn. I pulled out my pistol and called out to them, "What are you men doing here?" They said, "We are hunting for a night's lodging." I said, "I will give you one; just march right along, straight ahead of me."

They walked up towards the barn — I holding my pistol — in the moonlight, and when near the corner of the barn going towards the house, they said, "Where are you going to take us?" I said, "To the police station." They said, "We'll be damned if we go there." I said I would be damned if they did n't. They suddenly turned and ran, one running into the woods. I fired once over his head. The other man ran for the road that went in front of the



MRS. S. M. WELD MY FIRST WIFE [ ELOISE RODMAN ] AND MYSELF,  
ABOUT 1869





MRS. S. M. WELD [S. EDITH WATERBURY] MY SECOND WIFE



house. I chased after him, calling out to Barney, Mrs. Rodman's farmer, who lived in a cottage close by the road. I fired twice over the fellow's head and was gaining on him rapidly, when he made a dive for the stone wall by the side of the road, grabbing two rocks, one in each hand. He threw one at me with all his strength, just grazing my head, and then turned and ran again, I in full tilt after him. He called out, "If you won't shoot any more, I will give up."

I stopped then, just at the corner of Lauder Street and High Street, about two or three hundred yards from the house. He stood facing me, with the stone that he had not thrown in his hand raised up ready to throw. I had the pistol pointing right at him. I said, "If you throw that stone, you are a dead man." By that time Barney came up. I said, "Barney, grab that fellow by his shirt collar, not by his coat collar — he will slip out of that. If he tries to hurt you, I will shoot him." Barney grabbed him and they had a tussle, and Barney threw him. Just then a police officer came up, having heard the shooting from where he was in the village. I told him the circumstances of the case and said that he would probably find another man before long who had run into the woods. He took the man down to the lock-up, and about an hour afterwards a man came along asking the way to Boston. They took him to the lock-up. They found on both of the men a pair of lady's slippers with a very peculiar rosette on them, which had undoubtedly been stolen from a shoe store. The man who ran to the woods had a pistol, and they both had hammers and jimmys in their pockets, and great big bags for storing things away in. The men were held in jail for four or five months and then brought before the Grand Jury, but no bill was found against them.

The next morning Mrs. Rodman said, "Stephen, I heard some one last night swearing, saying, 'I will be damned if you don't.' What was it all about?"

A most curious thing happened to me about 1906 or 1907. I had bought, at Mrs. Weld's request, a new depot omnibus which would carry eight people, to bring guests to and from the village and my house. It was built by the French Carriage Company of Boston. After using it a year between the depot and the house only, and once to a neighbor's close by, it began to get a little shabby and Mrs. Weld thought it would be well to have it varnished. Accordingly it was sent in to the French Carriage Company. Mr. French called me up in a day or two and asked me if I had lost any jewelry. I said no, and finally went down to see him. He said something had been found in the omnibus. He told me that his workman in taking the body off the wheels had to drive a bolt out, and that while driving it a diamond bracelet fell down on the handle of his hammer. It had dropped through the drip-hole at the bottom of the omnibus, which drained the space into which the windows dropped down when they were open. I advertised the bracelet everywhere and wrote every lady who had ever ridden in the carriage, but never could find the owner. It was a bracelet worth three thousand dollars. I showed it to several jewellers and they could find no jeweller's mark on it and nothing to identify it in any way. The workman kept the bracelet and probably has it to-day if he has not sold it. My theory is that some thief with the bracelet was passing by French's shop in front of which the wagon was standing, thought he was being followed, and got frightened and dropped the bracelet into the enclosure on the side of the carriage where the window went down. That is the only way I can account for it.



On June 1, 1869, I married Miss Eloise Rodman, daughter of Alfred Rodman, Esq., and Anna Lothrop Motley, and niece of John Lothrop Motley, the historian. We were married in the old Rodman house in Dedham, called Tiota Woods — the same house, by the way, to which I came over from Readville, while recruiting my regiment there, and brought my regimental band to serenade Miss Elizabeth Perry just before her marriage to Mr. E. F. Bowditch.

We had seven children: — Stephen Minot and Alfred Rodman, twins, born September 2, 1870; Edward Motley, born September 4, 1872; Lothrop Motley, born July 26, 1874; Eloise Rodman, born January 24, 1879; Rudolph, born August 22, 1883; Philip Balch, born January 4, 1887.

Only Edward, Rudolph and Philip are now living.

My first wife died January 14, 1898, and on May 26, 1904, I married Susan Edith Waterbury, daughter of the Rev. Julius H. Waterbury and Jane Rebecca Branford.



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