

Civil War journal by a Wisconsin soldier.

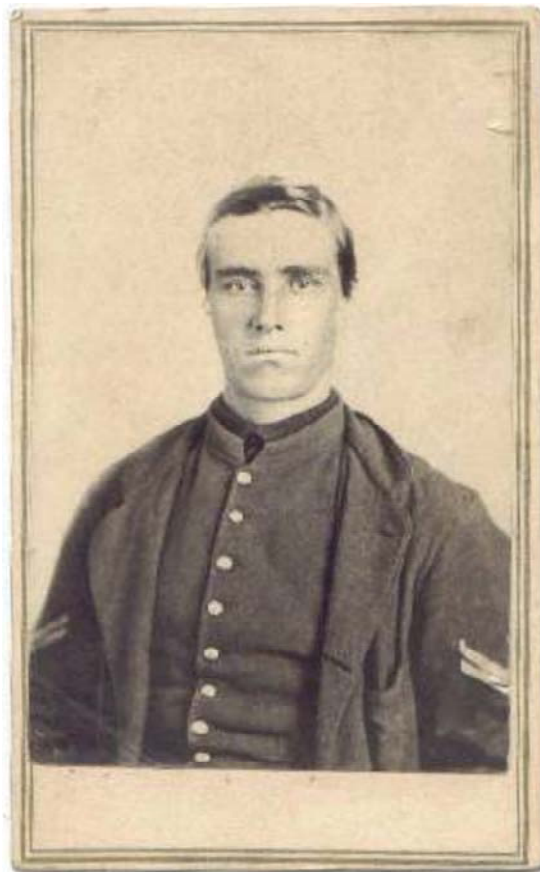
Brother to the Eagle: The Civil War Journal of Sgt.
Ambrose Armitage, 8th Wisconsin Infantry

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The Civil War Journal of Sgt. Ambrose Armitage

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Edited with annotations by Alden R. Carter

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1863

"Show thyself a man! Forward, guide center!"

January 1863

Thursday 1: Last night was cold and frosty, morning found the ground froze hard. Daylight found us shivering around a miserable fire. Oh I had forgotten, a happy new year, yes happy new year to all. We went back to camp soon after daylight and as soon as we had eaten our breakfast we had to fall in and stack arms inside of the fort, then keep near so as to be ready to fall in at a moments notice. I drew half rations for three days. We will probably have to live on half rations till the railroad is open. The ninty third Indiana arrived here to night as reinforcements. I do not know whether there are any rebels around or not, if not there certainly is a great scare on. I got my chevrons on this morning and now wear them. This evening we had to turn out again and the company sent out on picket. Richmond is not taken as reported and Burnside is reported defeated.

Battle of Stones River (Murfreesboro): Skirmishing and artillery exchanges continue as Bragg's and Rosecrans's armies hold position northwest of Murfreesboro. Meanwhile Morgan continues his Christmas Raid in Kentucky. Threatened by Federal cavalry, Morgan retreats into Tennessee. At a cost of only 26 casualties, he has taken 1,887 prisoners and destroyed \$2,000,000 worth of property. However, his raid has deprived Bragg of 4,000 soldiers during a critical battle.

Second Vicksburg campaign ends: Seeing that further attacks are doomed, Sherman withdraws to Milliken's Bend. Although the campaign ends in failure, it brings on a dramatic change in Union strategy. During the withdrawal north from Oxford, Grant's army was forced to forage for nearly all its food. Grant wrote: "I was amazed at the quantity of supplies the country afforded. It showed that we could have subsisted off the country for two months instead of two weeks." This realization led to a profound change in strategy. No longer would Grant worry so much about

his supply lines. Rather, the army would live off the land as much as possible. In 1863 the army would institute a ruthless policy of requisitioning supplies from civilians. Unauthorized foraging by enlisted men became accepted practice. By 1864 Union armies would be waging war on the means of agricultural production in the South, burning crops and barns, shooting livestock, and leaving huge swaths of land desolate.

Texas: Confederate Maj. Gen. John Magruder drives off the invading fleet at Galveston with a pair of "cottonclads" (steamboats protected with bales of cotton along the decks) and forces the Federal troops ashore to surrender, ending the weeklong occupation of the port. In Washington, Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves in all parts of the United States currently in rebellion.

Friday 2: I felt first rate this morning when I arose and my foot was very easy. I tried to find some wood sutlers as I wanted to take the teams to them for wood, but I could not find them though I travelled two miles in trying to find them. I am now reading *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott. It is very interesting. We have had a good sing.

Ivanhoe (1819) is generally considered the best of Scott's many novels. Its vision of romantic chivalry had considerable influence on both sides of the Atlantic. Scott's works were popular among professional army officers and no doubt inspired some of the romantic gestures during the Civil War. Silly though some of these incidents may seem today, the sense of a brotherhood of arms independent of national allegiances did mitigate some of the war's brutality.

Battle of Stones River (Murfreesboro): Bragg attacks Rosecrans's left with Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge's division. Union cannon fire slaughters the rebels.

Arkansas Post expedition opens: McClelland arrives at Milliken's Bend above Vicksburg where Sherman has his army encamped. He relieves Sherman on the basis of seniority, renames the army the Army of the Mississippi, and gives Sherman command of one the two corps. With Vicksburg too strong to assault, he readily accepts Sherman's suggestion that the army attack the troublesome rebel base at Arkansas Post (Fort Hindman) fifty miles up the Arkansas River.

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Saturday 3: The second roll call at eight found one rolled up in blankets. Last night was very windy nearly blowing our tent over several times. A guard of sixteen was called from our company and they had to go out in the rain, while I was buried in *Ivanhoe*. I have drawn half and quarter rations for three days, getting meal for bread. No mail yet. It is raining this evening. The company being on guard I am alone, but it storms too hard to sleep much.

Stones River campaign ends: Bragg retreats towards Tullahoma after dark. Rosecrans does not pursue. The armies will take months to recover enough to fight again.

Sunday 4: The first Sunday in the new year. When I awoke it was daylight and as still and quiet as if it had never rained any. The boys soon came in from guard. I have finished *Ivanhoe*. It is the first of Scotts novels I ever read. It is a great work, besides being very interesting it gives considerable light on the early history of England. They had curious times in former days, but they were full of crime. *Ivanhoe* is not an authentic history, but the customs of the times may be gathered from novels then as well as now. I drew two days rations of beef and got a box of hard bread from Lieut Williams which he borrowed some time ago. It is reported that the one hundred and ninth Illinois have stacked arms and the colonel broken his sword. This causes an excitement.

One hundred and ninth Illinois have stacked arms: At this stage of the war, it was not uncommon for a regiment of rambunctious volunteers to stack arms in protest over clothing, food, officers, or terms of service. Most of these incidents blew over quickly with the regiment doing good service once its complaints were acknowledged. However, the 109th Illinois was a particularly belligerent unit. The regiment had been recruited from the downstate counties where many families had strong Southern roots. Desertion, fraternization, and insubordination became epidemic despite all attempts to introduce better discipline. In April 1863, Grant lost patience, ordering the regiment disbanded and its men scattered among other units. Only the loyal Company K was transferred intact.

Arkansas Post expedition: McClelland's army embarks on its expedition against Arkansas Post, protected by the gunboats of Admiral David Dixon Porter's fleet.

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Monday 5: Great excitement this morning as it is reported that Gen Hamilton is going to get several regiments mounted, ours among them. At noon we got orders to be ready to march at a moments warning, but it was countermanded. I ran around some time this morning trying to get some wood. At last I got some rails. I have taken cold in my cheek and it is swelled very bad. Reports say that there has been some hard fighting at Vicksburg. It is cold to night.

Hard fighting at Vicksburg: The fighting would have been Sherman's assault at Chickasaw Bayou.

Tuesday 6: Company on picket. I have written to father. Mail came bringing me four letters and two papers, but nary one from "The Lassie I love best." I guess the rebels burned her letter at Holly Springs, but I wrote her one. I drew half rations for four days and this afternoon I have washed my shirt.

"The Lassie I love best": From a song by Robert Burns (1756–1796) "Of A' the Airs the Wind Can Blaw." The song was often given a less difficult title.

Wednesday 7: There is not much to record to day except that I have written to Joseph and to Hannah Hutchinson and I have drawn two days rations of beef. I issued sugar out to the men. It is funny to take about a quart of sugar and divide it to thirty or forty men. There is some talk of marching tomorrow.

The War: Confederate cavalry under Brig. Gen. John Marmaduke attack Springfield, Missouri, but are driven off.

Thursday 8: At roll call we had orders to pack up knapsacks and everything so as to be ready to strike tents at six o'clock. I had a great time issuing out the coffee and sugar, not on account of trouble but because there was so little of it. Being rearguard we did not start till ten. I took my place with the colors on the right of the state colors. After marching three miles it began to rain and rained, rained, rained till nearly night. It was not at all funny to march through the mud, with the rain spattering all around. Disagreeable enough, but we stuck to it. We marched ten miles north towards Bolivar, then set up camp and rigged up our tent tolerably. I was

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afraid my foot would give out, but it has stood it lovely. We have passed through the best farming country to day I have seen south.

Friday 9: I got two letters this morning one from Phebe and the other from the girl aforesaid, and it was a good one and made me happy. It cheered me as thoughts of her have many times, for it seems as if I had something to live for and keep me straight. But it was raining. I issued out some hard bread then hurried up the boys with their cooking utensils and just had them packed when the bugle blew "Strike tents." It was drizzling nicely when we started and we had two large swamps to go through. By the time we were through them it had stopped raining entirely and so did we for about two hours. Then we went on again and passed through Bolivar in gay style. The colors were out for the first time since I was promoted. They are much more worn than I had expected. Soon after we passed Bolivar it began to rain very hard. Gracious! how it did pour down for a few minutes. It made the road two inches deep in mud right quick. I tried to pick my way and keep my feet dry, but gave up and splashed through it as best I could. We did not stop till after dark. Things looked billious. It was raining, no waggons came, so we were minus tents and building fires was a task, as everyone was whipped with our fourteen miles march. I sat down a few minutes and tried to rest, then got up to get some water, but gracious I was so stiff that I could not hardly move. But I wiggled on through mud and cornstalks nearly half a mile. After returning I made supper then tried to dry myself and scrape the mud off my clothes. By this time it had stopped raining and here I am writing my Journal by a camp fire when darkness is all around. As I can see stars I think it will not rain any more to night, so I may get some good rest yet before morning even if the waggons are stuck four miles back. So kind reader I bid you good night.

Saturday 10: The thunder and rain wakened me last night so I had to pack up quickly and sit under my rubber during which time I was mixed up or muddled and felt "mighty curus." but it stopped raining and I turned in again and slept well till morning and awakened a new man. Rations was then the cry. I was trying to get some when orders came to fall in. I then hurried to our waggon which had just come along, got a box of bread and issued it after the men had fallen in, then we marched. We are on the road to Corinth. After marching nine miles on ridges though woods, we pitched camp in the prettiest place I have seen yet. I then drew and issued rations.

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The men also got some mutton which was very good. It has been a fine pleasant day.

"Mighty curious": mighty curious, perhaps another of Ambrose's jokes on the speech of his fellow soldiers or Southerners, black and white. The slang phrase (often spelled "mighty curious") was popular and used by a number of writers. The author Bret Harte was particularly fond of it.

Washington: In the most controversial court-martial of the war, Maj. Gen. Fitz-John Porter is convicted for failing to obey orders at the Battle of Second Bull Run (Second Manassas) and dismissed from the army. In Texas, Union gunboats bombard Galveston.

Sunday 11: We got up early and got things nicely in order to start early, but it was our doom to be rearguard so we did not get started till eleven, during which time I took out *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and read it all but the last chapter, which I finished at the first halt. I then thought of poor Pip's trials and my own, then of his love and mine and then wondered if every one had to go through all these little troubles and trials, wondering if our several lives are alike in that respect. We have passed through some pretty country and thickly settled. Many were loyal too as they came out and smiled on us and seemed pleased at our appearance. We camped just after dark near a little village named Bethel. Gen [John E.] Smith commands this expedition. The men shouted like everything when they passed his head quarters. He is very unpopular on account of his issuing such strict orders against burning rails on this march, especially the first night when it was raining so hard.

Great Expectations (1861): Many critics consider *Great Expectations* Dickens's greatest novel. Phillip Pirrip, called Pip, is the protagonist, a callow boy who through many trials becomes a man of character. As with all of Dickens's novels, criticism of the English class system is a major theme, no doubt to the enjoyment of the English-born and stoutly republican Ambrose.

Brig. Gen. John E. Smith: A Galena, Illinois, jeweler at the time war began, Smith had recently been elected county treasurer. He suggested to Governor Richard Yates that a local leather-goods clerk named Grant had the army background to drill a regiment. Grant proved himself and, thanks

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to the influence of Yates and Congressman Elihu Washburne, was soon a brigadier general. Smith became colonel of the 45th Illinois and commanded a brigade at Shiloh. The son of an officer in Napoleon's army, Smith had soldiering in his blood and proved more than ordinarily competent for a political appointee. Smith had been a general less than a month at the time Ambrose and his fellows expressed their displeasure with his order against burning fence rails.

Arkansas Post expedition: McClelland's army and Porter's gunboats attack and capture Fort Hindman. Casualties: Union 134 killed, 898 wounded, 29 missing; Confederate 28 killed, 81 wounded, 4,720 captured.

The War at Sea: Off Galveston, Texas, the Confederate cruiser CSS *Alabama* ambushes and sinks the USS *Hatteras*.

Monday 12: We got an early start and have marched all day at a snug easy pace, camping at dark in a field. We came seventeen miles through a good country. After marching five miles we marched through Purday. It has been a nice fine day, much more like spring than midwinter. We had a great time drawing rations this evening about two hours after dark. We finally got through but while I was issuing the boys spilled the tea.

Tuesday 13: All ready to start early, but as we would get to Corinth in the evening the teams were sent out foraging and we had to wait till nearly eleven o'clock. We then started, being just behind the ninety third Indiana, who made their brags last night that they were going to march away from us to day. We kept close behind them and they hurried on as fast as they could go. Their men kept falling out everywhere, but the old Eighth kept closed up and tight to their heels. We would have gone through them if one colonel had not stopped us. At night we arrived at Corinth and are camped half a mile south of where we were when we were here last time.

Wednesday 14: About daylight it began to rain and has rained all day. I went down town and got some tea for that which was spilled and got wet through. I then drew and issued some bacon. The rain has come through our tent making it like a mud hole, but we have had a pretty good fire. It has been a horrid day and is one of the stormiest nights I ever saw. It rains, rains, rains and everything is mud or muddy and the wind howls drear and dismal. I pity the guards to night.

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Thursday 15: Ugh! It was cold this morning and the ground was white with snow. We laid a bed till eight and did not venture out much before noon. It has been raining or snowing all day making it mean and miserable. I have partially drawn five days rations, the rest I shall draw tomorrow. It was a cold job drawing them. I have also written to Alice and Robert. I drew a dress coat to day. Cold, cold and miserable.

Friday 16: Cold and has been snowing all day. I drew the rest of the rations and had a great time dividing them out. I made a bunk and Tommy and I have cut some dried grass out of a swamp to sleep on. It will be a very cold night and we are under orders to be ready to move at a moments notice, but are going on cars. I sold my old watch for five dollars, waiting till pay day and afterwards bought a quartier watch from the same man for five dollars. The quartier is running.

Saturday 17: It was very cold this morning. We were up early and I commenced baking pancakes and eating them, so we were about filled by roll call. I drew and issued one days ration of meat and have written to Father and Phebe. Then I sewed chevrons on my new coat. We had an inspection while I was sewing. It has been thawing. We have signed the payroll. It is reported that our coming here is a mistake and that we will have to go back to LaGrange soon. I got two papers by mail. Our fire is burning brightly and we are all so warm and comfortable that I cannot help wondering how all the folks are at home and if they are as happy as we are. There is no telling thoughts. It is all in a lifetime.

Sunday 18: Our tent took fire this morning. We thru snow and water on it, but had to take it down at last, by the time it was down the iron ring around the top was nearly burned loose, but the boys patched it up while I got a team and went and got a load of wood. I have spent the afternoon in reading and writing a letter to William and Carrie. Last night was not very cold so by noon the ground was about thawed making it a very muddy afternoon. One of our tentmates got some molasses so we have had a great time this evening making candy. It is quite warm to night.

Monday 19: It began raining during the night and has been raining all day. Mud water and rain have been the vogue. At ten o'clock we drew two months pay for July and August last. I then drew two and a half rations of pork and issued it, and have sent home my volume of *Appleton's*

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Cyclapeoda which I have brought from Holly Springs. Tommy was today detailed into the Division Pioneer Corps. According to agreement I now write of our new surgeon, whom I have seen considerable of lately. He is rather a common looking man and seems as if either money or friends had got him the position instead of qualifications. He talks rather smoothly and seems as if he needed some one to tell him what to do.

Tuesday 20: Tommy went and reported to Capt Young the commander of the Pioneer corps. He soon came back for his descriptive list and says he may be gone from the company some time as the Pioneer Corps is to be permanent thing. He then went for good. I have drawn four days rations and issued the tea, coffee and sugar to the men. It has been a gloomy, muddy day. We expect to leave here in the morning. Gen Ross now commands this division in place of Gen J E Smith. We had a good sing with Woodard this evening. The mud has dried up a great deal and I hope may continue to do so.

Pioneer corps: Rosecrans had instituted permanent pioneer regiments to construct roads, bridges, etc. The practice soon spread. Many officers disliked the idea because it stripped the infantry regiments of many of their most competent men.

Gen Ross now commands. If Ross again commanded the division, it must have been only briefly since Smith is shown in the records as commanding Eighth Division until early April. Ross was apparently on leave or unassigned between the date of the army reorganization on Dec. 18, 1862, and Feb. 8, 1863, when he took command of Thirteenth Division, XIII Corps.

Fredericksburg campaign: Burnside makes a second attempt to get the Army of the Potomac across the Rappahannock River. The army marches doggedly upstream through a steady rain in what will become known as "the Mud March."

Wednesday 21: Yesterday Companies "B and G" went. This morning "K and E" Tomorrow "A and F" are going, then we will be the next after. It has not rained any and is much drier. I have written to Willis and Joseph and have received a letter from Joseph and two *Posts* from father. We

heard to day that Col Murphy has been dismissed from the service of the United States for the Holly Springs Affair.

Col Murphy has been dismissed: Grant had not bothered to have Murphy court-martialed a second time. He dispatched orders to General Stephen Hurlbut, commanding at Memphis: "Arrest and detain Colonel Murphy of the 8th Wisconsin. He is a paroled prisoner, now on his way out by my authority. He will not be permitted to leave Memphis until again authorized from these headquarters."

On January 8, Grant issued General Orders No. 4, which contained Murphy's military obituary: "Colonel R. C. Murphy of the 8th Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers, having, while in command of the post at Holly Springs, Mississippi, neglected and failed to exercise the usual and ordinary precautions to guard and protect the same, having after repeated and timely warning of the approach of the enemy, failed to make any preparations or defense, or show any disposition to do so, and having with a force amply sufficient to have repulsed the enemy and protected the public stores entrusted to his care, disgracefully permitted him to capture the post and destroy the stores—and the movement of troops in the face of an enemy rendering it impractical to convene a court martial for his trial, is therefore dismissed [from] the service of the United States to take effect from the 20th day of December, 1862, the date of his cowardly and disgraceful conduct."

Effective Dec. 20, Lt. Col. Robbins became colonel of the 8th Wisconsin, Major Jefferson its lieutenant colonel.

Thursday 22: The sun came out fair and clear this morning for the first time for several days. I borrowed a washtub and pulling off both of my shirts I washed them, which took quite awhile. Afterwards I went down town and got my likeness taken. I do not like the picture. It is some like me, only a great deal better looking. The artist rather overdid it. Perhaps the one I send it to will like it all the better for that. After returning I drew and issued two days rations and we have boiled our share of the hams as we are going to move tomorrow at six am. It has been a beautiful day.

Fredericksburg campaign ends: After two days of the Mud March, the Army of the Potomac finds itself mired to hub and knee, its way blocked by once-quiet streams turned into raging torrents. To the jeers of the rebels

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on the far side of the Rappahannock, the army begins slogging back to its camps.

Friday 23: We were up and stirring around at four, and just as the sun rose in the east everything was ready and we fell in and started to the depot. We waited till our baggage was loaded, then we got on flat cars and on top of our baggage, and toot, toot! and we were off. Away from Corinth the third and I hope the last time. Being close behind the engine the sparks and cinders flew like fun and kept setting our stuff on fire. The tents once got a blazing. The boys kept swearing and trying not to be burned up. At Bethel we halted and our car was put farther back, which made the fire matter all right. We arrived at Jackson Tenn. soon after noon where we stopped an hour. The Seventh Wis Battery is stationed here and I saw Charley McIntosh, Si Struthers, Ab Mosher and Lewis Conklin. They are old companions of mine and were in a battle at Parkers Cross Roads on the thirty first of last December where the battery suffered severely. Lewis Conklin was badly wounded in the shoulder, but is doing well now. Lieut Samuel Hays was also mortally wounded and has since died. His remains started north yesterday in charge of his brother John who came after them. There is another good man gone to his long home and I fear many more will have to go ere this war ends. His place will be hard to fill with one as good and brave as he was. The Battery boys look thin and have been seeing harder times than they saw at New Madrid. It began to look like rain as we started towards Grand Junction on the Miss Central and it soon began to rain, not fast, but slow, steady and sure. The cars went like mad for awhile, when all at once they began to go slow and slower till they stopped. The up grade was a little too much. As soon as steam was got up we started on again and ten times madder than before; it seemed as if the cars bounded along, taking a rod every jump. We were against wind and rain both. It jolted so hard that it nearly threw me off once. When we got to Bolivar I got a seat on a barrel partly filled with pork. I was all right only my legs which hung per force outside and when the cars started it seemed as if those confounded staves would cut my legs off as we bounded and jumped along. I managed to get my feet on some tents which made me all right. Yet it rained. It seemed as if there was no chance at all, so I drew up my rubber close around over my head and concluded to let things rip. We stopped long enough to let the men blackguard some negros which they did handsomely when toot toot! and we were going westward on the Memphis and Charleston. We soon passed LaGrange and our old cotton

fort, but it was about dark. As it grew dark it rained harder. But I was rolled in my rubber and did not care what was done. I had got hardened to it. I dozed and dreamed, then suddenly waked up. I dreamed I was at Williams, at Corinth, at Memphis and at another place not mentioned where somebody was and we were having such a happy time, then the engine screamed and there I was on the miserable old car riding in the cold, cold rain. We stopped at a place named Germantown fifteen miles from Memphis where we were ordered off after waiting awhile. I got off as best I could, but could scarcely stand. Either my legs did not know me or I did not know them, or else I was tight. Anyway I came very near falling down in the mud several times. We were marched to a church and quartered there for the rest of the night. Sykes made some coffee and now that is drunk, we will go to bed and try to sleep in this church, now a second bedlam. There was a meeting here last night, now soldiers are playing cards on the pulpit. Good night.

Bedlam: a place of uproar and confusion, a madhouse. A corruption of *Bethlehem* referring to the famous Bethlehem Royal Hospital for the insane in London. Originally founded in 1247 as St. Mary of Bethlehem, the hospital came under royal control in the middle of the 16th century. The asylum was open to the public for a small fee, and gawking at and abusing the inmates became a popular public entertainment. *Bethlehem* gradually became a *Bedlem* in popular speech and entered the language as the noun *bedlam*. Under the influence of reformers in the early 19th century, conditions at the hospital began to improve. Over the centuries, the hospital moved several times. The present Bethlem Royal Hospital is located in the borough of Bromley in the southeastern suburbs of London.

Battle at Parkers Cross Roads: The encounter near Lexington, Tennessee, on Dec. 31, 1862, was one of the few times in the war when Union troops bested Nathan Bedford Forrest. The great raider was on the point of surrounding and forcing the surrender of one Union infantry brigade when a second struck his rear. Forrest executed a skillful withdrawal at the cost of 300 prisoners, 350 horses, and six guns. The Union commander, General Jeremiah Sullivan, wired Grant that "Forrest's army is completely broken up." In reality, Forrest's angry men were more dangerous than before.

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Blackguard some negros: It is unclear exactly what Ambrose means. As a verb *blackguard* is defined by *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* "as to talk about or address in abusive terms." But Ambrose is generally sympathetic to Negroes, and it seems unlikely that he would approve casual verbal abuse with the adverb "handsomely." Furthermore, it seems unlikely that the train would stop for that purpose. More likely, the train stopped so the men could extort food from the Negroes—an act that could have been considered "handsome" if Ambrose thought that the men were in effect robbing from plantation owners. Finally, and least likely, is the possibility that the men recruited some of the Negroes as cooks and servants since an obscure meaning for *blackguard* is "the kitchen servants of a household."

Army of the Potomac: A frustrated Burnside demands the relief of Generals Hooker, Franklin, Newton, and Brooks. Otherwise, he will resign command of the Army of the Potomac.

Saturday 24: Oh how old I felt this morning. In eating breakfast I broke off one of my teeth which troubles me some when I eat. We got orders to move and about noon we fell in and marched out of town, stacked arms and pitched camp during which time it rained. We carried most of our stuff from the depot but got a team to carry our mess chest and rations. Then Sykes and I went after some boards. He getting some, I none, we then rigged up a bunk and now I am about tired out, wet through, sick and hungry. The best thing I can do is to go to bed and I guess I will do it. Raining.

Sunday 25: It has been a fine pleasant day through cloudy. I have written to father. G M Ross our first corporal who was left sick at Corinth rejoined the company to day. We have not rigged up much to day. There has been a great deal of raffling in the regiment for watches to day.

Army of the Potomac: Lincoln relieves Burnside as commander of the Army of the Potomac, appointing Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker in his place.

Monday 26: A pleasant morning like spring only the trees do not look just right. About noon it began to rain and has rained ever since. Three boys in our tent have been gambling all day and I am going to bed leaving them at it. I cannot see how much enchantment there is in cards that they interest

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them so much. To day is ration day but it has been to stormy to draw them. Our new chaplain attends to the mail department. He is a big, big nosed man but quiet and inobtrusive. The first day, we were here he was carrying off doors and boards from town to fix up his tent. At least he can help himself. The men think he is a pretty good kind of man. He has not preached yet, but will probably next Sunday. I got a letter from Robert. All are well at home.

Tuesday 27: As soon as breakfast was over, during which there was a great call for rations, I drew five days rations, which with issuing them took till about noon. I got my watch fixed yesterday, getting it this morning. It cost a dollar. I wrote to William sending fifteen dollars. Dress parade at four at which the order containing my promotion was read. The first parade we have had for some time and the first time I have been on parade since I was promoted. It was cold this morning and has been growing colder all day. To night is going to be a swinger. Our fire burns bright and clear and we have been sitting around it telling yarns. I being mostly a listener. Some have been playing cards and gambling. A letter from Robert.

Wednesday 28: It was cold last night and we were up early building a fire so we would not freeze. A clear, cold day and we have passed it as best we could. Dress parade at four. We have passed another pleasant evening. I wrote to Phebe and burned it. I have drawn fresh beef to day.

Thursday 29: A fine day but I am tolerable dull. I read a few chapters of Daniel but could find nothing to substantiate the Second Advent doctrine. Afterwards I played four games of sledge to see how it would go. I was sorry for it afterwards as it is the first thing I have done since I have been in the service that I was ashamed of my folks knowing. I have seen so much of cards that I know well enough how to play. Not meaning to be caught playing cards I made and took the following pledge. "I solemnly pledge my word that I never will play cards again and may God help me to keep my pledge—A. Armitage." I am sorry that I have to make such a record in my Journal. I hope I may never be obliged again to write my own shame. I drew a barrel of flour to day, so I guess we will have a great time in our cooking establishment. No parade. I have written to Phebe and sent it off. Not being well I am going to bed early. "Bonus Nox."

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The Second Advent doctrine: William Miller (1782–1849), founder of the Adventist movement, predicted the second coming of Christ for 1843 and then, when it did not occur, for 1844. When Miller's adherents were again disappointed, a significant minority voted to adopt the Second Advent doctrine that Christ would return in visible form sometime in the indefinite future to raise the dead and open the millennium. Adopting the name Second Adventists or Millerites, this group eventually took the name Evangelical Adventists. In that same conference, Saturday was approved as the Sabbath by the majority of delegates. Ambrose may have been particularly interested in the Second Advent question because his brother Tommy, though something of the family cut-up, was attracted to the Adventist movement.

Bonus Nox: good night.

Third Vicksburg campaign opens: To McClernand's disgust and Sherman's relief, Grant arrives at Milliken's Bend to take direct command of the forces gathering against Vicksburg. To buy time with the press and politicians while at the same time keeping the army busy, Grant launches several schemes to bypass the city. He tasks Sherman with completing the mile-long canal across the river from Vicksburg, a project the president much favors. But heavy rains fall, making the task even more difficult. Meanwhile, Grant puts Maj. Gen. James McPherson in charge of opening a tortuous four-hundred-mile route from Lake Providence, fifty miles above the city, to the Red River far below it. The work begins well but soon bogs down in the low country of bayous and small rivers.

Friday 30: I should have made a chimney this morning, but could not get a team to draw brick with. I then went down town and tried to get either some bread or baking powder, but failed. Germantown is quite a neat little place. I've lived on pancakes to day. Pancakes and nothing else is rather tough fodder I think.

Saturday 31: I made some biscuits this morning. They were pretty good only I burned them some in baking. Before noon we got orders to pack up and we moved about three quarters of a mile, north, through town and across the railroad. We are camped on ground which the Fifth Iowa moved from this morning. Just as we got our tents it began to rain and has rained ever since. We had to pitch our tents and fix up in it. Some one stole some

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of my boards while I was away so I had to go and get some more, carrying them from our old camp. It tired me, but Sykes and I have rigged up so that we are as well off as we were this morning. Several in our tent are frying doughnuts to night and they are an interesting looking set.

Charleston, South Carolina: The Confederate ironclads *Chicora* and *Palmetto State* launch a fierce attack on the Union blockading squadron. The Union ships take heavy damage while inflicting almost none, but the blockade is maintained.

February 1863

Sunday 1: The first thing this morning I had to go and draw a barrel of bread. After breakfast I drew five days rations which took a long time as it was muddy and our commissary is a long distance from camp. During the afternoon I got a letter from Alice and have written one to her in answer. I have also written to Tommys woman and sent some money to her which he gave me at Corinth to send off as he had to remain there. Just at night I heard he had come so I went to see him. He came back and staid awhile. Three in one tent got to playing cards and had a quarrel and would have fought but I interferred and told them to go out of doors and fight if they wanted to do. They blowed awhile, but that was all. I was the only one marked. I got a scratch on my finger.

Monday 2: Last night was cold and uncomfortable. This morning the cook would not cook any more and the men did not want a company cook, preferring to cook for themselves, so I had to divide the rations and cooking utensils to the tents which took till noon. I also drew a ration of fresh beef and the rest of our hard bread. Last Friday Badgero and I made a rude set of chessmen and board and played some. I have played some this afternoon winning everytime, but to night I played three games getting beaten once. It has been a cold, raw day. I am not very well. Drinking coffee every meal gives me the diarrhea. I made some doughnuts this morning which were very good. They were the first I ever made. Rumors say we are going to Memphis soon. I traded my watch for another getting three dollars to boot, then bought it back for five dollars. Now I have two watches on hand.

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Third Vicksburg campaign: The Federal ram *Queen of the West* runs the city's batteries. This evidence that the rebel guns are not as lethal as previously thought will influence the course of the campaign.

Ram: Lightly armed or unarmed steamboats with reinforced bows to ram other vessels. With few assets to build armored gunboats, Confederate commanders tried to make up for the inadequacy with rams. However, the Union fleet quickly dispatched most of the Confederate rams, dominating the Western waters from May 1862 to the end of the war. The Union also built rams, the Ellet rams being the most famous. They won a spectacular victory over the Confederate ram fleet at Memphis on May 10, 1862. Afterward they were largely used to transport the Mississippi Marine Brigade. The term *ram* becomes somewhat confusing because it was also applied to the heavily armored Confederate ironclads of the Merrimack/Virginia design, which were equipped with fearsome iron rams.

Tuesday 3: Cold. I've spent the day playing chess, cooking, eating etc. Not liking our chessmen, we are making a new set. I sold one of my watches for five dollars which makes several times that I have traded. We went and cut a lot of grass for a bed this afternoon.

Third Vicksburg campaign: The *Queen of the West* captures three rebel vessels below the city. Two hundred miles north of Vicksburg, Union troops break the levee across the river from Helena, Arkansas, to provide access to the Yazoo Pass, an area of swamps and streams leading to the Yazoo River. If this route to the Yazoo can be opened, the army will be able to land on dry ground north of Vicksburg, outflanking the city's defenses.

Tennessee: Confederate cavalry under General Joseph Wheeler attack Fort Donelson but are driven off.

Wednesday 4: That grass did us good service last night. In fact according to military parlance it was "Bully." I finished making our chessmen and have been playing some. After dinner I drew eight days rations, getting half of the sugar and coffee, which I have issued. This evening I have played a few games with Woodard. He beats me every time. He has

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studied the game some and is too much for me, but I am gaining on him. Snowing since noon, but it is changing into rain.

Department of Tennessee: Shocked and chagrined by the attacks on him in Congress and the press, Grant withdraws *General Order Number Eleven*. He protests that he had not meant to include all Jews in the order, but the whiff of anti-Semitism will cling to his reputation.

Thursday 5: When I got up this morning it was snowing and the ground was covered with four inches of snow. It soon stopped and it has grown cold. I played chess nearly all afternoon. It is cold again to night.

Chancellorsville campaign opens: While reorganizing the Army of the Potomac, General Hooker launches probes of the Rappahannock River line separating the two armies.

International: Queen Victoria announces that Great Britain will not be a party to a French proposal to mediate a settlement between North and South.

Friday 6: After getting breakfast which is a job I hate to do I went down town and got some stamps. Since I've been reading and playing chess.

International: Secretary of State Seward refuses the French offer to mediate a settlement of the war.

Saturday 7: Like a lazy housewife I left all of my work till the last day of the week and worst of all I spent all forenoon in playing chess. Then I made some biscuits which Sykes baked and they are good. Then I washed my clothes and myself. After cooking dinner and supper at one meal we ate it. We then fell in for orders and heard a lot of courtmartials read, all privates in our regiment. I then cleaned my gun which ended my days work. It has been a warm, pleasant day and the snow is almost gone. I bought Syke's flute for four dollars, then traded it for another [watch] a patent lever, giving four dollars difference. If the watch runs it is a good trade. To finish, Sykes took my quartier [watch] and a dollar for the four I owed him. So ends another day.

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Patent lever: a watch using a patent lever escapement. (See June 13, 1862). The term Patent Lever is often seen on the dials of English watches of the era and refers to the English lever type escapement with a jeweled lever and pointed-tooth escape wheel. Quartier was a brand of Swiss watch.

Sunday 8: My watch has stopped several times as I was cheated with Christy —whom I traded with. He has lied worse then I supposed he would and that was considerable. Fine, warm but cloudy. I got a letter from William in answer to one I sent him from Oxford, about going out west or settling around home. I was afraid it was burned at Holly Springs. He comes out fairly for staying where he is. It was a long letter and contains more real argument in it than ever I saw William get together before. I also got a letter from Robert. Folks at home are all well. The letters inform me that Miss Hannah H. Hutchinson has got married lately to a young man named Wm Ezard. She and I have corresponded some, but only as acquaintances. I certainly wish her much joy and happiness as she is an old and intimate acquaintance of mine. I do not know her husband. I've written to William and have spent the day reading and writing.

Monday 9: This morning I mended my pants and stockings, but they did not need much mending. I then put them on. Lieut McDowell went to Memphis at noon. By him I sent for a set of chessmen and a board. I have played several games to day, winning all but the last game. I thought I had that game, but I foolishly lost my queen, not having many pieces left and my opponent having his queen he soon beat me. Warm and pleasant, but cloudy.

Tuesday 10: It has been wet and rainy all day. We got a *Post* this morning. I drew coffee and beans to finish the eight days rations. Lieut Colonel Robbins got his commission as Colonel to day in place of Murphy who has been dismissed for that Holly Springs affair. Capt Britton of Co "G" is going to be major. Nearly all the captains in the regiment have had the "Major on the brain" for some time. Britton is the senior captain. I had a long chat with Woodard this evening. We were up till ten talking over matters. I guess it is bed time.

Wednesday 11: I was pretty sick when I awoke this morning and did not eat anything till sometime after noon. Since then I am some better. I went

looking after brick but could not find any. After coming back I made some more biscuits which Sykes baked. Then I drew pork and bacon for a day and a half. Lieut McDowell came back from Memphis rather "How come you so" bringing me my chessmen. I have played three games withem losing one. No mail. I had a good sing to night.

How come you so: very drunk. This was apparently a stage beyond merely "tight," a word Ambrose uses frequently to describe drunk and rowdy soldiers.

Withem: with them. Probably another of Ambrose's jokes on the poor speech of some of his fellows.

Thursday 12: When we went to bed last night the stars were shining and all looked fair. It soon began to rain slowly and by four this morning it poured down in torrents. It came into our tent as if was only a sieve making Sykes and I change our position in a hurry. Our blankets got wet but we came out all right. I had a great time getting good water for breakfast and we had a miserable breakfast. This afternoon I drew two and half days rations of fresh beef, the best I have drawn since I have been commissary. Had a good supper to pay up for our poor breakfast. I have written to father. Our tent plays the following games, Chequers, Chess, Fox and Geese, several games with cards and there is some talk of making a backgammon board.

Fox and Geese: a variation of checkers. A black piece is the fox, able to move in any direction. Four white pieces are the geese, able to move only straight ahead. The geese try to pen in the fox while the fox tries to get past the line of geese. There is no jumping or capturing.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Steaming up the Red River, the *Queen of the West* shoots up rebel wagon trains and otherwise infuriates Confederate authorities. At Vicksburg, the ironclad *Indianola* runs the city's batteries.

Friday 13: I got a letter from Joseph and one from Robert. It has been a fine, warm day. After dinner I drew seven days rations and have issued them out. I only drew three of pork, the rest will probably be fresh beef. I commenced reading *Esther De Medina or Crime in London*. It seems almost impossible to believe it. It is written by Reynolds. Woodard came into our tent acting drunk. He did very well. Afterwards he and I played a

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miserable game of chess. We then spent the evening talking on religious topics. I've written to Wm.

Esther De Medina by George William MacArthur Reynolds, 1814–1879 (New York: Burgess, Stringer & Co., 1848).

Saturday 14: It rained last night, but not enough to drive us out as it did the evening before. I played three games of chess with Woodard and beat him twice. I have written to Joseph. When I went to mail the letter, I noticed a number of soldiers around a building near the hospital. On going there I found a funeral was taking place. The coffin was first brought out and the procession formed. First eight men in charge of a sergt were the escort. Then the coffin on a cot carried by six men, then the company followed by the chaplain, doctor and such others as chose to go. The band played the dirge with muffled drums. A drum muffled makes a horrid din. He belonged to Co K. I could not help thinking that perhaps he left a vacant place somewhere and that he never could go home. Since coming back I have cleaned my gun and accoutrements. Dark and cloudy.

Red River, Louisiana: The Queen of the West runs aground and has to be abandoned. The crew manages to escape.

Sunday 15: I got up on the wrong side all over. After getting things straightened I cleaned my shoes, got breakfast, washed up and prepared for inspection, which came off at ten a m. Rather a somber inspection. Woodard in command. I have been out of the ranks so long that I hardly know how to file right or left. After reading awhile I wrote to William, then drew a day and a half's rations of fresh beef. At two I went and heard our preacher for the first time and was well payed for my trouble. He spoke well from his text, "Show thyself a man" [1 Kings 2:2] but it was more of a lecture than sermon. Warm.

1 Kings 2:1 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

2 I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man.

Monday 16: I washed up then cooked beef for dinner. I have not read much to day as I read too much on Saturday making my eyes sore. I played

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four games of chess with Woodard, getting beat every time. We have got our tent in better shape and appearance to day. I have taken cold lately and have coughed some to day. Pancakes for supper. It began to rain at dark and will probably rain all night. My head aches this evening, I guess I have been playing chess too much. One of our tent mates, Oliver alias "Old Gray" is a regular shirk about doing anything around the tent. He never gets any wood or water. He plays cards and gambles a great deal.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Federal troops hold off rebel probes at Yazoo Pass.

Tuesday 17: As I did not wash up the dishes have remained unwashed all day. There are only three in the tent who pretend to do much anyway. But I dived into "Esther De Medina" and have read of crime, love, happiness and almost everything else till I finished it, at about noon. Dinner did not amount to much, as usual. I wish the commissary would furnish us with some vegetables to eat. Laying around here, eating nothing but coffee, pork and crackers. The fact am, I dont like it at all. There was a case of small pox up town a few days ago, so to day we all had to go and be vaccinated. The doctor only vaccinated a few saying the rest did not need it. I played four games of chess with Woodard winning two. It has been a dusky cloudy day. I have seen some blue and other birds to day.

Wednesday 18: I got three letters this morning, two of which were from William and one of them stated that he had got my money all right and that all were well at home. I have written to William. I think there has been some letters lost so I am going to letter those I send for awhile. The one I sent to day is "A," the next will be "B" etc etc. I have drawn and divided two and a half days rations. Woodard and I played four games of chess, I winning two. This evening we played five and I won two. He was playing up to head quarters this forenoon and did not get beaten, so my beating him rather took him down a peg. He says I am improving very fast. Some men belonging to the Eleventh Missouri went out in an ambulance yesterday and were taken prisoners. Four of them were taken by two rebels, though they had a revolver among them. They came in to day. It has been a wet kind of a day. Yesterday, I drew a pair of pants and two white shirts.

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Thursday 19: In one of the letters I got yesterday there was one from my little sister Fanny. It was well written and the spelling was much better than I expected for her. So when I wrote to Robert this morning I sent one to her. It has been wet and rainy again. This forenoon I washed, now that I have two shirts I dont have to go without till mine gets dry. My pants are too small. I tried to change them but failed.

Friday 20: Oh it has been such a splendid day. I have not seen a cloud during the whole day. Corporal Durkee of Company "B" a colorguard has been buried to day. He has not been sick but a few days. He died last night. We all went [to] work and cut slabs about three feet long and drove them around the outside of our tent, then raised it up on top of them making it two feet higher, so we have much more room. We then made good bunks, up from the ground. Corporal Apple was ordered into our tent to day. It is said that "Sweet after toil cometh rest," if so I shall rest sweetly to night. I played two games of chess with Woodard beating him the last time. He left in a rage, not at me but because he thought himself beaten by his own folly.

Sweet after toil cometh rest: possibly from *Spirits and Men: An Epic Poem* by the English poet Ebenezer Elliott, 1781–1849, known as the Corn-Law Rhymer for his attacks on the protectionist tariffs that created great hardship for the working classes. In *Spirits and Men* the line is "Sweet after toil is rest."

Third Vicksburg campaign: Rebel troops again probe Federal positions at Yazoo Pass.

Saturday 21: Last night was fine and clear again when we went to bed, but it began to rain during the night and has rained nearly all day. It was so wet that I could not draw rations till night when I managed to draw them and divide them out before dark. I have written to Phebe and Willis. Badgero and I played an awful game of chess. I had my king left and he had his king and castle, with which he could not mate me. As near as I can learn we are to remain here for some time. I changed my pants for a larger pair to day. I always have a great time in getting clothes to fit me, they being too small. Lieut McDowell found a violet to day in bloom. It looked as bright as they ever do but very tender. I never saw a flower that filled me with so many impressions as it did. Such a tender little flower in

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February. Spring is coming and old winter will have to go away. Oh may this war soon pass away like winter and bring a peace that may never more be broken by traitors.

Sunday 22: I cleaned my gun for inspection which took place at ten. One of our boys got a copy of the *Patriot* a Wisconsin copperhead paper. The *Chicago Times* has been suppressed and the *Patriot* ought to be. I hoped there were no such papers in Wisconsin. Such work must stop. The rebels in our front we can manage but those at home who ought to be fighting side by side with us, turning against us is too much. Lots of the boys would like nothing better than to clean them out. It would be too bad to let the copperheads at home who dare not fight, settle this war, and those who have done the fighting not have chance to say a word and when they do go home to have the dastards point the finger of scorn at them. But I am not writing an essay. This afternoon several of us went and cut a load of wood. It is quite cold to night.

The Chicago Times: A long-time organ for Senator Stephen A. Douglas, the newspaper was purchased in June 1861 by the successful Detroit newspaperman Wilbur Fiske Storey (1821–?). A lukewarm supporter of the Union war effort, Storey broke with Lincoln over the Emancipation Proclamation: "a monstrous usurpation, a criminal wrong, and an act of national suicide." Thereafter he became a supporter of the copperhead leader Clement Vallandigham. Although Union supporters in the Midwest urged the suppression of the paper, Ambrose was responding to a rumor. The paper was not closed until June 2, 1863, and then only briefly by General Burnside, commander of the military district encompassing Chicago. Lincoln lifted the ban two days later rather than engage in an acrimonious legal battle.

Monday 23: I wrote a letter to Alice this morning. I then washed and mended my pants. Fine and warm.

Tuesday 24: Mansur was detailed for guard, but being unwell I went in his place. Guard mounting was at Brigade (Mowers) headquarters. We went out on a post a quarter of a mile from camp. Lieut Willoughby is here with me and eleven men. Being the only noncommissioned officer on the post I put on every relief till midnight, when an extra man acted as corporal. I have passed a pleasant day. I read *Pericles, the Prince of Tyre* and

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Cymbeline. The stars were shining brightly with the pale moon when I laid down to rest.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre, a romantic drama written by Shakespeare about 1608 in collaboration (probably) with George Wilkins. The play tells of the journeys and adventures of Pericles and the even more fantastic perils (mostly his fault) experienced by his wife and daughter. All are eventually reunited.

Cymbeline, a romantic drama written by Shakespeare about 1610, relates the story of Cymbeline, king of Britain, his daughter Imogen, and her husband Posthumus, whom Cymbeline has banished. Despite the seductive wiles of the villain Iachimo, Imogen is faithful. Frustrated, Iachimo convinces Posthumus that he has bedded Imogen. Posthumus orders his servant to kill her, but the kindly fellow helps her escape disguised as a boy. Eventually, all is revealed, the evil punished, and the righteous rewarded. The play has such a complicated story that some critics have wondered if Shakespeare intended a parody of the overburdened plots of many Elizabethan dramas. The play is rescued by some lovely poetry.

Third Vicksburg campaign: South of the city, the refloated *Queen of the West* hoists Confederate colors and joins the ram *Webb* in overwhelming the *Indianola*. The surrender of the powerful ironclad poses a considerable concern to the Union commanders upriver.

Wednesday 25: At four this morning I was awakened by thunder and soon after it began to rain and has rained all day. I have passed the day as best I could. I never feel right after standing guard till I have had a nights rest and raining has made it worse. I went up to the upper tent and scooped their best chequer player winning four games out of six. Our tent beats in nearly all the games anyway. I am enough for everything in the shape of chess or chequers, and the best card players live in our tent. Our tent can hoe its row anyway. It looks rather dubious for a nights rest as the rain is spattering in but I'll try it.

Thursday 26: Misty and rainy till noon, when it cleared up. I have written to William. Then I went up to see Tommy. I found him ready to go to Memphis with a detachment of the pioneer corps. I staid till he and the rest were on the cars, then returned. During the afternoon I have drawn and

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divided some beef. Then I loafed around. This evening we had a good sing with Woodard and the adjutant. Lieut Williams is now in command of the company and has been for a week, but has not put up his tent yet.

Friday 27: Another fine day at last, but I did not get any mail. I played three games of chess with Woodard winning the last which was a very hard one. We got orders to move our tent to day between two others to make room for a cook house. We do not like it at all as we are rigged up comfortable now. Three of us went out to try and get some boards but did not get any. I pitch quoits badly awhile to day.

Quoits: a game similar to horseshoes played with flattened rings of iron or circles of rope.

Saturday 28: We polished up and got ready to muster the first thing this morning and at nine we were mustered for two months pay. It is the first muster that we three were not present at together. Tommy is with the pioneer corps and Sykes is on picket, making me the only representative. I got three letters this morning two from home and one from Alice. I wrote to Robert sending home my cuffs and mittens by mail. Alice wants me to send her my likeness. I shall send it for that is what I had it taken for. After inspection we moved our tent which was a hard job, as half of the men belonging to the tent were on duty. It began to rain before it was done and I had to draw five days rations and issue them. Darkness came too soon for me to put up our bunk and I am going to turn in with Sam Fausnaught. Robinson (H J) belonging to one of the other tents wanted me to go and play chequers with him. I went and played till after taps. He is no player. After the first two games I would tell him whether I would skunk him or not and did as I told him. I've been cross and vexed all day. Making us move has put me out of gear.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Under the direction of Admiral Porter, Union crews construct a huge mock-up of an ironclad from an old barge. The "ship" is equipped with log guns and empty paddle houses. With pitch fires belching smoke from its fake stacks, it floats past the Vicksburg batteries, impervious to their fire. The *Queen of the West* and the other vessels of the small rebel squadron flee. The Confederate crews working to repair the beached *Indianola* set the ironclad afire. Not until the next morning will the ruse be discovered.

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March 1863

Sunday 1: Last night was windy, but this morning all was calm and clear. Inspection at ten. Then I drew two and a half days rations of fresh beef. I had to fix our bunk enough to sleep on to night. At two I went and heard one chaplain give another lecture. Woodard, Sykes, the Adjutant and I acted as choir. The lecture was on the materiality of the mind and what becomes of the mind when the body dies. I wrote to Alice, sending my likeness, but telling her it looked better than I do.

Monday 2: Day of toil, day of trouble. First I went to the creek and washed. Then I began to work at our bunk, but was called off to help raise the cook shanty. A few of us worked hard till noon and got it up. I was so tired that I would not go for water to make dinner with, but waited till somebody brought one. At two we had batallion drill. To top off with I have not been well. Going to Vicksburg is all the tattle now.

Tuesday 3: I wrote to father this morning. I've felt mean all day. After dinner we pitched in and made a lot of bread or rather biscuit. Company drill this afternoon. Woodard came around to day by recommendation of Col Robbins, with a paper of some length, requesting Capt Dawes to resign. It was signed by all the company. Woodard intends passing it along to the line officers and Col Robbins will sign it. It is written in respectful language and asks it only because his wound renders him unfit for service. We hope he will resign, but I don't think he will. It was dated March 2d, 1863. Dawes is now at home. He has not been with the company since the Battle of Corinth.

Washington: Congress passes the Conscription Act, which calls for the drafting of all able-bodied men between 20 and 45. The act motivates so many men to enlist to avoid the stigma of being conscripted that the government will draft fewer than originally planned.

Wednesday 4: A year ago I was sick in Cario and to day I have been hard at work all day on the cook house. Wm Hall and I went and loaded some bolts for shingles then cut some poles and loaded them. We then worked at the roof and chimney and I fixed the logs on each side of the door and chinked up some. Clear and cold as was yesterday. Sykes and I went to Woodards tent and sang some, but not much as I am too tired. When we came back three of the boys were playing cards with the candle. I waited

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till they quit then wrote, or am writing my Journal. The candle light is rather dim, but the fire burns bright and clear. I cannot help wondering as I look at our fire, what they are doing at home. I hope they are as happy but not as tired as I am. But I am too sleepy to write. Good night.

Bolts: blocks of wood (cedar is preferable) from which shingles can be split with a froe or a hatchet.

Chinked up: filling the space between logs with moss, grass, or similar material, often mixed or layered over with mud. The best fill was oakum, a material made of loosely twisted hemp or jute fiber impregnated with tar.

Thursday 5: I was just thinking I would go and wash when Lieut McDowell came and told us to be ready to march at a moments warning. So we packed up. I soon found out that we were not going to move to day, so Sykes and I went and washed. We do not know where we are going. All kinds of rumors are current. After dinner I drew five days rations and at two we had a long batallion drill. I feel very well to day. If we move our cook house will be a fizzle. A fine day.

Middle Tennessee: Glorifying in his new role as a cavalry commander, Van Dorn surrounds two Federal brigades from Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland at Thompson's Station (Spring Hill). The Union cavalry cuts its way out but the infantry is forced to surrender. Union losses in two days of fighting are 400 killed and wounded, 1,300 captured. Confederate losses number about 300.

Friday 6: I guess marching orders are "played out." Nothing has been said about them to day and drill has been as usual. I have read *Eugene Aram* by Bulwer. It is a singular work, a tragedy in a novel. It is true as Aram is an historical character.

Eugene Aram by Edward Bulwer-Lytton, an 1832 novel based on a sensational murder. The real Eugene Aram (1704–59) was a schoolmaster convicted of killing a shoemaker over a debt. The novel makes Aram's motives for obtain money idealistic. Bulwer-Lytton (1803–73) was a member of parliament as well as a prolific and popular writer. His best novel was the carefully researched *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834). Author of the notorious opening line "It was a dark and stormy night," his

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name appears on one bad-writing contest that bids "wretched writers welcome."

Saturday 7: When all was quiet after breakfast, It began to be rumored around that we were going to be paid. We soon signed the payroll and went up to headquarters and got two months pay for September and October 1862. We settled our clothing account, I received \$1.25 not having quite drawn my allowance which is three dollars and a half a month. Sykes had drawn \$1.25 over and it was taken out of his pay proper. Some of the men drew \$18.00 extra while others were as much out. I have been pitching quoits since then. The boys are rather too much for me at that game yet. I have gathered up the extra rations and Lieut Williams sold them to the post commissary. Mansur and I had quite a quarrel this morning. I was to blame at first, but he began calling hard names which made me mad. After talking awhile we "dried up."

Sunday 8: All was hurry and bustle this morning for inspection. General inspection by Col Mower. As it looked rainy it was a short one. I have heretofore been in the third rank of the color guard on the right of the state colors. To day I was placed in the front rank on the right of the US flag. Sergt Briggs Co "C" is color bearer. Drizzling nearly all day. I have written to Phebe. A man offered me a dollar for my old watch which went go. I took it and thought I made a dollar clear. My trading watches is played out. I've been through the mill and am satisfied. It has been a good lesson though rather expensive, but it has shown me how dishonest a man may be. Sykes and I have sent for the *Weekly Sentinel*.

Third Vicksburg campaign: High water breaks the levee protecting the canal Sherman's corps has been constructing across the river from the city. With much of the arduous work lost, the canal is abandoned.

Monday 9: One of my mean days. I have written to Joseph. Mail brought two *Posts* which father sends to us. Company and Batallion drill. I played chequers awhile with Sykes to night. He plays pretty well.

Tuesday 10: It has rained all day since ten. I have been reading some. Then I went to the upper tent and beat Harry Austin playing chequers. I am not very well.

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Washington: President Lincoln announces amnesty for deserters who return to their units by April 1.

Wednesday 11: Eighteen months ago I was mustered into the US Service for three years unless sooner discharged. So if I live my time with Uncle Sam is half up. A year ago we marched into Point Pleasant. I was then very sick. I have seen a great deal since then. Immediately after breakfast I drew two days rations. Soon we got orders to march at ten. I issued them out and began to get things together to pack in the mess chest. Snatching a few minutes when I could to pack up my own things. Soon the tents were struck and all was ready. Just as the bugle blew the assembly the eagle got loose and after soaring around awhile lighted in a tree [a] quarter of a mile distant and was recaptured. When we were all ready to go, Col Bryant of the Twelfth Wisconsin, which relieves us, made us a curt little speech, for which we gave him three cheers. We took the railroad track west towards Memphis. We stopped after going seven miles, for dinner. After dinner we went four miles farther on the railroad track and then went to the state fair grounds near Memphis and camped. Twelve miles in all. I carried a heavy load, as we are not going on a regular march. I threw nothing away, but I came through in good shape. We are three miles from Memphis. The evening gun sounded very plain. We came through a good country. I got a letter from Robert, one from William and one from Carrie. They at home are down on the copperheads. We'd give them a time they never heard if we were only up there awhile with our bayonets. We have no tents to night. We turned over our old ones and are going to draw new ones. Our brigade is along. Williams letter was number two. I have not received number one yet. There were some stamps in the letters which was lucky as I had only one left.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Union gunboats and transports pushing south from Yazoo Pass along the narrow, winding Yalobusha River, a tributary of the Yazoo, are stopped by the newly constructed Fort Pemberton.

Thursday 12: We have not moved to day. Soon after noon Tommy came. He hurt his back a few days ago, not seriously but enough to prevent him from working. He said there were no guards to prevent anyone from going to the city so I went back with him and expressed thirty six dollars to William, eighteen for Sykes and eighteen myself. I took a receipt. The cost was seventy-five cents. I bought a quarters worth of apples, *Ollendorffs*

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German, for a dollar and a half and half a dollars worth of stationery. I got back all right. Memphis is a large place and business is going on the same as if there was no war. When I got back they had drawn three days rations for me.

Ollendorff's German. Full title: *A New Method of Learning to Read, Write, and Speak the German Language* by H.G. Ollendorf (Frankfort: C. Jugel, 1851). Heinrich Gottfried Ollendorf (1803-1865) was one of the 19th century's great linguists. He pioneered the use of phonics in the teaching of languages. His program was adapted to a number of languages and became immensely popular.

Friday 13: Last night was considerable colder than the evening before. I was awakened early this morning by a man in our company who was tight. He was swearing and tearing around like mad. The officer of the guard soon came and quickly quietened him. Last night was a pretty wild one as many of the men were drunk and were carrying on and shouting most of the night. Soon after breakfast orders came to pack up and be ready to gig. Our camp and garrison equipage was soon sent away. It was warm. At two we started, marching through the city in columns of platoons. We went to the landing and on board of the *Empress*, on the hurricane deck and guards were stationed to keep us up there. The *Empress* is a noisy boat to night, over half of the men are tight and most of the rest are "how come you so." One of the boats in the fleet has a calliope which played some this evening. I hope I may get a letter before we leave here, which will probably be tomorrow.

To gig: to travel in a gig, i.e. a light wagon or boat. It is unlikely that the nautical usage was common in Ambrose's time (or any other time) and he is apparently toying with the word.

Hurricane deck: upper deck.

Richmond, Virginia: An explosion at the Confederate Ordnance Laboratory at Brown's Island near the city kills 69 workers, 62 of them women.

Saturday 14: I awoke amid smoke and men. Last night was a tight one on our craft and to day has been the same. But they are not quarrelsome yet.

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Sykes and I got a pass and we went up town. After a few purchases we went to the park, which contains about an acre of land in which there is considerable shrubbery and a few trees. There are also a few black and gray squirrels which are quite tame. The park is enclosed with a cast iron fence. It is a five dollar fine to allow a dog to enter. There are four entrances, one on each side. In the center there is a bust of Gen Jackson. On the front side of the pedestal is the inscription "Frangas non flectas" and on the right side "The Federal Union; it must be preserved." Some low lived villain has tried to break out the word "federal" and the letter "U" in "union," but letters in stone are not so easily erased. His effort only condemns him. Some say it was a colonel in the rebel army that tried to deface it. On the left of the pedestal are the names of the battles which Gen Jackson participated in and behind a Latin inscription which I cannot remember. The bust is life size and with the pedestal it stands on is about eight feet high. The old hire looks stern with his garment wrapped around his shoulders. Memphis is full of newsboys. On every corner they are crying their papers. After we were tired of rambling around town we came back on the boat into a bedlam. But I doubt if Bedlam is any name. About two they fired up and between five and six we started down the river. Leaving Memphis with its large buildings and wharf strewn with old guns that used to belong to the rebels. We are now silently gliding quietly down the river and Memphis is out of sight.

Frangas non flectas: Bend do not break (Jackson's motto).

Old hire: workman.

Port Hudson campaign opens: Admiral Farragut and General Banks move against the Confederate bastion at Port Hudson, Louisiana. Poor communication hampers the operation. Banks fails to launch his diversionary attack on schedule, and Farragut's big ocean-going ships get the full attention of the rebel batteries. The USS *Mississippi* is lost, several ships badly damaged. Farragut manages to get the *Hartford* and the *Albatross* past the batteries and steams north toward Vicksburg.

Tennessee to Arkansas

Sunday 15: When I awoke this morning we were tied up at Helena Ark. I went ashore and enquired for the twenty ninth Wisconsin and was told that

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they had gone down the river a few days ago. I bought some bread and after breakfast was busy writing my Journal when William Dorward came and put his hand on my shoulder saying, "well I have found you at last." We went and found Sykes then we all started to the camp of the twenty ninth which Dorward belongs to and was at Helena. There are about a dozen in the twenty ninth I am acquainted with. They were as glad to see us as we were to see them. All at once the boats started off. We started to hurry to the bank but they were in the middle of the stream before we had gone far. One of our men who we saw said that the men had been having some trouble with the provost guard and one of the provost guard had shot a horse. A scene occurred. Gen Prentiss the commander of the post ordered our boats across the river. Those coming from the wharf told us to stay where we were as they were arresting all the men belonging to the boats that were on shore. We returned and continued our visit and took dinner with company "E" of the Twenty ninth. About three we went to the wharf with a pass from Lieut Barney of Co "I." We did not need the pass and if we had it would have done us no good. We waited till six when the boats all started down without making us a call. Finding there would be no chance to go we went back to the Twenty ninth and will remain with them all night.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin M. Prentiss: Illinois lawyer, politician, militia colonel, and Mexican War veteran. He entered Civil War service as colonel of the 10th Illinois Infantry. Soon appointed a brigadier general, he commanded Sixth Division, Grant's Army of the Tennessee at Shiloh, where he stalled the Confederate attack for six hours at the "Hornet's Nest." Captured and exchanged, he was promoted major general. Though a superb combat leader, Prentiss was a difficult subordinate, and Halleck—apparently at Grant's request—assigned him to command of the District of East Arkansas. Unhappy with a largely administrative appointment, Prentiss resigned in October 1863. At the time Ambrose might have seen him, Prentiss was in his early forties, a grim warrior with the glare of a zealot and a full beard except for a shaved upper lip.

Ambrose and his companions had missed a considerable ruckus. In boisterous spirits after their confinement aboard the boat, the men of the 8th Wisconsin and the brigade's other regiments made a commotion among the sutlers' shops near the wharves. Many bought whiskey to continue the binge already begun on the river. A provost guard of Indiana soldiers, arriving to restore order to the Sabbath, was greeted by a hail of

coal. The post commander ordered the guns of the fort trained on the mob, a gesture that failed to impress the men. A provost officer was knocked down by a piece of coal and a guard fired his musket, killing a horse. More coal flew and more guards rushed to the scene. At this point, Mower arrived, his presence impressing the men where cannons had failed. The post commander ordered Mower to re-embark his men. The boats cast off and lay on the far side of the river until evening when they steamed downriver to Chuck-a-Luck Island, a miserable camp probably assigned the brigade in punishment for the riot.

The regimental history bragged about the incident: "And what a 'Jubilee' we had with the sutlers, the bakers and the provost guard. The demand for 'stone coal' was also active and its movements brisk. How scared (?) we all were when the guns of the old fort were trained on us and that regiment of 'red legged Hoosiers' stared our way." [The question mark is ironic.]

Monday 16: Last night I slept at Helena, which was before the war the residence of the rebel General Hindman. It is located on a level piece of ground which is now nearly overflowed. Just behind the village it is quite bluffly. It is a very unhealthy place. Dead horses and mules lay all over even within a few rods of camp. The smell is awful. We took breakfast and after bidding our friends adieu we started to the landing. As we were going two boats started down that had been tied up during the night. We hurried and just had time to get on board of the *Forest Queen* on which were Gen [J. E.] Smith's headquarters. Just before getting on board I saw Elisha Cole. I had not seen him since we were at Pilot Knob Mo. He is quite well and is still orderly sergeant. After steaming down the river about eight miles, we tied up close to the rest of our boats. A lieutenant on board had orders to take us to Col Mower, our brigade commander. We did not like this but there was no chance of getting ashore only with him. He got us together and we followed him ashore. As soon as we were ashore we scattered leaving Mr Lieutenant alone. When I got to our boat I found my things all right. We soon went ashore and set up camp on a small piece of land surrounded by water, as the river is very high. Our new tents the "V" tent, we soon set up. Each tent holds four men. Lieut Williams was obliged to report us absent without leave yesterday, he thinks nothing will be done with us for being absent. Sykes, Mansur, Pete Newman and I occupy one tent. We are in Arkansas just opposite the Yazoo Pass. I have drawn five days rations and divided them out. It has been quite warm to day. Tommy

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was left at Memphis on duty with some pioneers. I have drawn a splendid rubber to day.

Maj. Gen. Thomas C. Hindman: one of the most colorful figures of the war in the West. A terrier of a man with a lion's courage, he had excelled as a lieutenant in the Mexican War before entering the rough politics of antebellum Arkansas. As a one-term Congressman, he refused to compromise on the issues dividing the nation. He led a division at Shiloh and was briefly in command of the Trans-Mississippi Department before being relieved by Lt. General T. H. Holmes. He commanded the Confederate forces at the drawn battle at Prairie Grove, Arkansas, on Dec. 7, 1862. At the time the 8th Wisconsin camped near his home, Hindman commanded a division in Bragg's Army of Tennessee.

Tuesday 17: Our camp is on a bed of quicksand, so sand gets into everything. I wrote a letter to Dad telling him where we are. I have been playing chess a great deal to day, but have been unlucky enough to win every game. I never learn much playing with the small fry whom I beat so easily. Hot. I've looked at my German some to day.

Third Vicksburg campaign: After six days trying to capture Fort Pemberton, Union forces concede defeat in their attempt to reach the Yazoo River by way of Yazoo Pass.

Wednesday 18: This morning I cut down a tree standing in the water rolling up my pants to do the same. I split up two lengths and made a bunk to sleep on. Somehow I hate to sleep on the ground where there is so much vermin (I mean ants, spiders and the like) runs so much at large. I have played chess a little as well as looked into *Ollendorff*. I got letter No. five from William. I guess his number one is lost. Warm.

Thursday 19: We raised our tent this morning and of course our bunks accordingly. I wrote to William. The small pox is on our little island. They are going to issue a little less salt meat on that account. Bathing is prohibited to eleven o'clock and restricted to once a day. The river keeps rising. The water creeps closer and closer to us. If it raises much more we will have to clear out.

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Third Vicksburg campaign: Trying to force a route through flooded Steele's Bayou to the Yazoo, Admiral Porter's fleet of eleven vessels is nearly trapped "in the woods" by the rebels. Sherman hastens a force to Porter's relief, barely averting a catastrophe to Union hopes for capturing Vicksburg.

Friday 20: Hot as ever, no mail to day. The ram *Searchland* and five convoys went down to day and two or three boats went down the Yazoo pass. The water keeps raising fast. Several boats came to day, on one of them was the Eleventh Wisconsin. I have written to William. Nearly all the troops left the island last night. Raining a little this evening.

Saturday 21: Once to day all the boats were gone. Several boats have passed. One day passes much like another. I'm hanging around playing chess, reading, writing etc. Sykes, Woodard and I went to the chaplains tent and had a good sing. I have drawn five days rations. Two of the men, D. Baker and S. Fausnaught have volunteered to cook for the company.

Sunday 22: It has been a great deal cooler to day and is raining this evening. I wrote to Joseph and Robert, and after dinner I got a letter from both of them. Joseph said he was going to leave home and we must not write till we heard from him again so I went to the mail bag and took his out again. One of the Twenty ninth boys were here to day. I sent a note to Wm Dorward by him. I spent my last fifteen cents for apples.

Monday 23: Cold and raining all day, keeping us in our tents. I've been playing chess nearly all day. No mail. A brigade of Quimbys Division came here to day and went through the pass.

Brig. Gen. Isaac F. Quinby: a classmate and friend of Grant's, Quinby commanded Seventh Division, XVII Corps.

Tuesday 24: It rained till noon and has been cold and chilly all day. The first number of the *Sentinel* came to day. I also got a *Post*. I have written to Phebe and to Alice. The water keeps raising.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Federal troops abandon an attempt to force a route to Vicksburg through Black Bayou. Grant's efforts to outflank the Confederate stronghold with Sherman's canal and the routes from Yazoo

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Pass, Lake Pleasant, Steele's Bayou, and Black Bayou have all failed. Many Northern newspapers call for his removal. Sherman advocates withdrawing the army to Memphis and again trying the overland route down the Central Mississippi Railroad. But with the machinations of McClellan and the hostility of the press, Grant suspects he will be relieved if he pulls back. He begins considering a daring plan: He will march his army down the west side of the river while Porter runs his squadron past the Vicksburg batteries. Reunited with the army below the city, the boats will ferry the men to the eastern shore. Grant will be on dry ground at last where he can fight the rebel army on even terms. Sherman is appalled by the plan. The move will put Grant hundreds of miles deep in enemy territory with only a long, fragile supply line down the western shore of the river to feed and munition his army. Privately Sherman calls the operation: "one of the most hazardous and desperate moves of this or any war." But he remains faithful to Grant.

Wednesday 25: A glorious morning, but rather cool till noon when it grew much warmer. A gunboat passed to day going down. The water has not raised any since last night. I have drawn six days rations except the meat which I shall draw tomorrow. All the talk now is that we are going to Lake Providence and very soon. I am not well to day. No mail to day. Sykes gave me his old watch a day or two ago. He had broken the crystal and minute hand. I beat Woodard at a game of chess, but he beat me three times yesterday.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Two of the famed Ellet rams attempt to run the Vicksburg batteries shortly after first light to join Farragut and his flagship, *Hartford*, below the city. Confederate fire sinks *Lancaster* and heavily damages *Switzerland*.

North Carolina: Union naval forces capture Hilton Head, tightening the blockade.

Thursday 26: My twenty fourth natal morn. I was also born on Thursday. I drew four days rations of bacon this morning. I wrote one exercise in German. Yesterday I wrote two. The exercises are in English and I have to translate them and write them in German. I've played some good games of chess to day. Lieut McDowell marked out a bed for Scotch hop. The game is kicking a chip from one portion of the bed to another without letting it

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touch a line and hopping all the time, with the foot you kick with. There are nine different parts to it. I only got to the sixth place. Woodard went through. I got a letter from Alice. The water has fallen an inch since last night.

Friday 27: I have had diarrhea to day. There is not exercise enough here to keep me in good health. This occasional diarrhea keeps one I think from having fevers and other diseases that are now prevalent. I have written to father and Willis. Boats are hanging around and it is probable that we will leave soon. I have been reading most of the day and drawn two days rations of fresh beef. Peddling apples is the rage in the regiment now. They buy them from the sutler by the barrel and then retail them.

Saturday 28: I was hopping and jumping a great deal this morning and am consequently rather tired. I got a letter from father and one from Phebe. I have stuck pretty close to German to day translating but not writing. Our boats are here and we will probably leave here in the morning. It is cold and raining. Just at dark Woodard, Lieut McClure of Co "F" and Wilcox of Co "A" went out on the river in a skiff and have not returned yet.

Sunday 29: After we were all snug in bed last night, orders came to pack up and embark immediately. So we routed out and began. The men swore and chafed a great deal. Finally we were ordered to bed again. Our boat being loading up all night. I got some of our rations with those of the regimental commissary so they would be safe on the boat, then I went to bed again. It was a wild and stormy night. I was afraid our tent would blow over and have us out of doors *a CasPonit Pleasant* but luckily it did not. We got no news of Woodard till to day at ten when some of the battery boys told us they saw the boat coming back. It was in danger of being run over by a steamer, but they got on board of the steamer. We hope this may be true. If they are not on some of the boats that went down last night I am afraid they are lost. We packed up and went on board the *Ben Franklin* this morning and at about five pm we started down the river. Our boat is heavily loaded and some think she will not carry us safe. Once I thought she was going down for certain. It is not a pleasant situation to be on board of a boat you think is sinking. We put up our tent on the hurricane deck. It required some figuring to get it up in the wind, but up it stands. Oh it has been an awful day, a day to make men weep, a day that tries a man. There has been a cold north wind all day. It has been so cold that we could not

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keep warm and we have been shivering all day. My feelings have put me in mind of cattle out of doors on a cold wet winter day. Now at bedtime it is snowing and blowing, making the old tent shiver like an aspen. We tied up at dark for a few minutes, but soon started down again. Good night.

a CasPonit Pleasant: should be *un cas point plaisant* "a situation not pleasant." (*Point* was in common usage a century ago. It has been largely replaced by *pas*).

The Eagle Regiment: According to the regimental history, the eagle Old Abe hopped around in terror during the storm, becoming so entangled in his tether that he was discovered in the morning hanging upside down from his perch in a tree in a most undignified position.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant directs General McClernand to open a line of march along the west bank of the river from Milliken's Bend to New Carthage below the city.

Arkansas to Louisiana

Monday 30: When I awoke this morning we were still going down the river, having passed the mouths of the White and Arkansas Rivers during the night, also Napoleon, Ark. My left side felt paralised. I could not move any for a long time. I was not cold either. About two we tied up at Providence which is a small village at the entrance of the lake bearing the same name. There we found Woodard. The *Express* ran into their little boat as they were coming ashore night before last and broke it in two in no time. They caught hold of the boat and were taken on board, but Woodard got hurt in the back. We soon left Providence where I first touched the soil of Louisiana and went down to Transylvania landing, where we went ashore and set up camp. It is a pretty place, nearly level. Thompson the owner of the place did not want Gen Smith to camp here but he was soon overruled and a strong picket was sent out. At dark Sykes and Pete Newman came in with a gate which will make us good bunks. We are sixty miles from Vicksburg. Cold.

Tuesday 31: I went to work and got all the company things to camp. While I was doing this the rest put up the tent. We made good bunks and had our things in the nicest shape we ever had them in. Soon after dinner orders

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came to embark immediately, so we packed up and got our stuff on board. At dark we marched on board and arranged ourselves as well as we could for the night. I had a long chat with sergt Phillips of Co "I" and went to bed rather late.

Savannah River, Georgia: The Federal blockading force overwhelms the CSS *Nashville*.

April 1863

Wednesday 1: One time during the night there was a great whistling and ringing of bells and soon after we started down the river. At daylight this morning, we were tied up among a fleet of transports just opposite the mouth of the Yazoo River. What a forest of smoke stacks there were. There are several gun and marine boats in the mouth of the Yazoo. I rather think any sign of a rebel ram would make a howling. After breakfast I had to go into the hold of the boat and get some rations. The hold of a boat puts me in mind of the "Hades" spoken of in my Latin Reader. About ten we moved up the river two miles, landed, got our things on shore and put up camp. Our camp ground is level and about a foot higher than the Mississippi River. There has been a camp here before. The canal at Vicksburg is a failure. Another canal is being dug a quarter of a mile below us, which runs into a bayou that enters the River twelve miles below Vicksburg. We are twelve miles above Vickburg and have a good view of the fleet at the mouth of the Yazoo. We heard some big guns towards Vicksburg this morning. Thus we keep drawing nearer and nearer that great strategetic point.

Marine boats were transports assigned to the Mississippi Marine Brigade. The brigade was authorized by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton as an amphibious auxiliary to the Ellet ram squadron. Col. Alfred Ellet (later brigadier general), a brother of the rams' designer Charles Ellet, Jr., recruited and commanded the brigade. Eventually the brigade numbered 3,000 men, including artillery and a substantial number of cavalry. (During one period, the infantry was mounted on mules.) The brigade's mission was to defend Union shipping on the Mississippi and its major tributaries from attack by guerrilla bands and Confederate mobile forces. But Ellet was more interested in seizing contraband cotton than fighting rebels. Most of the officers and men adopted his attitude and the brigade soon gained a reputation for ruthless pillaging and wanton destruction. (Later in

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the campaign, Ambrose would see the marine brigade's work up close.) Efforts to bring the brigade to heel failed. Ellet refused to accept direction from naval commanders and, when the brigade was transferred to the army, continued to resist any authority below that of Stanton himself. The secretary's sponsorship continued to protect the brigade against a growing list of complaints from frustrated military commanders and wronged civilians. Late in 1864, the new district commander, General Edward Canby, finally managed to dissolve the tactically innovative but otherwise thoroughly disreputable Mississippi Marine Brigade.

The 8th Wisconsin camped at Duck Port just below the Federal base at Milliken's Bend. The canal being dug from Duck Port to the bayou above New Carthage was of modest dimensions, too shallow and narrow for gunboats and troop transports, but large enough for barges carrying supplies.

Thursday 2: I made a table for Woodard this morning as he is lame and while I was doing it Sykes and the others put up the tent and our regular bunks. This sleeping on the ground is played. After dinner I finished drawing five days rations which commenced on the first. Then several of us built a brick oven, as we drew flour. This afternoon we had a grand review by Maj Gen Sherman. Sherman is rather tall and slim, having that "lean, hungry look," that Shakespeare speaks of. His hair is red and his nose sharp, his beard which is small is red too, not to say auburn. He looks as if he could bite a wrought iron nail in two. I got tired of standing up long before the review was over. How I hate reviews and parades and all such stuff. Men have been working the whole length of the canal all day. The one hundred and ninth Illinois that stacked arms last winter are now here digging with the fourth Virginia which also stacked their arms and some negros. Rather a bad joke on those fellows who stacked arms, to take their arms away and set them at work digging. If they are baulky we will make them work. I have been so busy that I have not written any but as soon as I have written my Journal I am going to write to Alice. It has been a fine, warm day. D. H. Hatton joined the company to day. He was left sick at Memphis.

This sleeping on the ground is played: an awkward way of saying that Ambrose and his companions were sick of sleeping on the ground.

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Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman: Ambrose provides an excellent description of the forty-three-year-old general. Although junior to several other major generals, Sherman had in effect become Grant's second-in-command. He commanded XV Corps, Army of the Tennessee, to which the Eagle Brigade now belonged.

A lean and hungry look: The famous description of the villain Cassius from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

Richmond, Virginia: The famous Bread Riot erupts. Most of the participants are women angered over the high price of food. (The *Richmond Dispatch* estimates the cost of feeding a family has risen from \$6.65 to \$68.25 in the two years of war.) They loot shops and refuse to disperse when threatened by militia. President Davis himself mounts a dray to announce that the soldiers will open fire in five minutes. Awed, the mob breaks up.

Friday 3: I have drawn some fresh beef and molasses. We had some good baked beans from our oven for dinner. I had my hair cut. I went to wash my shirt with some water we got out of a hole we dug, but the soap stood in lumps on the top of the water, making the soap and water look like sour buttermilk. I have found out what hard water is at last. I did not get it clean. Tomorrow I will get some water from the river and try it over again. It has been a nice, warm, clear day. I have put up a table to day. Mail brought me a *Sentinel*.

Saturday 4: The regiment all went to work in the canal to day. Being color guard I did not have to go and I went washing again and washed my shirt clean. Then I played chess awhile. Woodard beat me twice to day and I beat him last night. Lieut Williams hurt his back when we unloaded the boat. He is quite crippled by it. After reading awhile I went and had a look at the canal. It is now two and a half feet deep and needs to be dug two feet more. We signed the pay roll to day.

Sunday 5: Sunday morning and of course inspection at nine by Col Mower our Brigade commander. I drew five days rations, getting some potatoes, onions and fish, which were issued by the sanitary commission. We have been transferred to the fifteenth army corps, which is commanded by Gen Sherman. Ours is the third division and is commanded by Gen Tuttle who

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has relieved Gen Smith. A great pump, pumps the water out of the canal as they dig. It makes the water fly. I have written to William.

Sanitary commission: The United States Sanitary Commission was the largest and by all standards the most effective of the volunteer organizations supporting Union troops in the field. Founded by Dr. Henry W. Bellows in 1861, the Sanitary Commission worked to augment the diet of the soldiers, improve sanitation, care for the wounded, contact relatives of casualties, and to otherwise aid the armies. Generals were at first skeptical, but the Sanitary Commission soon proved indispensable to an army attempting to manage an unprecedented increase in strength. Soldiers, though grateful, were occasionally resentful of the well-fed young men who avoided army service by obtaining jobs with the commission. Ambrose often refers to the Sanitary Commission as the "sanitary department" or the "sanitary."

Brig. Gen. James M. Tuttle was a handsome, thirty-nine-year-old, Iowa merchant and politician. He had made a good combat record at Fort Donelson and Shiloh, though his advancement to divisional command seems at best premature, especially when professionals like Mower still served in brigade command.

Monday 6: Our regiment is at work on the canal to day. During the forenoon I went and watched them awhile and worked enough to swear by. I never saw a busier looking set of men, for a quarter of a mile it was alive with men, there being a brigade in that distance. Our brigade works one day and then the first brigade a day etc. I went the whole length of the canal this morning. It is a long distance from the canal to the river. About half of it is under water.

Tuesday 7: It has seemed like Sunday all day. After dinner we drew four months pay most of it being in one dollar bills. Col Mower has got commissioned as brigadier general. I feel dull and it is rather cool. It is election day and we voted. Our company voted unanimously for Dixon as chief justice of the supreme court of Wisconsin. In the regiment Dixon got three hundred and fifty-six votes. Cathrin got twenty one. Bully.

Col. Mower was appointed brigadier general on March 16, 1863, with the effective date of November 29, 1862. The backdating of appointments was a frequent and often controversial practice.

Luther S. Dixon (1825–1891) had been appointed to the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 1859 by Governor Alexander Randall to fill out the term of the recently deceased chief justice. Only 33, Dixon became the youngest chief justice in the history of the court. In Jan. 1863 he sided with the other two members of the court in the famous *In re Kemp* decision declaring Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus an unconstitutional act. The decision caused an uproar in the Lincoln administration. Attorney General Edward Bates advised against an appeal to the United States Supreme Court, and Republicans in Congress arranged a bill of dubious constitutionality granting the president the right to suspend the writ. With the spring election of 1863 approaching in Wisconsin, Dixon declared himself an independent candidate to avoid association with the copperhead elements within the Democratic Party. His action helped to split the already divided party. War Democrats supported Dixon while the copperheads nominated Montgomery M. Cothren to oppose him. The Republicans, although unwilling to endorse Dixon after the *Kemp* decision, knew they would lose in a three-way race. They resolved the dilemma by passing a resolution declaring confidence in Dixon's integrity. Meanwhile, the Republican legislature passed an amended law so that soldiers in the field could vote in judicial elections. The Democrats challenged the law in the Supreme Court, but Dixon and his colleagues held in favor of its constitutionality. This proved the critical factor in the election. Cothren carried the home vote 56,840 to 51,948, but Dixon carried the soldier vote 9,440 to 1,747, more than making up the difference. In a year when any election was considered a referendum on the war and the Lincoln administration, Dixon's reelection was a significant blow to the Democrats. Dixon served as chief justice until 1874, when he resigned to practice law.

Charleston, South Carolina: A powerful fleet under Rear Admiral Samuel Du Pont bombards the city. But the Confederate forts hold out, inflicting extensive damage on the Union ironclads and sinking the *Keokuk*.

Wednesday 8: Though I was sick this morning I went and cut a load of wood and got it drawn up. This morning I bought a gold pen and silver

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pencil case for two dollars and a half. I have been abed nearly all afternoon. I always sleep a great deal when I am sick. Our regiment is in the canal again to day. No mail since we came here.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Moving toward New Carthage to open a way for Grant's march south, McClelland's forces fight a heavy skirmish at James' Plantation.

Thursday 9: I've been pretty sick all day for me and have not eaten anything. It has been a warm day. I have kept pretty quiet all day. Both yesterday and to day there has been a great deal of cannonading towards Vicksburg. A portion of Farragut's fleet of gunboats is now below Vicksburg. They having run past the batteries of Port Hudson. Some flat boats are being made to run past the batteries of Vicksburg. Details from the several regiments have been working at them all day.

Farragut's gunboats: were actually the seagoing *Hartford* and *Albatross*. The ram *Switzerland* had joined them from Porter's squadron above Vicksburg.

Friday 10: This morning we had a muster to find out how many men we had that the authorities might know how many conscripts are needed to fill up the regiment to the maximum. Sykes and I put forty dollars by Lieut Willoughby to express he is going to Memphis. We sent twenty dollars each and to William at Woodland. After dinner I drew five days rations. I am much better to night. After tattoo Tommy came. He had just come from Memphis and is staying all night. He is well. No mail.

Tennessee: Hard-bitten Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger defeats Van Dorn in a small battle near Franklin.

Saturday 11: One more month gone. There was a small mail this morning, bringing us a paper. I've had plenty of papers to read and I have read them. It has been warm and a restless day for me. It is thundering and lightening to night. I have played chess some to day. We heard to day that Calvin W. Burt of our company died at Cairo when on the way to the regiment. He was taken when we retreated from Iuka, being too sick to keep up. He has been exchanged and has been sick at St. Louis. He was one of the largest

men in the company, being second only to James Richards. Rumors are that Charleston is taken.

Charleston is taken: The city was frequently bombarded but not taken until 1865.

Port Hudson campaign: Believing his force insufficient to take Port Hudson by storm, General Banks moves up Bayou Teche. His plan involves cutting Port Hudson's supply line along the Red River and then returning to the Mississippi to cooperate with Grant in taking Port Hudson and Vicksburg. Since his major general's commission pre-dates Grant's, Banks will be the senior officer present should the armies unite.

Sunday 12: It did rain some last night and with a vengeance too. To day has been as calm and quiet as Sunday. We had inspection as usual, only much earlier. I was busy packing my knapsack when the color sergeant came and wanted me immediately. I threw my traps on as soon [as I could] and went. Lieut Col Jefferson inspected us. To day has been a hard one for one. This having nothing to do is the hardest thing for one to do. I have written to Wm Dorward. I have drawn one days rations this evening. A cool day.

Monday 13: It rained last night and this morning the ground was covered with mud and water. It rained till noon. Our regiment went out to work on the canal and came back at ten having finished. Sykes said they were cutting the levee to let the water into the canal. So I went up there and watched the proceedings till noon in the rain, then went to dinner. After dinner I went back again. They had got one of the dredging machines at work which threw out about two loads a minute. The machine is a scoop with a bottom that sets itself. We, for the bank was crowded full, watched it work till about four o'clock, when as it dug out the last load the water rushed through. At first only a small stream through the center of the canal but soon it was large enough and the water came hissing and boiling through. I watched till the canal was full and as high as the river, when I came to camp and got supper. After dark it began to rain and is a wet night. I have drawn a hat, two pairs of socks and a musquito bar. All the company are drawing bars as it is by orders of the sanitary department that they are issued. By the activity among the boats I think there will be stirring times here soon.

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Musquito bar: A piece of mosquito netting on a rigid rectangular frame, large enough to cover a reclining man.

Tuesday 14: It rained all last night and the appearance of our camp this morning put me in mind of the deluge. The mud and water of yesterday are not to be compared. Being tired of camp, I went out with several of the boys for a load of wood. We went to an old cotton gin and after pulling it down cut our load from the pile. When I got back there were four letters for me which I read with a great deal of satisfaction. I answered one from Robert. It is said that no more mail will be allowed to go north till the twentieth of this month. Thomas is not very well to day. The sun had dried up camp considerably. The Eighth Iowa which was captured at Shiloh, came here a few days ago. They are camped near us and now form a part of our division. I fixed up our bunk so I think I can sleep to night. It was too short and the boards were too limber, now it is strong enough and I can stretch myself without getting off the bunk.

Deluge: the Biblical Deluge recounted in Exodus.

Port Hudson campaign: Fighting their way up Bayou Teche, Banks's troops force Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor, son of the late president, to abandon Fort Bisland. The *Queen of the West's* varied career ends as the gunboat burns.

Wednesday 15: It has been a warm day and the mud and water have decreased considerably. The pioneer corps got paid to day. Tommy is some better. A man from the pioneer corps is going to Millikins bend and will express money for the boys. Sykes and I sent twenty dollars in the same package Tommy sends his in. I played several games of chess and have been reading one of Ned Buntlines novels named *Thayendanega* which I call a very poor Indian story. The regiment went on duty strengthening the levee on this side of the canal. During the afternoon I have stuck close to my German and can report progress. I have written to William.

Ned Buntline: pen name of Edward Z. C. Judson (1823–86). Author of an astonishing 400 dime novels, Judson/Buntline once wrote a 600-page novel in 62 hours. A romantic scoundrel, he was a duelist, organizer of the Know-Nothings, friend of Buffalo Bill Cody and Wyatt Earp, playwright,

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editor, temperance lecturer of doubtful sincerity (he was dismissed from the Civil War army for drunkenness), and a writer of hymns. He was once lynched for murder but cut down before he strangled. (Any number of literary critics would no doubt have protested this act of mercy.)

Thayendanega: The Indian name of the Mohawk hero Joseph Brant (1742–1807), who fought with the British in the French and Indian War and again in the Revolution. Unable to make a fair settlement with the national government after the war, he took his people to Canada.

Thursday 16: I awoke late this morning, not till breakfast was over, then I drew five days rations once more. Tommy is well again and our money was sent off all right. I have studied two pages of German and have written to father. The pioneer corps moved onto a flatboat to day, they are going down the canal on it.

Canal: The completion of the supply canal was another step in Grant's plan to move the army down the western side of the river. Next Porter needed to get his squadron past the Confederate shore batteries.

Friday 17: Last night near midnight a terrible cannonading began towards Vicksburg and for over an hour an incessant cannonading was kept up. It was thung, thung, thung, all the time. During this midnight work two great lights were visible. This morning we learned that six of our ironclad gunboats and three transports—viz, *Forest Queen*, *Henry Clay* and *Silver Wave*, attempted to run past the batteries at Vicksburg. They all got through without serious injury except the *Henry Clay* which was burned. The first light was a house set on fire by the rebels so they could see our boats by means of a great reflector they have which threw a streak of light across the river as bright as day. It was a complete success, as our boats passed much better than the most sanguine [hoped]. One man was killed, [missing phrase] all of which were on the flagship *Benton*. All day long a two gun battery which our men have slily planted behind the levee opposite Vicksburg has been throwing red hot shot into Vicksburg. That will be a bad battery for the rebels. It has been a warm and pleasant day. Lieut Williams got a team and we took our extra rations to the commissary boat, but the commissary was absent and we did not sell them. We had a good swim to night.

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Third Vicksburg campaign: The running of the city's batteries by Porter's gunboats will prove the turning point in the campaign. The next morning, Col. Benjamin Grierson starts south with 1,700 cavalrymen on a raid that will cross 600 miles of Mississippi in sixteen days and make the horse-hating former music teacher one of the war's heroes. The raid is intended to distract Confederate attention while Grant makes his dangerous crossing of the river below Vicksburg. On the western shore, the roads are deep in mud, the army's progress slow. New Carthage is inadequate as an embarkation point, and McClernand's corps pushes another twenty-two miles south to Hard Times.

Arkansas: General John Marmaduke leads his Confederate cavalry out on a raid against isolated Union posts.

Saturday 18: Company drill yesterday and to day. I have had several tough games of chess with Badgero, he plays much better than he used to. He beat me nicely once. Warm and sultry. I have not looked at my German to day having been busy at something else. Lieut Williams is getting well again. His lame back has kept him down for some time. There has not been much cannonading. I bought a quire of large sized letter paper for scribbling. I have written to Robert. We got a *Sentinel*. The miserable gnats bother me so that I guess I will quit.

Quire: one twentieth of a ream (24 or 25 sheets).

Sunday 19: Last night was a wet stormy one and the rain was accompanied with a great deal of thunder and lightening. But the question is what shall I write down as the adventures or non-adventures of this day. Listen. I arose late which resulted with the following misfortune; when Sykes came home from roll call he sat down on my toe and hurt it awfully. Then I got up then, got my blacking brush and cleaned my shoes which was quite a job. Then I took breakfast per contra the fable of the cat. Then I packed my knapsack and brushed up for inspection which came off at nine thirty. Then I read my Bible and wrote to Phebe till noon. Now comes the hardest part of the days toil. This afternoon I have tried to do nothing and have made poorly out. I have read the *Ledger* and all the other papers I could get hold of. I have sung some, walked around some and, well the fact is I was not brought up to do nothing, and no wonder I have done it so poorly. There has been a funeral to day, one yesterday and two the day before.

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Per contra the fable of the cat: There are a number of fables in Aesop, the Brothers Grimm, and elsewhere featuring cats. In several the cat is deprived of his meal through his own dishonesty or the trickery of others. *Per contra* translates literally from the Latin as *through against*. However, if we use a looser translation: *contrary to*, then we can guess that Ambrose is saying that unlike the cat in the fable he had a good breakfast.

Monday 20: Last night was cold. Company drill. We fall in for drill at a bugle call and cannot be dismissed till another call is sounded. The first boat went down the canal about noon to day. During the afternoon several flat boats have gone down, on one of which was the pioneer corps. At four pm we fell in and heard what adjutant general [Lorenzo] Thomas had to say on the "nigger question." He has come by the Authority of the administration and is going to raise several regiments of negro troops, which he is going to officer from our division. He wants the commissioned officers and first sergeants. Woodard has applied for a captaincy and I for a Lieutenancy. We will probably be examined within a few days. I do not know as I will pass, but am bound to try it, "nothing ventured, nothing won." Gen. Thomas is an old, white haired man, yet looks as sincere and earnest as a little child. He is a adjutant general of the United States.

Brig. Gen. Lorenzo Thomas was an aging staff officer who had served General Winfield Scott and the army with great loyalty. Secretary of War Stanton shunted him aside, sending him off on minor assignments. At the time Ambrose heard him speak, Thomas was organizing Negro regiments.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant issues orders for McPherson and Sherman to follow McClernand. The order of march puts Mower's Eagle Brigade toward the rear.

Port Hudson campaign: Banks's army captures Opelousas.

Tuesday 21: After washing this morning, I drew five days rations. Orders came this forenoon from division headquarters that Col Robbins must recommend nine men for officers in negro regiments; viz, one major, two captains, two lieutenants and four orderly sergeants. This of course was only one to a company. Woodard was recommended for a captain, Lieut Williams tried hard to persuade him not to and Col Robbins promised him all he could do, but Woodard would not give it up. Lieut Williams wanted

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to get J E Hawley recommended, though he is not very bright. They want to keep all the good men and send out poor ones if any. I did not expect any promotion, but thought Lieut Williams would recommend me before Mr Hawley. A man in the army without money and friends cannot get any position. I did not care much and did it more for the fun of the thing. But look at the thing. A good smart man applies for a good position and cannot get it because the company commander wants to keep the good men in the company and as he has the power he uses it and sends off some necompoop in his place. It has rained some during the afternoon. I got a *Post*. The men all hate to lose Woodard, as he has made the company what it is. Capt Dawes is detailed as A. A. G. at Gen Pope's headquarters at Milwaukee. We call this good news. I hope he will stay there till the war is over at least.

Wednesday 22: It rained all night, making our street all mud again. I have spent the day as best I could playing chess, studying German and poking around. We got a *Post*, a *Sentinel* and I got a letter from Alice. It is a good letter and came at a good time as all such letters do. She tells me that Elizabeth Heathcote has got married to a Mr. Wright. I have also written to Tommy on the nigger commission business, as hed had authorised me to apply for him when he went away. This being away made it useless as his presense was imperative, so I did not apply for him and I sent him my reasons for so doing. While Sykes and Mansur were playing chess a few days ago they lost one of the black knights. We searched carefully for it but could not find it. Losing it spoils the set. Report says that some more of our boats are going to try and run the blockade to night.

Thursday 23: During last night there was a great cannonading again and it was not till late to day that I heard the result. Seven transports started to go down and all went down safe except one, the *Tigress*, which was smashed to pieces. Company drill. I have written a long letter to Alice, making it long to use up time. I have also looked at my German and played a few games of chess. I played hard, my opponents laid there getting beat [due] to thier poor playing, but if their heads felt like mine does they would not think so and lay it to accident. A soldier was drowned in the canal to day.

Friday 24: I'm as tired as any farmer I'll bet. As we had no wood I got Lieut Williams nigger and started. We found an oak log after some searching and cut off a length apiece. But we could not split them to save

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our necks. We worked at them a long time in the boiling sun, then left them and hunted another that some one had cut up and left. Leaving the nigger to watch it I went after the team and we got it drawn about noon. During the afternoon we went to sell rations. We took eight boxes and one barrel of hard bread. Five boxes of the hard bread were rejected as they were spoiled. After bringing them back I repacked them, throwing away the old ones. No mail for me. H. H. Hall rejoined the company. He was taken sick and left at Point Pleasant and has been absent ever since. He is quite a stranger. He is very pale and thin. Christy went to the hospital yesterday. A hot day. I found the lost knight in my haversack yesterday.

Tuscumbia, Alabama: Troops under Brig. Gen. Grenville Dodge defeat a small Confederate force.

Missouri: Union forces defeat a rebel probe near St. Louis.

Saturday 25: Hot as fury. Company drill in the bayonet exercise. The river has fallen two feet the last few days and these old marshes smell mighty strong. I wrote to William. I wanted to write, so I wrote about a dream or rather two of them which I dreamed at Clear Creek. This afternoon I drew five days rations. Things begin to look like marching again. Lieut Williams thinks we will go about Monday. No mail. A man in Co "H" was buried to day. His name was Roberts. He has been sick for a long time.

The river has fallen two feet: The fall in the Mississippi rendered the supply canal useless, making it necessary for Porter to send supply boats and transports past the Vicksburg batteries.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Union troops skirmish with rebels near Hard Times Landing.

Sunday 26: Inspection at eight, being early it made us hurry. This afternoon I went to the river and saw a flat boat that is being rigged to run the blockade, with a load of hay. A tug is hitched on the side which will not be exposed to the rebel batteries, and cotton bales are placed around to protect it more. The tug made it go when it did start. That flat boat was simply a great floating cube of hay. This evening we got orders to march tomorrow, leaving everything but a blanket or overcoat. And we are to

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calculate that we were going on a ten days trip and would be without tents a month. So I guess that Vicksburg will soon be taken.

Missouri: Desperately trying to draw off troops from Grant's impending attack on Vicksburg, Marmaduke attacks the Federal garrison at Cape Girardeau only to be repulsed with heavy losses.

Monday 27: Last night I thought we would march this morning early, but it is night and we are still here. The order for our division to march was countermanded. We are going to move our camp about a mile up the river and form it in a line of battle. It has been raining nearly all day. The rebels fired fifty two rounds at the barge last night, but it went through safe. Their banging away does not amount to much during the night. I got a letter from Robert besides the *Post* and a *Sentinel*. I've been reading, studying German, playing chess etc etc etc. I'm not very well this evening.

Chancellorsville campaign: After weeks of preparation and skirmishing, the Army of the Potomac moves out of its camps in peak fighting condition. General Hooker has some 134,000 men available, Lee only 60,000 undernourished, ill-clad soldiers. While Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick with 30,000 men holds Lee's attention at Fredericksburg, Hooker will march the main force upstream twenty-five miles, crossing the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford, and then pushing southeast to get between the Army of Northern Virginia and Richmond.

Tuesday 28: The day is past and gone and darkness now appears. I have been unwell to day and have not done much besides play a few games of chess with Badgero. Twice I got badly whipped. The last game I had him beaten at every point, then in four moves I gave away my castle, knight and queen without getting a single thing. I then scattered the men. I looked at my German a little. It is now getting pretty tough and hard. We are expecting to move all the time, but are here yet. Officers are laying out our camp ground. It has been dry and warm, drying up some of the rain. I have written to Robert.

Wednesday 29: Things went pretty smooth till noon when we got orders to strike tents. We soon packed up and in a few minutes our camp looked very different. We marched to our new camp which is in a cornfield, but the ridges were all nicely levelled off, streets made and trenched. As soon

as our tents came and we were going to put ours up, Woodard came along and said he was ordered to take possession of our tent and that he and Davison were going into it. They and they only. This unceremoniously turned us out of doors. Some of the boys were building little houses rather than live with five in a tent. But as I did not believe in that thing, Sykes and I took quarters with Becker, Hawley and Barrington where Davison left. There were five of us together, thick I admit, but if Uncle Sam is not able to furnish me with a house I want him to send me home. I do not propose to build a house at every camp, as that is the way one has to do when he once begins it. Sykes hated to go inside and said he would not but when I was determined to he came to. My grit was up. I was turned out without any ceremony or anything else. My scruples were played out and I did not care whether the inmates liked it or not. It was better to live five in a tent than for us to lay outside. Four of us lay on the sides and one (Hawley) in the middle on a moveable bunk which will be taken out in the daytime. When we are all laid down it is just full. We carried our bunks from the old camp.

Third Vicksburg campaign: It is a momentous day downriver from Vicksburg. Ten thousand men of McClelland's corps board transports to cross the river to Grand Gulf on the eastern shore. Porter's eight gunboats move ahead, unleashing the fire of nearly one hundred big naval guns on the Confederate fortifications. Despite a bombardment of five hours, the gunboats are unable to silence the Confederate guns. The transports return to Hard Times. Meanwhile, Sherman sends ten regiments against Haynes (Haines) Bluff on the Yazoo upstream from Chickasaw Bluffs and the river's confluence with the Mississippi. The demonstration succeeds in confusing the Confederates about the location of Grant's main effort.

Chancellorsville campaign: Sedgwick's troops pour across pontoon bridges to threaten the Confederate positions on the heights behind Fredericksburg. At Kelly's Ford, Maj. Gen. George Stoneman's 10,000-man cavalry corps crosses the Rappahannock, cutting loose from the main army to attack Lee's supply lines. The infantry follows the cavalry across the river, racing south for the fords across the Rapidan and Lee's flank. Informed of the Federal movement by Stuart's cavalry, Lee coolly detaches Major Richard Anderson's division to meet Hooker's advance at the crossroads of Chancellorsville near the edge of the Wilderness, a rugged area of thick second-growth forest and scrub.

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Thursday 30: We mustered for pay at six this morning. As we were rather too thick to suit one of the men in our tent (Barrington), he left the tent and made him a house, leaving only four of us. As soon as breakfast was over I pitched in with what help I could get and got some brick and made a good brick oven getting it done about noon. Since dark I have drawn five days rations getting some potatoes. All forenoon we heard heavy guns towards Haynes Bluff. Reports are current that our forces have taken the batteries there. Quite hot to day. We got our brick to make our oven at what has been a splendid plantation house. All around the ruins are shrubs and trees, besides stumps of many that have been cut down. Many of the prettiest trees are girdled. The great number of lonely chimneys standing around tell what a number of negros he had. Now all is ruin and destruction. These buildings were all burned down because they have been used as a small pox hospital by the rebels. There is a very large plantation here and everything denotes the owner as a man of great wealth. Now it is a grand camp and destruction stalketh at midday as well as midnight.

Many of the prettiest trees are girdled: Cutting a band of bark from around a tree will kill it. It seems curious that soldiers would girdle a tree and leave it if they needed firewood immediately. Perhaps it was an act of revenge by soldiers or the plantation's former slaves. Possibly the trees had been girdled to reduce the shade and improve the campsite.

Destruction stalketh at midday as well as midnight. Ambrose is probably paraphrasing Psalm 91:6:

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

Third Vicksburg campaign: An elderly black man brought in by one of Grant's patrols tells the general of a good landing at Bruinsburg, a few miles downstream from Grand Gulf. McClelland's troops wedge themselves aboard the transports and, under the cover of the gunboats, land unopposed. Though now deep in enemy territory, Grant's army is at last on dry ground on the east side of the river.

Chancellorsville campaign: Stoneman's cavalry cuts the Virginia Central Railroad, creating great consternation in Richmond. Hooker's infantry is

across the Rapidan and advancing through the Wilderness. Concluding that the main threat is to the west, Lee leaves a single division to watch Sedgwick at Fredericksburg and hurries the rest of his army to support Anderson's division near Chancellorsville.

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Friday 1: "The merry month of May has come and sweetly smiles the summer sun." I slept late this morning, then rigged a little around our tent, issued sugar, then carried water to make lemonade with for our boys that were at work levelling our camp. Lieut Williams furnishing the material. After dinner I and two others went and cut some brush for a shade for the cooks. We went to the plantation and cut down a splendid willow tree and were busy trimming the branches off, when Col Buckner the commander of the first Brigade ordered us away, as his brigade having moved near there he claimed them and wanted them for his men. We left them of course but with rather ill grace. We then cut some trees standing in the water, got the brush and carried it to camp and have our shade done. Dress parade at half an hour before sundown. The color sergeant wanted to know why I had not blacked my shoes. I made some excuse wondering what had put that into his head. I have always been particular about it, being tired I thought I would let it slide. Maybe he wants to keep me right hereafter. All kinds of reports are current as to our success at Haynes Bluff. We are under marching orders at eight tomorrow morning and with three days rations. I got an old letter from Joseph dated March twenty fifth. Woodard beat me two games of chess to day.

The merry month of May has been a formula in English folk songs from at least the time of Shakespeare. *And sweetly smiles the summer sun*: I have been unable to locate the exact reference. There are numerous similar phrases in Romantic poetry.

Third Vicksburg campaign: More Federal troops cross the river. McClernand's corps moves on the Confederate outpost at Port Gibson. Brig. Gen. John S. Bowen opposes the Federal advance but is beaten back by overwhelming numbers. McClernand suffers 875 casualties, Bowen 1,650.

Grant's orders from Halleck are to join Banks in a reduction of Port Hudson before moving on Vicksburg. But this day he learns that Banks has committed his army to an advance up Bayou Teche to the Red River, a

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campaign that will take at least another ten days and will bring only 15,000 troops down the Red River to cooperate with Grant's army against Port Hudson. Grant now makes a decision that, in the words of one commentator, "elevated him to the ranks of the great captains." Against orders and knowing that even his loyal subordinate Sherman will disapprove, Grant decides to cut free of the river and his already tenuous supply line down the west bank. He will drive inland, living off the land, to the state capital at Jackson, where he knows an army is gathering to reinforce Vicksburg. Once he has defeated that army, he will circle back to the river to assault Vicksburg from the landward side.

Battle of Chancellorsville: Advancing into open country beyond Chancellorsville, Hooker's lead elements encounter light resistance. By afternoon, the army holds a series of excellent positions. Then, in a move that flabbergasts his corps commanders, Hooker orders the army to fall back into the Wilderness. That night Lee and Stonewall Jackson consult. They are outnumbered 70,000 to 40,000 but Stuart reports that Hooker's right flank is "in the air." Lee, who has already divided his army once in defiance of the textbooks, divides his army again, ordering Jackson to march by a circuitous route around the Federal flank. Hooker is about to pay for sending away his cavalry.

Saturday 2: We were ready early this morning, packing up our traps and putting our knapsacks in Lieut Williams tent. Rations had to be got rid of and distributed. I am going to take my rubber and a blanket. We have to take sixty rounds of ammunition and two days rations. We marched on the levee and then lay there two hours, during which time we got a lot of mail. I got news that William got our first forty dollars all safe. Most of the folks at home are sick. At last we started down the east side of our canal. We passed dredgeboats and flatboats stuck. After marching two miles we came to the bayou, along the banks of which our days march has been. We passed several plantations, camping at dark on the bank of the bayou, where there is an old camp. We only came seven miles, but I am very footsore.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant's army pushes inland to Bayou Pierre. Grierson's exhausted troopers ride into Baton Rouge after their spectacular 600-mile raid through Mississippi.

Battle of Chancellorsville: In what may be the most brilliant tactical move of the war, Stonewall Jackson leads his corps into position to strike the Federal right flank. Coming late in the day, the attack crushes Hooker's right. Only darkness and skillfully handled Federal artillery stem the disaster. Scouting out in front of his lines, Jackson is mortally wounded by some of his own pickets. Maj. Gen. A. P. Hill takes command but is seriously wounded soon after. Command devolves on Jeb Stuart.

Sunday 3: It has been much hotter than yesterday. We have marched along the bayou all day. There is a tillable strip of land along the sides of the bayou from sixty to a hundred and twenty five rods wide. Beyond this are impenetrable cornbrakes. We passed corn to day sixteen inches high. We passed two dead alligators to day. They were small, one being about six, the other seven feet long. They are homely looking monsters. We camped this evening at a small village named Richmond, about fifteen miles. My feet are sore and I am tired. Richmond is the county seat of Madison Parish. I have bathed my feet and I have torn out my pockets to wrap around them. I have had to run around after some beef. I am as whipped as ever I was on a march.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Outflanked by Grant's advance, Confederate troops abandon Grand Gulf. Porter's gunboats now have a good base below Vicksburg.

Battle of Chancellorsville: Lee's army pounds the Federal lines, making some progress, but is unable to repeat the spectacular success of the day before. Sedgwick attacks the thin Confederate lines at Fredericksburg. Wheeling to face this new threat, Lee stops the Federal advance at Salem Church.

Monday 4: I had to tear the handkerchief mother sent me in two to wrap around my feet. This with the pockets has helped them a great deal. It has been hot but I came through pretty well. We passed forty five rebel prisoners who were taken at Grand Gulf last Friday. At one place where we stopped to rest there were a clump of fig trees. I saw Tommy this evening. The Pioneers are going down the bayou on their flat boat. I saw Albert Warren, a Fox Lake acquaintance of mine. We did not stop till after dark and then in a miserable rough place. I was so tired that I preferred

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going to bed without making any supper. But faithful old Sykes made some coffee, which was very acceptable.

Third Vicksburg campaign: McClelland's corps pushes east toward the Big Black River, McPherson's corps close behind. The plan is to feint toward Vicksburg, confusing Pemberton, while Grant gets Sherman's corps and as much salt, ammunition, coffee, and hard bread as he can across the river. Meanwhile, the army's foragers range far and wide with orders to commandeer all the food, wheeled vehicles, and teams they can find. The mills at every plantation in the army's path are put to work grinding corn into meal.

Chancellorsville campaign ends: General Sedgwick retreats across the Rappahannock. Hooker's corps commanders beg him to resume the offensive, but Hooker orders the rest of the army to re-cross the river. Lee has won his greatest victory. Casualties: Union 1,606 killed, 9,762 wounded, and 5,919 missing; Confederate 1,665 killed, 9,081 wounded, and 2,018 missing.

Tuesday 5: It began to rain during the night, making us dress up. I wrapped my blanket around my shoulders and put my rubber over it. Then got my traps together, putting my canteen on the ground and my other things on it, finally sitting down on the top of the pile. Sykes went off to an old house. As soon as it stopped raining I spread out my rubber and laid down again and slept till I only had time to fill my canteen when we had to fall in and start. At five we arrived at Parkers Landing, which is on the river sixty miles below Vicksburg. While running around after some rations that had been stolen I lost my pocket book. It had between three and four dollars of my money and eighty five cents belonging to the company. Besides some receipts that I got from Adams express company for about seventy dollars. The money is at home. I came through well to day. We have now marched forty miles from Duckport.

Dayton, Ohio: Copperhead leader Clement Vallandigham is arraigned on charges of treason by General Ambrose Burnside, the department commander.

Wednesday 6: I was up early and drew and divided two days rations. Lieut Williams bought a barrel of hard bread and left it with the commissary to

load on the waggons if there was any room after his stuff was loaded. As the regiment passed it Co "F" took the barrel, loaded it, and marked it with the letter of their company. When Lieut Williams heard of it we had marched a quarter of a mile, but he sent me back to see about it. The commissary looked for the barrel after the regiment had left, but could not find it. I told him how it was and he said we should get it. As soon as we stopped for the night, I went and got the barrel, but as we did not need it, I was waiting for a chance to reload it when Cap Green of Co "F" claimed it. I began to explain the matter to him, but he motioned me away with his hand saying, "Corporal! I want no words with you. The hard bread is mine and I mean to have it, If you have anything to say get your lieutenant, I will talk with him." This was putting on a heap of style, but as I could not do anything else, I went and got Lieut Williams. While I was after Lieut Williams, Capt Green sent the barrel to his company. Lieut Williams plainly stated the case to Capt Green, but the captain had made up his mind and would hold them against a whole brigade. It was his and he would like to see Lieut Williams help himself. We then went to the barrel, around which a squad of men had gathered, and were arguing "pro and con." While we were talking Capt Green came and Lieut Williams called up men that identified the barrel. One man in Co "F," Capt Greens company said it was not theirs as they did not have a full barrel. When Capt Green refused to give it up with such evidence, Lieut Williams told him he might have it if he wanted it after such proof, saying it was worth a barrel of hard bread to find out a man. We then left. After this several of Capt Greens men came and told him that it was not theirs. Capt Green then called Lieut Williams and gave up the barrel saying there would have been no trouble if that corporal (me) had not been so saucy. Sykes tells me the boys in the company have been blowing about it all day not saying much to my credit. Now it is straightened no one says a word to modify what they said before. Envy sees no good in its object. There are some splendid plantations here and everything in good shape. Nearly every plantation having a steam engine to run its gin and other cotton machinery. Gen Steeles division which has marched ahead of us to day has burned a great many buildings. We have marched twelve miles.

Dayton, Ohio: Vallandigham is sentenced to close confinement for the rest of the war.

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Louisiana to Mississippi

Thursday 7: We started again in good season. After marching six miles, we stopped in a cornfield. Men were sent out to get beef. But we soon had to fall in and we marched a little farther and stacked arms in the road. Some of the men went out and got some beef and we had a great and good time roasting it. About two pm we fell in and marched to the bank of the Mississippi River and were ferried across on the Gunboat *Louisville* landing at Grand Gulf. Which is now only a desolate bluff as Flag Officer Farragut had destroyed it. Our gunboats fought four hours and a half at this place and did not silence the forts. Some of our transports ran past in the smoke and landed below them. Their appearance made the rebels abandon in a great hurry. Port Gibson, three miles below, was afterwards taken after a severe fight. The twenty ninth Wisconsin was engaged and suffered severely. Samuel Dorward was wounded in the leg.

Farragut: It is likely that Ambrose meant Porter's bombardment on June 29, not Farragut's of some months before.

Port Hudson campaign: General Banks arrives at the Red River port of Alexandria, only to find several of Porter's gunboats there before him. From Porter he learns that Grant is across the Mississippi and moving inland on Jackson.

Friday 8: Up early and drew and divided three days rations. After breakfast I went to see the rebel works at this place. They consist of a few strong batteries. If the rebels had had a little more time, they could have made Port Gibson a very strong place. It is just at the mouth of the Black River in Mississippi. Sykes had his rubber overcoat and blanket stolen last night. Tommy gave him another blanket which he would not carry. Mail brought a *Post*. At ten we fell in and marched through a very rough country, about nine miles, camping at sundown in some woods. This country is very thinly settled and not much is going on. We had a good supper and expect a good breakfast.

Spring Hill, Louisiana: General Earl Van Dorn is shot to death by a Doctor Peters, who claims that Van Dorn has "violated the sanctity of my home."

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Saturday 9: We got an early breakfast as is always best on a march, but as matters did not looking like marching we made ourselves comfortable. Badgero and I played chequers awhile. As it looked like staying all day I washed my socks and drew some beef. Then the bugle blew and we had to fall in and march away leaving our beef. We marched eight miles through a rough country, though not as rough as it was yesterday. Sykes and some others were out after something to eat and did not come in till we came to camp. We passed through a little village where the people came out and cheered us, waving their handkerchiefs and the ladies smiled on us. We camped at dark on a little stream.

Sunday 10: We have been in camp all day. I made a shed with our blankets and am pretty well rested. I've read all I could. I had a testament, the *N. Y. Ledger*, *Moore's Rural New Yorker* and a *Post*. So far on this march our course has been north east. I had a good wash to day. This morning I drew a lot more beef, which will probably be the last for some time. It begins to look as if rations would be scarce pretty soon. About a dozen prisoners passed to day.

New York Evening Ledger, a newspaper published beginning c.1846.

Moore's Rural New Yorker: An alternative title for the *American Agriculturist* published Ithaca, New York, and read widely by those interested in advances in farming.

Port Hudson campaign: At Alexandria, General Banks has received a request from Grant to assist in taking Vicksburg. Banks, however, has learned that the Port Hudson garrison has been reduced by more than half to 7,000, the rest of the troops ordered north to defend Vicksburg. Banks decides to descend the Red River to attack Port Hudson, a decision that at least averts an awkward wrangle over seniority.

Chancellorsville campaign: In a sad postscript to the Confederate triumph, Stonewall Jackson dies of pneumonia brought on by his wound.

Monday 11: We started early and have marched all day. It has been very dusty. We passed Hovey's Division to day in which is the Twenty Ninth Wisconsin. I saw Dorward and several others of my acquaintance. The days march has been a long one. We camped among some negro houses in

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some nice grass, we did not camp till after dark. I hunted water and got supper. Though very tired and sleepy I had to stay up till midnight to draw two days rations.

Brig. Gen. Alvin P. Hovey: An ambitious and capable officer. From modest beginnings, he had become a prominent lawyer, politician, and jurist while yet in his early thirties. A former Mexican War officer, he had fought well at Shiloh, and was considered among the most reliable of the army's political generals.

Tuesday 12: Up early and distributed my rations and after breakfast I drew some beef. Hovey's division passed west, giving me a chance to see the boys again. I also saw Elisha Cole, who is well and in good spirits. At nine we heard some cannonading and at ten we fell in and started in our north east course. After marching two miles we stacked arms and stopped till night, while a bridge was being repaired that the rebels had burned, where there was a skirmish this morning we losing seven men. At night we marched two miles over the bridge and camped in line of battle. I got some nice straw for a bed and Sykes got some fresh beef.

Third Vicksburg campaign: With as many supplies and men as he can get over the river quickly, Grant severs his supply line and pushes inland with 44,000 men. Leading McPherson's corps, Maj. Gen. John Logan's division fights a sharp skirmish at Raymond, fifteen miles from Jackson. Union casualties are 499, Confederate 820.

Wednesday 13: We had to jump up in a hurry this morning, get our things on as quick as we could. Orders last night was to have reville at three, but there was some mistake about it. Result, our brigade had to start minus breakfast. We marched at a quick pace seven miles, halted and stacked arms at a place named Raymond. There was quite an engagement near here yesterday. Our loss being three hundred, the rebels five hundred. Our men ran into an ambush. This accounts for the firing I heard. We got all the sugar we wanted and one of our men got two hams, which furnished us all with a slice. We laid here some time and were busy watching some prisoners bury a Rebel colonel who was killed yesterday, belonging to the Tenth Tennessee, when the bugles blew and on we started. Very hot. We are now in a good farming country. At Raymond, I threw away my blanket, it being too heavy to carry. After going four miles from Raymond

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skirmishers were sent out and we formed a line of battle in the edge of some woods. It rained a little just at dark. I have drawn some bacon.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Sick and still not fully recovered from the wounds received at Fair Oaks, General Joseph E. Johnston arrives at Jackson to take command of the Confederate troops gathering to reinforce Vicksburg. But he finds that Grant has already cut the railroad between the cities. Johnston wires Richmond: "I am too late."

Thursday 14: Reville quite early and after a hurried breakfast we were again on the march. After we had marched a mile it began to rain and has rained nearly all day. But we plodded on through rain and mud, with our oilcloths on we silently and patiently kept plodding on. We were twelve miles from Jackson, the capital of Mississippi when we started this morning. After marching ten miles cannonading began and soon after we were double quicked into line of battle while shells were bursting and whizzing around us. The cannonading soon stopped and "Forward, Guide center" came along the line. Our first line was in thick woods. We soon came into an open field. The whole brigade started across it on the double quick. It was a newly plowed field and the mud soon stopped our double quicking. On the opposite side of the field a rebel general and his staff hurried off as we approached. In the middle of the field there was a deep slough which bothered us to get across. I got wet and very muddy in doing it. The line was then straightened and we pushed across the field and formed another line in the edge of the woods and three fourths of a mile in advance of our last line. Oh how hot I was. We soon moved on by the right flank, advanced a quarter of a mile and formed our third line of battle, this time we were in a dense nursery. I was very hot when we stopped, but we had to keep still in the rain till I was chilled through. Finally orders come to storm the town and with a yell we double quicked into town. The rebels were gone, knowing we were too much for them they left without trying to resist our last charge. We marched to the capital and stacked arms in the state house yard. Our company is provost guard. We got some tents. I'll sleep to night.

The Eagle Regiment: In rhetoric overheated even for the era, the regimental history made considerably more of the attack on Jackson:

"On the 14th of May, 1863, Gen. Grant, with his gallant army, stood before Jackson, Mississippi, McPherson at the head of the right wing, and

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Sherman the left, in which the Eagle was placed. A violent storm poured out its vials of wrath upon friend and foe. Gazing at the heavens, the eyes of the Eagle seemed as lightning; and as the clouds pealed forth their fiery thunders, commingling with the roar of cannon, shell and musketry, he was indeed the embodiment of a sublime fury.

“The boys say, ‘the lightnings played upon his pinions,’ and that when he stretched them forth and dashed the electric drops of rain upon the soldiers, they were inspired with an inexpressible enthusiasm.

“Swift as a mountain avalanche swifter, swiftest, was that ‘Forward!’—the ‘Eagles’ led by the intrepid Col. Robbins—until it became the acceleration of Jupiter’s bolts, hurling with resistless weight against the enemy, bravely defending his entrenchments. A creek was before the Federal forces; unheeding, they plunged into it—the Eagle carried aloft on his standard—and ploughed across, backing the swelling current till it rose to the waist, and, springing up the opposite bank by the aid of the advance party, the last pulling out his next neighbor, they formed again, and, in a wild ‘Eagle yell’ swept over a level tract like a dark, whirling tornado, right on to the guns of the enemy in the woods. Nothing on earth could withstand that charge.

“The rebels fired, fought like brave men well, but, quailing at last, fled amazed. The ‘Eagles’ with their screaming bird were among the first to enter the city. Amid the wild huzzas of the victors, they flew through the streets, just as Gen. Joe Johnston with 8,000 men retreated out in a southerly direction; and, reaching the Capitol, in a moment tore down the rebel flag and hoisted the ‘stars and stripes’ on the same staff.”

Port Hudson campaign: Banks leaves Alexandria, his army ferrying down the Red to invest Port Hudson.

Friday 15: We have laid in Jackson all day. Jayhawking, thieving, plundering and drinking have been going on at a fearful rate all day in spite of the guard. Most of the men are drunk to night. Stores have been broken open and shirts, blankets and almost everything else have been pouring into camp all day. Several buildings have burned. I’ve drawn a little meal, meat, salt, sugar, coffee, beans, flour, but no hard bread. A cold day.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant orders Sherman to destroy the railroad yards and everything of military value in Jackson. Sherman’s men carry

out the task with zest, burning much of the town. Meanwhile, Pemberton is trying to cut Grant's supply lines, still unaware that his opponent is fighting without them.

Saturday 16: Some splendid blocks were burned last night. Gen McPherson who was on our right had quite a fight on another road yesterday. Our brigade was first in town. A great deal of the railroad was destroyed yesterday and all the stores we could not carry away also. We packed up our traps burned tents and at eleven o'clock and started out. Some rebel cavalry entered the town as soon as we left, killing all of our men who were behind, among them Col Cromwell of the Fortyseventh Ill. As we marched out the confederate hotel, the great hotel of the place, was in flames. We marched eight miles to Clinton where we stopped till dark, when we pushed on eight miles more camping at two am on the seventeenth. There has been a battle on another road, between Raymond and Clinton.

Battle of Champion's Hill: McPherson and McClelland's 29,000 men attack Pemberton's 20,000 at Champion's Hill midway between Jackson and Vicksburg. Several hours of heavy fighting result in a Confederate retreat to the Big Black River. Casualties: Union 410 killed, 1,844 wounded, 187 missing; Confederate 381 killed, 1,800 wounded, 1,670 missing. Grant's army captures twenty-seven guns. Meanwhile, Sherman's corps completes its work in Jackson.

Sunday 17: Our troops took the works at Black River Bridge last night. Our forced march was to assist them. They captured a regular pile of artillery and three thousand prisoners. We started early, went two and a half miles wrong, then went back and pushed on, camping at six o'clock on Black river thirty three miles from Jackson. Very hot and dusty, but I came through first rate though I've been very sleepy.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Johnston's rebels reoccupy Jackson, much of which is now in ashes. Pursuing Pemberton from Champion's Hill, Grant's army continues along the Southern Mississippi Railroad to the Big Black. General Bowen tries to delay the Federal crossing, but Grant's forces rout him, taking eighteen guns and 1,700 prisoners. Grant's engineers throw new bridges across the river to replace the ones burned by the rebels.

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Meanwhile, Sherman's corps crosses upstream to envelope Vicksburg from the north.

Monday 18: We are in a rough country again. We lay till five this afternoon where we stopped last night at which time we crossed Black River on a pontoon bridge. The river is narrow and deep. Our company is on picket. I've drawn a smattering of rations. The Eleventh Mo Regt presented Gen Mower with a splendid chestnut horse to day. Eleven pieces of artillery captured yesterday are with us. We are rear guard of Shermans army.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant's army crosses the Big Black. Pemberton draws his army within the nine-mile line of fortifications protecting Vicksburg. Sherman pushes toward the Yazoo to reestablish contact with the navy and to reopen Grant's supply line.

Tuesday 19: Marched at eight and have marched all day through heat and dust and camped at dark in a hollow, half a mile from the rebel works at Vicksburg. Skirmishing has been going on here all day. I got some muddy water after a great deal of trouble. Sykes is not well to day, but he has pulled through. Gen Blairs division stormed the works here this forenoon, but after getting to the works could [not] climb them. His men lay close to the works till dark. Then withdrew. Our loss being heavy.

Maj. Gen. Francis P. Blair, Jr.: Nearly forgotten now, Blair was one of the era's great men. He was the son of Francis Preston Blair, adviser to Andrew Jackson, Lincoln, and other presidents, and the brother of Montgomery Blair, Lincoln's postmaster general. A St. Louis lawyer, editor, and politician, he founded the Free-Soil party in Missouri. An orator of great force, he was elected to Congress in 1856 on the Republican ticket. When war threatened Missouri, he raised companies of Unionist "Wide-Awakes" and "Home Guards." Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon and Blair suppressed secessionist elements in St. Louis, seizing the arsenal and the rebel camp at Camp Jackson. These steps, unauthorized by the Lincoln administration, did much to secure Missouri and Kentucky for the Union. Blair raised seven regiments and entered the army as a brigadier general in August 1862. He was rapidly promoted to major general and command of a division in the Vicksburg campaign. Sherman and Grant praised his leadership and consulted him frequently on political issues.

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Third Vicksburg campaign: Still uneasy about Johnston in his rear, Grant tries to carry the Vicksburg defenses by assault, losing a thousand men against a handful of casualties.

Wednesday 20: Cannonading was heavy all last night and has been all day. Our guns doing most of the firing. We have laid all day where we came last night. I went to the front this morning and had a good view of the rebel works. I have drawn a little more grub to day. Fighting has been going on all day.

Thursday 21: Lain still all day. Drew one days rations. Got orders to night that tomorrow at ten the rebel works are to be stormed.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Union gunboats steam up the Yazoo River. At Yazoo City, the Confederates burn their boat yard, workshops, two steamboats, and a gunboat.

Port Hudson campaign: Banks's army begins landing on the east side of the Mississippi to invest the other Confederate bastion on the river.

Friday 22: I drew and divided one days rations. At ten we marched out with only one days rations and our canteens full and ammunition. We marched half a mile and lay till four when our brigade stormed the works by the right flank. We double quicked under a terrible fire, went to the works but failed to carry them. We then formed a line in a hollow and at dark withdrew. I never had ball flying around me so before. Men were dropping all around and I expected to every minute. Briggs the color bearer sprang behind a tree. The state color bearer down in a road which was worn down about a foot. As I could not go on without the colors, I quickly laid down in the road too. Soon looking up I noticed Briggs had gone on. I moved on about a rod, while the bullets were just whistling. Looking back I saw the other color bearer was gone too. Gen Mower then came along and told us to "get out of this" and go under the ravine, which I did, passing several dead men. In the ravine, I found the color bearers. At dark we marched quietly back to where we were this morning. The charge was a failure. Two men in our company were wounded, J. E. Hawley slightly and Seth C Haskell, mortally. Lieut Chapman Co "F" was killed and Capt Estee Co "H" severely wounded, Sergt Boonbas Co "A" missing, known to be wounded. Our regiment total loss is eighteen. The Eleventh

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Mo. and Fortyseventh Ill. suffered much worse. I'm tired out but am thankful that I am alive and unhurt. Sykes is unhurt too.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant again tries to break through the Vicksburg defenses. At 6:00 A.M. the Federal batteries and gunboats open a furious bombardment. At 10:00 A.M., the infantry goes forward: McClernand's corps on the left, McPherson's in the center, and Sherman's on the right. (Sherman holds Tuttle's division, including Mower's Eagle Brigade, in reserve.) The Confederate fortifications are strong, well-manned, and heavily mounted with artillery, and the Union attack makes little headway. When the bloodied infantry falls back after an hour and a half, Grant is prepared to accept the necessity of a siege. But McClernand requests a second assault. Grant accedes in a decision that he will regret the rest of his life.

At 2:00 P.M. the infantry attacks again. This time Tuttle's Division takes part. Mower leads Second Brigade forward in column along aptly named Graveyard Road. The plan is for the brigade to turn right into a ravine, left face into line of battle, and charge the enemy works. Confederate artillery fire from Stockade Redan and vicinity batters the brigade as it marches down the road. In the lead, the 11th Missouri comes under heavy musket fire at the turnoff. With casualties mounting rapidly, the 11th Missouri pushes up the ravine, followed by the 47th Illinois, 8th Wisconsin, and 5th Minnesota. The brigade shifts into line of battle and charges into the open, but the fire is too much. Only the 11th Missouri, led personally by Mower, manages to reach the foot of the Confederate works. The other three regiments hold for a time under the terrible fire, finally falling back to avoid annihilation. After dark, Mower will lead the 11th Missouri back to the Union lines.

For the day Grant's army loses 502 killed, 2,550 wounded, and 147 missing against fewer than 500 Confederate casualties.

The Eagle Regiment: The regimental historian again employs his purplest prose to describe the brigade's participation in the attack:

“At the very minute the gunboats began their vengeful bombardment, McClernand on the left, McPherson in the center, and Sherman on the right with the Eagle, simultaneously moved on their columns with fixed bayonets. It was ‘a time that tried men's souls.’ Tho enemy burst upon the Northmen in general pandemonium of destruction; and yet they advanced,

climbing higher for the piles of the slain, treading upon their fallen companions, up furiously to 'enter the lion's angry mouth.'

"The frowning fortifications streamed forth forked lightning, blast after blast, upon our uncovered ranks below. No enemy was discernible; only solid earth works, rolling sulphurous clouds, lurid fires, missiles of death, confronted them. Must they not reach that volcano—that crater of fire, and smother it? One hour—two hours—walking over heaps of the accumulating dead and dying, and yet they struggle on, they reach the ditch; they pass it; they scale the ramparts; they plant there the Union flag; a shout goes up, but in an instant it is hushed in the throttle of death, when fresh troops come on to swell the slaughter, and yet the main works of those Southrons, so worthy of our steel, yield not an inch.

"Meanwhile the Eagle clinched his claws fast to the grooves of his perch, and, standing under the proud colors, bent his head, soldier-like, on a listening angle, his fierce eyes reflecting the glare of the battle, his wings outstretched, his voice heard, as oft before, cheering his compatriots to the shock for conquest. In the general wildness and confusion, Homaston, rushing to keep at the head of the company, central in the regiment, accidentally stepped on a slippery canebarke, and fell; when in an instant, the Eagle, shocked, doubtless by the concussion of a bullet that glanced with a quivering pressure on his breast, mounted up with a desperate spring for a flight; but the Bearer held fast to the perch, whilst 'Abe,' at the other end of the cord, having gained great speed lifted him from the ground, dragged him forward with such an impetus that it brought him abreast against a rough log, jerking back the bird and hurling them both together into the brush on the other side. The blow stunned Homaston, and 'nearly knocked the breath from his body,' for he lay there apparently dead, for a few moments. Whether we call it Providence or not, that Eagle's flight saved the life of his Bearer.

"Had he not fallen at that instant, the well aimed shot of the enemy at those conspicuous standards, pouring right there in waves of fire, would have killed Homaston, and thrown the company into confusion.... Placing the Eagle upon his perch again, Homaston hurried forward to his post on the left of the regimental colors, borne then by Sergt. Myron Briggs, and with him, Lieut. Butler and others, stood under a large tree in front and in plain sight of the rebel batteries, not a hundred rods distant. Evidently espying the Eagle and colors, the rebels poured a special fire of grape upon the daring group, and sent a well aimed shell, which, hitting the top of the tree, cut it off, crashing to the ground, and burst with a horrid scattering,

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the pieces of which tore many holes in the flag, and killed several, among whom were Lieut. W. D. Chapman, of Company F, and Capt. Stephen Estee, of Company H. The Eagle sprung for a flight again, but was held fast, and both he and his Bearer escaped unharmed.

“Lowering the colors and Eagle, they lay down under that shivered tree expecting annihilation, but, resolving to die at the best price, continued to fire upon the enemy, when an Adjutant rode briskly to the spot and announced the order to 'go forward into the ravine, and avoid the useless slaughter.' The regiment recoiled over swaths of the slain.... It was indeed an *eagle* leap from a maelstrom of consuming fire.”

Later, while the regiment rested in a ravine, a soldier brought Old Abe a live rabbit. The regimental history continues:

“[He] threw it to the perch, the Eagle catching it in his claws, and there in the raging battle, as shell and cannon were playing freely overhead he devoured his prey, heedless of noise and excitement. How much like a soldier! His self-possessed demeanor pleased the boys vastly, it was so brave and military....

“On carefully examining ‘Old Abe,’ Homaston found he was hit probably with a spent Minie ball, and naturally concluded it occurred when he lifted him up and flung him against the log. The ball passed down his neck and breast, cutting off the feathers in its track. Had it glanced the other way, the proud bird would have fallen; but being shot in the direction of the lay of the feathers, as he faced the foe, they saved his life. Another ball passed through the web of his left wing, making a round hole in it. He is a scarred veteran to this day.”

Saturday 23: Hawley has been sent to the hospital. Haskell died this forenoon. Cannonading has been dull to day. Rumors are that we are going to seize Vicksburg now. I drew a days rations. It has been warm. Sergt. Boonbas has been found dead. They are now burying them. Oh it sounds ominos, the rattling of spades after dark.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Grant's army settles in to reduce Vicksburg by siege.

Sunday 24: I have had a hard diarrhea all day. The surgeon gave me some pills. I've eaten nothing except a little at supper. I drew and divided two days rations. I got a letter from father and have written to him. Three of our men were put in the guardhouse for skulking in the charge. Two were

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left out. But Badgero who ran away at eight and staid away all day remains in. He is a regular coward and has not been in a fight yet. I'm better this evening.

Monday 25: I'm much better to day. I copied my journal from loose scraps of paper on which I had kept it on to sheets of paper and sent them with a letter to William. There was a flag of truce from four till seven this afternoon and we went quietly and peaceably over the ground that we charged over on the twentysecond. I should have gone to the rebel works, but guards were stationed to keep us back. All seemed so quiet and peaceful and men laughed and talked together, where an hour before they were fighting. The flag of truce was to bury the dead who were killed during the charge. It was dark and I was just going to bed when the bugles blew the assembly. We packed up and were soon started on another march towards Haynes Bluff and over some of the roughest country I ever saw. About midnight we camped in the Yazoo Valley, near Chikasaw Bayou, having marched seven miles.

Third Vicksburg campaign: While the majority of the army lays siege to the city, Grant dispatches small expeditions to destroy rebel supplies and to distract the forces Johnston has summoned to Jackson.

Tennessee: Banished on Lincoln's order, Vallandigham is handed over to Confederate authorities.

Tuesday 26: We started early and marched six miles to Snyder's Bluff which is three miles below Haynes Bluff on the Yazoo. It is pretty well fortified. Two forts were blown up and there are two large guns dismounted. We have made a shade and moved our position a little this evening. We are near the Yazoo River and there are some steamboats running around. After dark I drew two days rations. Many of the boys think we are going to remain here. Only our brigade is along, Joe Mower commanding of course. There is plenty of water here and beef too which has been used very freely, for we are bound to live if there is any chance at all.

Wednesday 27: We marched this morning about three miles when we stopped near a small stream and rested till four pm. We drew some "taters" and pickles. We ate the pickles and the "taters" too, but we boiled the

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"taters" and did not the pickles. While we halted other troops joined us and the expedition is commanded by Gen F. P. Blair. He is medium sized man, had dark sandy whiskers, with sharp and not pleasant features. At four we started, marched three miles and camped.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Admiral Porter sends the ironclad *Cincinnati* to reduce Fort Hill above the city. But the Confederate gunners get the better of the exchange, sinking the gunboat and inflicting forty casualties. The ship will later be raised for a second time, repaired and returned to duty.

Port Hudson campaign: Banks assaults the Confederate works but the attack fails at the cost of nearly 2,000 casualties to only 235 for the rebels.

Thursday 28: We marched five miles, then rested till four, then fell in and marched fifteen miles towards a village named Michamasville, where some rebels are reported to be. We did not get into camp till midnight. I'm tired out I tell you. Sykes has not been well to day but has pulled through. It has been a good day for marching, but rather dusty.

Michamasville: Ambrose changes this spelling to Michamesburg on June 4, 1863, and identifies the hamlet as three miles from the Yazoo River town of Satartia. The regimental history spells the name as Mechanicsburg. No settlement bearing a name close to any of these spellings is present on the period maps consulted.

Boston: The Union's first regiment of Negro infantry, the 54th Massachusetts, departs for training at Hilton Head, South Carolina.

Friday 29: I drew and divided a days rations quite early, getting salt beef for our meat. It was left on the ground when we marched at nine o'clock. Great quartermasters to give us salt beef on a march with no chance to either cook or carry it. It was awful hot when we started and dusty too but after we had marched three miles we had a nice shower which cooled the air and settled the dust. We then pushed to Michamasville which is barely a squad of houses and has been badly plundered by our cavalry advance, which had skirmish beyond here. Some of our boys got lots of honey. I drew and divided two days rations. The boys are in good spirits.

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Saturday 30: At six we marched on the back track towards Vicksburg. Cool and nice marching. After going seven miles we took another road which after three miles more brought us into the Yazoo bottom. This bottom is not very wide but it is very rich land. It is all planted to corn. I guess the rebels did not expect us in this quarter. Lots of the corn is six feet high already. We stacked arms to rest an hour on a plantation. The men made a grand rally for chickens, bacon or anything the men wanted. I went to see if I could get a shirt and such a cackling and squealing I never heard before. This was a regular plundering and plundering that I was ashamed of. Gen Lightburn had got it stopped when the bugle blew and we started again. Sykes is sick to day and has rode in the ambulance for the first time. We poked along in the road marching and resting only going five miles more. We did not camp till dark, then I drew some beef. Some fellows then went with me to get a sheep. They hung back. I caught a sheep and held it awhile calling them to come and help me carry it off. After I tired of waiting, I let it go and went back to camp where I found my assistants. They went with me to help get it and then went to camp expecting I would carry it alone. It began to get dusty once to day but a shower came just in time. All cotton gins, barns, machine shops on the road have been burned down by order of Gen Blair. One peculiarity of this country is there are no wells; the people depending entirely on cisterns for water, so every building of any size has a cistern attached. It is good water. It is fun to see soldiers get water out of them when we halt. There are no pumps and seldom ropes, so every one lets down his pail or kettle on a string. Each drawing his own, only. There is always a crowd. Sometimes the string gets tangled, then there is some tall swearing. Every one is dry and thirsty and is afraid he will not get any. This place shows out all the hog there is in a man, which is not a little.

Brig. Gen. Joseph A. J. Lightburn was a thirty-eight-year-old former regular army sergeant. A farmer in western Virginia before the war, he was elected to the loyalist convention at Wheeling before being commissioned colonel of the 4th West Virginia Infantry. He fought in western Virginia and was then transferred to the West. Promoted to brigadier general, he commanded a brigade in Blair's division.

Sunday 31: It fell to our lot to be rearguard to day, so we did not get started till ten o'clock when we took the ridge road. Oh how hot it was. I thought I would melt. We could only march a mile or two and then rest. I

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never marched in such heat before. It was just awful. We rested most of the time till four o'clock when we pushed through to Haynes Bluff, eight miles and camped in good season. I bought a shirt this morning for a dollar which was a good thing. I also had a good bathe in the Yazoo River. Which is about seventy rods wide here. The banks are strewn with sixty four pound shell that the rebels threw in the water when it was high. Now the water is low and they lay all around. I drew and divided two days rations. I am tired and worn out to night. The terrible heat has prostrated me. I hope it will be our fortune to remain here a few days and get rested.

The Eagle Regiment: The regimental history estimated that the 8th Wisconsin marched 550 miles in May 1863. Although the actual figure was probably closer to 400 miles, it was still an impressive total.

June 1863

Monday 1: We have remained in camp all day. It has been pretty warm. I received a letter from Robert and one from Phebe. The folks at home are well. Joseph has gone on another trip with rather a hard character, Oscar Clark, maybe he will be enough for him. Sykes and I also got four papers. I've felt curious all day, caused I think by the great heat of yesterday which has hurt me. Our train came up today bringing rations etc. They also brought the news that Archibald Thompson, our regimental commissary formerly a member of our company, has died at Grand Gulf. He was left sick there with Woodard. He was a good, honest, conscientious young man. I have always thought a great deal of him ever since I knew him. He was a lover of books as well as myself. I drew two days rations this evening and have partly issued them. I have written to William. Cannonading has been heard towards Vicksburg all day. Our chaplain came today, bringing two numbers of a works he is writing, entitled *Camp Life* or *Stray Shots by a Staff Officer of the Eighth Wisconsin*. It is a dry, common place work. He can not write as well as he can speak.

Army Life and Stray Shots by a Staff Officer of the 8th Regiment Volunteers, 15th Army Corps, 3rd Division by Chaplain McKinley was published anonymously in Memphis in 1863.

Department of the Ohio: A public outcry follows General Burnside's order closing the *Chicago Times* for its copperhead sympathies.

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Tuesday 2: I divided out the rest of the rations this morning. After hunting around awhile I managed to buy an envelope with a three cent stamp. I then wrote a letter to Alice. It is over a month since I wrote to her, and during that time I have not received any. But on such a tramp I cannot get letters from anybody. About three o'clock word came that our knapsacks were at the landing, having been brought on a steamboat. Soon, the "Second Brigade" rallied to the landing when "Bully for us," there they were. I elbowed my way through a crowd and found a small pile of knapsacks belonging to Co "D." I saw mine and soon had it in my happy hands. I then stood guard over the pile while some of our boys hunted up the rest of the knapsacks. Sykes soon found his and then carried his and mine to camp. After finding all we could we carried them to camp. I soon opened mine to see how my things were. My chess box was broken but luckily none of the men were lost. Everything else was all right except I could not find my bottle of ink. I got some string and mended my chess box, wrapping some string around each end and along the edge of each side. I used string because I could not get any small nails. It is the first time I ever mended a box entirely with string. I bet it will take a harder knock to break it next time. It is reported that our brigade is going up the Yazoo River near Yazoo City and are going to camp there. The cannonading has been a great deal heavier to day towards Vicksburg. Our gunboats are keeping those rebels warm. We call Vicksburg Gen Grants guardhouse. It is rather singular that we were away from our knapsacks just a month as we left them at Duckport on the second of May.

Wednesday 3: Last night after I had gone to bed mail came bringing me two papers, a letter from Joseph and one from Alice. It seems funny that I should get a letter just after wishing one. Joseph is at Brickton, Cook Co, Illinois. He has been working in a brickyard but is going to try farming again. He says he wants to see some of the world. Things looked like moving this morning and we soon got orders to pack up. I got another blanket and threw away my overcoat. My knapsack is a snorter. Listen to what is in it. Two blankets, one shirt, one pair stockings, a large Bible, *Ollendorffs* German, a musquito bar, a set of chess men, a candle, some thread etc. About ten we fell in and started for the river. In marching over the camp ground I found a German reader by Woodbury. It is a treasure. I would have paid considerable for one. I'll keep it if I have to throw a blanket away. As we went to the boat I saw a solitary tombstone. Leaving my place I went to see it. It was among some small trees, which had a

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grape vine running among them. It had the inscription "Andrew Haynes Died October 29, 1840, aged forty-two years." I presume the Bluff was named after him. There is no village here and only one house. Its only importance is it commands the Yazoo River. We marched on board the *L. M. Kennett*, a large side wheeler. The captain of the boat thinks we cannot go up the river with it. Only our Brigade is going. Our old battery the Second Iowa has left us and a Chicago battery (Taylors) of six guns is assigned to our brigade in place of the second Iowa. Three transports are going escorted with two gunboats. One of the gunboats the *Baron De Kalb* is a regular iron clad, the other is a wooden sternwheeler only carrying light guns. As soon as I was on board I read two pages in my reader. I feel glad that I found it. I am now rigged for studying German. I then played two games of chess with the color corporal of Co "F" beating him both times. It is now six o'clock and we are not off yet.

Bedtime. Reports come in that Vicksburg has surrendered to day. Anyway there has been no cannonading since morning. The boats are to sail at eleven to night. Ten pm I had to get up, pick my way over sleeping men and the boat is crowded; and draw and divide a days rations amongst the biggest howling I ever heard while issuing rations. The boats start at eleven and we have orders to march at daylight.

Snorter: Either very heavy or excellent.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Maj. Gen. John Parke's IX Corps begins arriving from Kentucky to reinforce Grant.

Gettysburg campaign opens: The Army of Northern Virginia sets out from its camps near Fredericksburg, moving west for the fords across the Rapidan and the roads north into Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Thursday 4: I awoke early and found we were sailing up the Yazoo in a boat so large that it nearly filled the river. There was not room to turn the boat and at the short turns we had to back up and figure a little, in order to get past. At about six am we tied up and landed at a small place named Satartia. The boys rallied for hens and such things. But Gen Mower soon stopped it. Companies "C" and "D" were immediately sent out on picket. We halted long enough to make breakfast then loading our knapsacks on the boat we started towards Michamesburg (not Michamasville as before written) which is three miles from Satartia. Skirmishing soon began and it

was not long before the five right companies of our regiment were deployed as skirmishers. At one place the rebels were too thick and a piece of artillery was brought into play, which soon scattered them. We soon began to go very fast and we heard rebel artillery. We arrived at the town on a double quick and formed a line of battle under cover of a hill. As soon as a line was formed the artillery opened and kept up a sharp firing for a few minutes. As soon as the artillery stopped, the Fifth Illinois Cavalry, which came into town just as we did on another road; charged driving the rebels and taking thirty five prisoners. We passed through the town. Stacked arms and prepared to stay all night. Our men have burned most of the town. Our loss is two wounded a drummer belonging to Co "A" and a man belonging to Co "F."

Gettysburg campaign: Lee crosses the Rapidan with Ewell's and Longstreet's corps while A. P. Hill covers the Fredericksburg area.

Friday 5: We moved camp back into the village and made shed to protect us from the intolerable heat. I picked up a book as we left the place where we staid last night named *Theophilus Walton or the Majesty of Truth*, an answer to a book entitled *Theodosia Earnest*. It is a religious work on baptism. It is interesting and gives me a great deal of light on baptism that I wanted. I mean to try and keep it. I also got a nice little blanket.

Theophilus Walton or The Majesty of Truth: A reply to Theodosia Ernest by a member of the Alabama conference. (Nashville: Stevenson & Owen, 1858).

Theodosia Ernest or The heroine of Faith (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & co., 1857) by Amos Cooper Dayton (1813–65). Alternative title: *Theodosia Ernest or Ten days' Travel in Search of the Church*.

Gettysburg campaign: A. P. Hill repulses a strong probe of the Fredericksburg defenses by Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick's corps.

Saturday 6: We got up early and were to march at daylight with three days rations, but we had no rations except for to day. Teams were sent to the river getting back about nine. One days rations were issued and we fell in and we marched back towards Haynes Bluff. We took the valley route, marching back almost to Satartia then down the valley. It has been very

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hot and we have suffered, but not as badly as some new troops who are along with us. After marching twelve miles we camped.

Sunday 7: We were awakened at daylight by the assembly call and had to fall in and march as soon as we could get our traps on, without anything to eat. We were behind some teams and kept hitching on and resting till about noon when we arrived at Haynes Bluff almost melted down. Any general who will march men from four till twelve without breakfast or a halt to making is either a dunce or a fool and ought to be cashiered.

Hungry, tired and footsore we rested about two hours, then went on the bluff and stacked arms. I went to the river and bathed then lay in the shade till five. We then got supper which I relished as well as any meal of victuals I ever had, though it was only coffee, bacon and crackers. After getting some water I went and got my knapsack which was all right. I then drew a days rations. Seven men belonging to the Twenty Seventh Wisconsin died yesterday from the heat. Our coming back was contrary to Gen Grants orders. He is here this evening. He wanted to know of Gen Mower what he was doing here. Gen Mower said he came back by order of Gen Kimball the ranking officer of the expedition. We are afraid we will have to go back to Michamesburg again. Cannonading at Vicksburg keeps on.

Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball: In late May, Mower's Eagle Brigade was assigned to Kimball's Provisional Division. Kimball was an Indiana physician and Mexican War veteran. Commissioned colonel of the 14th Indiana in June 1861, Kimball served in western Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley. He won fame at the Battle of Kernstown on March 23, 1862, where he temporarily commanded Shield's Division in a small victory over Stonewall Jackson. He fought in brigade command at Antietam and Fredericksburg before going west to command a division during the siege of Vicksburg. His portrait shows a heavily bearded, narrow-faced man with wide eyes and a quizzical expression: a demeanor better suited to a kindly family physician than a general.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Fifteen hundred Texas troops under Brig. Gen. Henry McCullough attack Grant's supply base at Milliken's Bend. The Union garrison numbers only a thousand, most recently recruited Negro troops. The Federal troops fall back grudgingly in fierce hand-to-hand fighting, suffering 652 casualties. Fire from a pair of Union gunboats

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finally drives off the Confederates. Grant's army is greatly impressed by the behavior of the Negro soldiers. Surveying the bloody field, a Union officer states: "I never more wish to hear the expression 'the Niggers won't fight.'"

Brierfield, Mississippi: Vengeful Union troops burn the plantation of Confederate president Jefferson Davis.

Monday 8: I've been sick all day, feeling the same as I did when we were here before only more so. This heat is too much for me anyway. As soon as I had issued out the rations Sykes and I made a good shade, since which we have kept still and quiet all day. I have written to William and Robert. It has been quite warm and sultry to day. The weather here is hot anyway. Just before dark the bugle blew and we marched down to the river and stopped. We are going on boats but I guess not till morning. A nice thing to leave our camp and lay in the dust all night.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Union gunboats open a 24-hour bombardment of the city, forcing many residents to take cover in caves dug in the city's clay bluffs.

Mississippi to Louisiana

Tuesday 9: We went aboard the *Sam Young* about eight and started down the Yazoo. Making a good trip we arrived at Young's Point about noon, and landed. There was a pile of tents near which our brigade soon appropriated and set up. They belong to troops around Vicksburg. A lot of sutlers goods was hooked by our brigade and a search instituted, but with very poor success. We have looked anxiously for rations all day, but did not get any till ten this evening. I am not going to issue them to night. I've been sick again all day, but have managed to get around. Mail brought me a paper this evening. Woodard rejoined the company this evening. He does not look very well. The rebels made a raid in this vicinity a few days ago and were driven away by negro troops and gunboats. We are camped opposite the mouth of the Yazoo. The Mississippi is about thirty feet lower than it was when we left Duckport. Sykes went down to the hospital to see Sam Dorward who is about a mile from here. Sam is doing well. Coming down past Snyders Bluff, we passed the ruins of obstructions that had been placed in the river. Enormous rafts and flatboats bound together with

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railroad iron, great cables of iron and cribs filled with stones, forming the most important. A great deal of labor was expended this way. But the river arose and the spring flood carried them away.

Hooked: stole. Apparently officers or the provost guard searched for the stolen goods but without much success.

The Eagle Regiment: The regimental history described this crossing of the Mississippi: "Our war-bird, ever as potent in battle as the ark of Israel, flew with his peers to Young's Point near Vicksburg."

Battle of Brandy Station: A massive Federal probe of Lee's movements brings on the largest cavalry battle of the war, pitting some 11,000 Federals under Maj. Gen. Alfred Pleasonton against 10,000 Confederates under Maj. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart. Though the Federals suffer 866 casualties against 523 for the Confederates, the fight is a morale booster for the Union horsemen.

Wednesday 10: I awoke early this morning and was looking around to see what time it might be when I heard the captains "A" and "F" order their men to fall in. Soon Lieut Williams came around with the same orders. We rattled out as soon as we could, fell into line, marched to the levee, and formed a line of battle behind it; the battery was brought up and guns planted on our right. Daylight soon came and we marched back to camp. I did not feel hardly able to get back to camp. Excitement sustained me going out but coming back was a tough one, though it was only a few rods. As soon as we got back I distributed the three days rations that I drew last night while Sykes cooked breakfast. As soon as this was over it began to rain and it rained steady till noon. I wrote to father and translated the two first exercises in *Ollendorff*, writing them in a blank book which I found buckled in my knapsack at Haynes Bluff. A negro woman came around looking for her husband. She was a young woman but said her husband was an old man. Some of the boys asked her why she married such an old man. She said there was no use marrying a man that belonged to another plantation as he could do her no good. Another, an old man said he had worked all his life and hard too, and had nothing now but a few miserable rags to cover his nakedness. He had toiled hard all his life till age had made him helpless and feeble and now was thrown on the cold charity of the world at the last, the close of life. Negros in Mississippi around

Jackson told harder stories than those of any other place we have been in. They want us to "poke the rebels," and "poke em hard too." Hawley came to day after his descriptive roll. He is doing very well. Woodard saw Tommy at Grand Gulf and says he is tough and well. Tommy thinks the pioneer corps are an ordained institution in which he firmly believes. I drew some potatoes, beans and peas this afternoon. Just at dark a regular squall came on. The wind blew almost a hurricane, several boats broke their anchorage and started down the river. There was some scratching to keep the tents up. Stakes etc were in great demand. It soon began to rain and the wind abated. Sykes and I feel pretty musical this evening in spite of the storm and have sung everything we can think of. We are without singing books entirely. Ours is a bell tent. There are Sykes and I, Bill Hall, Frank Blaisdell and Bill Fitts, a sleepy fellow in it. But I ought not to say anything about sleepy folks, bearing in mind "That people who live in glass houses must not throw stones" etc. During the last month I have slept a great while. I mean in the day time. It is probably owing to the fatigue and having nothing but coffee to drink. I feel much better this evening than I have for some time. Three boat loads of troops came down the river to day.

People who live in glass houses must not throw stones: A proverb dates from the mid-17th century according to *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*.

Gettysburg campaign: In the vanguard of Lee's army, Ewell's corps leaves Culpepper, Virginia. Alarm spreads through Union towns in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Thursday 11: I was up early, went down to the river and washed, got breakfast ready feeling pretty well, yet faint like. I shall recruit up in a few days. I know if I can only get some rest, for I keep feeling better every day. I am not sick but am tired out. I was busy writing this morning when I heard a small voice ask for a cracker. I looked up and there were three little niggers from four to six years old. As I looked up one of them repeated the question. I stuck my hand in my haversack and handed him one and a half. "Please give me one sir" said both of the others in a voice. I gave one of them one and Sykes told me to give the other one of his, which I did of course. Poor little fellows, half clothed, they have to beg their bread. I saw an old lady who said she had been a slave nearly a

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hundred years. The bent form and wrinkled face told plain enough that she had lived a long time. Boatloads of troops have been coming down the river all day. About twenty having come down. They all went up the Yazoo, but several have come back again. I got a letter from Phebe and the *Sentinel* came. It is now bed time and I have been out watching the shells burst over Vicksburg. We first see the flash of the mortar, then see the fuse of the shell, which is on fire going up and up, making a great curve and beginning to descend. Down, down, down, a flash, and it has burst. Some burst going up, others going down. I have an idea that a piece of one of those shells would hurt a fellow if it had hit him on the head. They must fall almost everywhere. Rather hard to get out of their way I reckon.

Port Hudson campaign: General Banks attacks the Confederate fortifications for a second time and is again heavily repulsed.

Friday 12: I did not awake till quite late, and then my breakfast stood by my bedside waiting for me to eat. Sykes had made breakfast, eaten his and put off leaving mine ready when I should awake. After breakfast, I wrote to Robert and Phebe. It was nice and cool this morning, but got quite warm by noon. About two o'clock I drew five days rations, one half being flour. A new camp ground has been selected and men have been cleaning it up. We will move camp tomorrow. A part of the second Wisconsin Cavalry came down in a boat this afternoon. I could not find anybody I knew during the short time they stopped. It is hot and sultry this evening. Our new camp will be quite a distance from the river. Those who have been working at the new camp ground say it is a very dirty place, having been a cavalry camp. Orders are to have four roll calls a day now, so the boys will have to get up early in the morning. Camp life will soon begin again.

Gettysburg campaign: The Army of Northern Virginia begins crossing the Blue Ridge Mountains into the Shenandoah Valley. Cavalry fighting flares along the army's flanks.

Saturday 13: I'm mad. There is no use whatever of polishing it over and calling it angry, vexed or any other soft name. Mad is the only word in the English language that expresses my feeling at the present moment. There is no effect without a cause. Listen to the reason. I got up early and had a good breakfast, so far so good. After a good swim in the Mississippi we fell in and marched a quarter of a mile to our new camp, stacked arms and

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set up camp. Sykes and I got a good large tent for us two and the rations. This being done I got some water, bringing it nearly a mile and we got dinner. So far so good again. Now comes what I am mad at. As soon as dinner was over I went after boards to make a bunk with. I carried three from a way down the river, three quarters of a mile. Then swallowed supper which Sykes had got ready and went with four others and a waggon to get a waggon load. When we got back orders were to march at five in the morning. Labor in vain, ever since coming in I have been cutting up meat, dividing rations etc. etc. etc. Thats what makes me mad. There goes off another big mortar. Confound those rebels, I wish they were all in a boat with the hold full of powder and I had a red hot iron to touch them off with. Dont you believe I'd blow them up. Yes siree I would if they did not surrender in just half a minute.

Gettysburg campaign: Despite orders from Halleck, Maj. Gen. John Milroy refuses to evacuate his garrison of 5,100 men from Winchester, Virginia. Ewell's corps drives in the Federal outpost at Berryville, Virginia.

Sunday 14: We started up early and got things ready to march, but we did not start till about seven, which gave us ample time to get ready. Just before we started, thirteen boat loads of troops came down the river. They belong to Gen Burnside's army. At seven we started, marching up to the old canal, which now has a little water standing in the bottom. Then we started towards Richmond taking the road we went on to Grand Gulf. We marched seven miles, stopped two hours for dinner, then pushed on six miles farther and camped for the night. A cool day for this season and we came through nicely. A great many men were left back sick at camp and some have fallen sick along the road. Our brigade is not fit to march anyway. It is entirely worn out. I have not seen a man who considers himself fit to march. While trying to get some water out of a cistern with an old rope I lost our coffee pot. So we had to wait till others got through before we could make our coffee. We will have to get another someway. We are camped on a nice grass plat, across a bayou from a splendid house and plantation. There is no bridge, but there were some of our boys were soon over and got lots of sugar, bacon, chickens etc etc etc.

Port Hudson campaign: Banks is repulsed for a third time. Union casualties in the attacks on May 27, June 11, and June 14 total nearly

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4,000 against small losses for the Confederates. Another 7,000 Union soldiers have fallen ill. Banks, who desperately wants a dramatic victory to further his political ambitions, must settle for a siege.

Gettysburg campaign; Second Battle of Winchester: Ewell spends the day preparing an assault on the Union forts north and west of the town. Following a heavy artillery bombardment in late afternoon, Louisiana troops capture the westernmost of the three forts, gaining a commanding position. After dark, Milroy attempts to withdraw. Anticipating the move, Ewell blocks the roads to Harpers Ferry.

Monday 15: The first thing I heard this morning was; come boys, get up and make your breakfast or you will have to march without. I laid awhile, but fearing to lay any longer, I got up, borrowed a little pail, made coffee, took breakfast, packed up and at about half past five we started on to Richmond. When we came to the Junction of our road with the one that goes to Millikens Bend, we were joined by the marine brigade who were coming on that road to assist us. A mile and a quarter from Richmond the marines formed a line of battle. We quickly formed a line in front of them. The Fifth Minnesota were deployed as a skirmishers "Forward guide center" and on we went a quarter of a mile and halted. The Fifth went on till they drew a volley, when they fell back. Then our battery and the battery belonging to the marines, twelve guns in all shelled the rebels from the bayou which they lay behind and we advanced to where they had been. Here our batteries shelled them like fury they being in the edge of the town. We lay here an hour, our batteries shelling them and their battery answered a little. The ground is level on our left was a bayou and on our right some woods. We marched into the woods by the right flank, while our batteries kept playing. The rebels no sooner saw this flank movement than they put [missing phrase]. Our skirmishers advanced over the bridge into the town, the bridge being on fire. Our company was the first across. As no teams could cross the bridge, we stacked arms on the bank of the bayou. The batteries unlimbered and shelled the woods beyond town. I was close to the battery while it fired. The firing made my head ache. When the battery stopped I went across the bayou up to the town passing one dead rebel and up town I saw two wounded. The place was full of soldiers. I got some sugar, meat, a knife and fork, some scoops, a two quart measure to make a coffee pot of, an eight quart pail and a splendid chequer board, with these I went back to the regiment. I sold my large pail

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to a nigger for seventy-five cents, swapped my measure for a nice three quart pail, gave the scoops to our commissary and got him to carry my chess board [to] Youngs Point for me. I drew two days rations of meat and coffee letting the commissary keep the small rations till we got back. At five we fell in and started back, leaving what had been Richmond a mass of flames. People were carried out of their houses, put into tents and their houses burned. No more rebels can harbor in that place. We marched back three miles, burning all the houses along the way and camped for the night. Our loss is six or seven wounded and one killed. The rebel loss is one killed and twenty wounded. It rained a little this evening, otherwise a fine day.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Reinforcements have swelled Grant's army to 70,000. Two hundred guns are bombarding the city around the clock. Vicksburg's residents are increasingly desperate for food, clean water, and shelter. The "hard hand of war" is being increasingly employed by the Federal army, a foreboding of what will happen as Union troops penetrate the heartland of the Confederacy.

Gettysburg campaign; Second Battle of Winchester: In a rare night action, the Confederate brigades sent to block Milroy's escape hold against desperate Federal attacks. Reinforced at dawn, the Confederates force the surrender of Milroy's division. In all, the rebels take 3,358 prisoners, 23 guns, and 300 wagons. Federal dead and wounded number another 443. Confederate losses are 269. Lincoln sends an urgent request for militia to the governors of West Virginia, Ohio, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Confederate cavalry raids Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Tuesday 16: The first I heard this morning was from the stentorian voice of Sykes saying come Ambrose get up and eat your breakfast or your coffee will be cold. Orders of that kind could not be disobeyed, so I got up and ate breakfast. Then drying my oilcloth which is always wet in a morning on the side that lays on the ground. I packed up, rolling up a quilt that one of the boys gave me, thinking it would pay to carry it through, as it would be only one days carriage and it would soften one side of those planks considerably. We fell in early taking a nearer road back, passing within three miles of Millikins Bend then turning off to the right. Coming along the road we saw a dead body of one of our men who had been killed some time. Nothing was recognizable except the hair which was long and

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dark. We also saw a clean white skull by the roadside. Oh this land is turning and overflowing with dead mens bones. On levees, in swamps, and on hillsides, everywhere, everywhere the fatal headboard stands, marked with the names, company and regiment of the deceased. I never was in any place, except Corinth where there were so many graves. After marching twelve miles march and by two pm we were back to our camp at Duckport. There was fighting going in Vicksburg yesterday and has been going on to day. Artillery and musketry being heard very plain, for about two hours. It rained some this afternoon. I managed to get my quilt on a mule after we had marched about four miles which was quite a relief.

Gettysburg campaign: General Hooker has the Army of the Potomac moving north, keeping between Washington and the Confederate army. This night he camps at Fairfax Courthouse, Virginia. His plan is to cut Lee's supply lines through the Cumberland Valley, a move for which he needs the cooperation of the 10,000-man garrison at Harpers Ferry.

Wednesday 17: Having a big days work to do I got up early and went at it. As soon as breakfast was over I went down to the river and did my washing. I worked at my washing till my hands were sore, then quit thinking I had done enough. I then wrote to father. After dinner I drew rations to last to the nineteenth. This being done I cleaned my gun, which was quite rusty. I worked at it till it was tired of it and rust too and laid it aside till another day. Hearing some firing toward Vicksburg I went down to the river to see if I could hear it any plainer, when I got there it was fainter. Heavy fighting has been going on this afternoon. They are having warm times. I think Vicksburg will fall soon now. I believe in a week. Four loads of troops went past this morning. This evening I played Badgero a game of chess, last night I did ditto. It is rumored around camp that we will join our division pretty soon now, some say tomorrow. A fine day.

Vicksburg campaign: Desperate to loosen Grant's tightening hold on the city, Confederates attack Union positions and gunboats at Commerce, Mississippi, without success.

Gettysburg campaign: Lee's army reaches Point of Rocks, Maryland.

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Thursday 18: A fine, warm day. About nine o'clock orders came to pack everything up and move on the boat. We soon had all the company stuff loaded and started to the river. As there were not many teams, we had to wait quite awhile for the other companies to draw their stuff to the river. Before it was all drawn, the order was countermanded and about four o'clock the stuff came back and we set up our tents again. It has been a quiet day at Vicksburg, as still as if there was no war there. Many think Vicksburg has surrendered. Allen; a private in Co "I" died last night. I mended my pants after out tent was up.

Vicksburg campaign: After waiting patiently through months of insubordination and intrigue, Grant finally has sufficient cause to relieve McClernand when the Illinois politician admits to putting false reports in the newspapers. Maj. Gen. E. O. C. Ord takes command of McClernand's corps.

Friday 19: I slept quite late this morning. After breakfast I went down to the river to get some boards but could find none. After writing to William I pitched into my German till noon. Then after a little sleep I studied till three when I drew five days rations. Then we pulled down an old chimney at the head of our street, got the mortar from enough of them to make a brick oven, after which I went after a turn of water to make mud with. It was dark by this time and a calliope was playing on the river. It sounded very well. After playing chess with Woodard and getting beat, I am writing my Journal and am now ready to go to bed. A warm day. This evening the officers of the brigade presented Gen Mower with a splendid sword sash and belt, field glass and shoulder straps.

Gettysburg campaign: Lee's army clashes with Federal troops at Middleburg, Virginia.

Saturday 20: I awoke early and got up. Our artillery was banging away like fury. I never heard so near a continued roar of artillery. I immediately began to work on the oven. Being commander of the oven I had most of the work to do. Doing a little of everything, but mixing mud was my principal job. I worked where there was the weakest force and any scholar in this business knows mixing mud is the weakest point. The work was all voluntary as usual. Some turned out and worked well, others did not. We got the foundation laid by breakfast time. It is seven bricks long and five

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wide, two thick and will be five brick high when finished. We have arched it over. It is the first arching I ever did. We have a good oven. It just suits the colonel who comes around occasionally to see what is going on. It was finished by eleven o'clock. It has got a good cast iron door which some of the men picked up at Duckport. About nine o'clock the artillery firing ceased till evening. News came this evening that Port Hudson is taken, no particulars. The work of the day and the reading of an Indian novel cut down my time so that I only wrote down one exercise from *Ollendorff* and translated two pages from the reader. Company "I" buried another man to day named Isaac Convoy. He was a fine, brisk young man and has been cooking for the officers sometime. It has been hot and feels like rain this evening.

News...that Port Hudson is taken: The rumor was false.

Indian novel: another dime novel perhaps.

Vicksburg campaign: Sensing the weakening Confederate defense, Grant orders a particularly heavy bombardment of the city.

Sunday 21: "Another six days work is done. Another Sabbath is begun." Hold on this Sunday morning, not so fast with your singing. There is lots to do. Besides there is company inspection at nine. I take my little pail and start after some yeast, so our cook can get some bread started. This takes half an hour, a miles travel and twenty cents. Item, as there is no kneading tub I go and beg a barrel, saw it in two, round off the corners and, that is done, then lay around till inspection. Item. I then get all of Alice's letters, read them over in proper order and wind up by writing her one and one to "Josphizz." Item, the rest of the day I have spent in reading and passing time away as well as I could. This was pretty hard to do for about two hours as I was tired of reading and was bound not to go to sleep. At night Woodard and I had a good long sing. Soft bread for supper. Bread here should begin with a capital letter. Cannonading as usual. Our sutler came with some new goods to day, bringing some good maple sugar. Sykes came along with some so I had a good taste. There is to be a general inspection at six in the morning, by Capt Green of our regiment who is inspector of the district of North east Louisiana. Item, no mail; the items of another day are recorded.

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Hold on this Sunday morning, not so fast with your singing: Perhaps a quote, but no reference found.

Josphizz: probably his brother Joseph.

Bread here should begin with a capital letter: After weeks of hardtack, no doubt many in the company felt this way. Ambrose, after his labors on the oven and getting the yeast, certainly had additional reason for wanting to capitalize the word. He may also have been playing with his new German skills since German nouns are written with an initial capital.

Gettysburg campaign: As Lee moves steadily north, there is fighting at Frederick, Maryland, and Upperville and Haymarket, Virginia.

Monday 22: We were up early and getting our things in shape for inspection. It was after six or after breakfast that it came off and was a short one as captain Green did not bear down very hard. Then I went and washed. I also washed for Sykes as he is on picket. This done I wiggled away at my German nearly all the time till dark. I have written the English exercises in German and translated three pages from the reader. German will catch it now, as I have time and can learn myself. In the negro camp about a mile from here they are dying pretty fast. Day before yesterday thirty died, yesterday ten and to day at four o'clock eight had died. This is owing to want of cleanliness, change of living etc. If people do not keep their persons and their camp clean nothing can save them. Without wishing to boast, I can say our regiment keeps the cleanest of any I know of. The contrast between ours and the sixty-third Illinois which is camped about sixty rods in our rear is very great. There are some prospects of us getting paid soon. Rumor says we are going to Memphis to relieve a brigade that had not seen much other duty than garrison for some time. May it be true. A little cannonading morning and evening is all we hear from Vicksburg.

Tuesday 23: I was awakened early this morning by Lieut Williams who wanted to know if there were rations enough on hand to last two days, as orders had come to march at five with two days rations. I told him we had plenty of everything but meat, of which we had none. I went and tried to get some but the commissary was without. At six we marched to the "Cut off" near Vicksburg and stopped in the woods. From the levee there is quite a view of the town. We have laid in the woods all day. This evening

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our company with four others went out on picket. It began to rain at dark so we are in for a wet night. Cannonading to day has been light. I got an *Evening Post* by mail. Sykes staid on picket at camp and the company being gone leaves me quite alone.

Cut off: the road running down the west side of the Mississippi to a point opposite Vicksburg.

Gettysburg campaign: With Lee now well ahead of him, Hooker orders his army across the Potomac.

Tullahoma campaign opens: The Army of the Cumberland under Rosecrans marches from Murfreesboro against its old foe, the Army of Tennessee under Braxton Bragg. Rosecrans hopes by a complex series of maneuvers to force Bragg out of Middle Tennessee, capturing his supply base at Tullahoma and forcing him to withdraw to Chattanooga on the Tennessee River.

Wednesday 24: Last night, I slept pretty well considering. I made a pile of sticks and spread my blanket on it, on them I laid and covered myself with my rubber. The cold rain falling on my face occasionally felt curious as well as unpleasant. At two we marched back to camp. I've been reading a *Harpers Monthly* that I borrowed. I'm not well the last two days.

Harper's Monthly: Launched in 1850 by Harper Brothers of New York. Very successful from the outset, the journal initially concentrated on publishing established authors such as Charles Dickens and William Thackeray.

Gettysburg campaign: Ewell's corps enters Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Thursday 25: At nine we drew two months pay. Quite hot and sultry. After dinner I drew five days rations. We of our tent bought some fresh fish, which with our new bread and potatoes with tea made a good meal. After eating a supper of the above I felt like a man, as if there was something inside that would hold me up. Sykes, Fitts and I went about a mile to get barrels to draw water in. We rolled them of course. Christy of our company was taken to the hospital to day. It is reported that Sherman had a

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terrible battle on Black River yesterday. He drove the rebels with great slaughter. Very hot to day.

Sherman had a terrible battle on Black River yesterday. This was apparently a rumor. No such battle took place.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Union troops explode a large mine under the Confederate line. (Apparently the blast was not loud enough to cause Ambrose to comment.) But the rebels, anticipating the tactic, have already withdrawn to a new line. Bitter fighting results in nothing but pointless loss of life on both sides.

Gettysburg campaign: Stung by the Federal audacity at Brandy Station, Jeb Stuart cuts free from Lee's infantry to try one of his famous rides around the Union army. The move will result in disaster for the Confederate army when, without adequate scouting, Lee is sucked into fighting on ground not of his choosing in the great battle at Gettysburg.

Friday 26: Did not stir till about breakfast time. I have read of the circumlocution office in one of Dickens novels. Just see what I had to do to get some water drawn. First I went to Lieut Williams three days ago and to him stated our needs. He said he would see the colonel about drawing some water for us. After we came back from going on picket I went and saw Lieut Williams again. He had not seen the colonel but would. So last night he told me if we would get barrels the water would be drawn. Last night we got the barrels. This morning Lieut Williams went to Haynes Bluff early. At nine I went to the quartermaster sergeant and wanted to know when that team would be ready to draw water. He wanted to know what team. I told him the colonel had promised us that our water would be drawn if we would get barrels and I had got some. He knew nothing about it of course. After awhile I went to the Hon Quartermaster Sergt and wanted to know if he would let me have a team to draw water with. He said he would if I would get a load of seven barrels. I went through the regiment twice but only got one besides ours, three in all. I then went again to the q m Sergt and told him there were four or five who wanted water and asked him if he had ordered a team. He said no. As he was rather noncommunicative I asked him if I should go and order one. He finally consented and I went. Mr waggon master hardly took me for authority and had to find out for himself. Finally the team came. In such matters every

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one stands in the road and are afraid they will have to move their bones. Sykes and I have sent for *Harpers Weekly* for six months and I have written to Phebe and Willis. I have translated two exercises from *Ollendorff*. Sykes is on picket. I've spent a dollar in stationery. Tattoo is beating I guess I'll quit. No mail. An hour later. I had to draw some beef and the mail has come bringing a *Sentinel* for us.

The circumlocution office: Dickens's satirical name for government bureaucracy in *Little Dorritt* (1855–57).

Harper's Weekly: Building on the success of *Harper's Monthly*, Harper Brothers launched *Harper's Weekly* in 1857. It quickly became one of the nation's leading magazines. *Harper's* coverage of the Civil War was second to none in accuracy and vividness. Its reporters traveled with the armies, and its artists and photographers recorded the carnage on the battlefield. The photographs were converted into etchings for publication, losing some verisimilitude in the process, but nevertheless giving the public its best look yet at the reality of war. Starting in 1862 *Harper's* began publishing Thomas Nast's brilliant political cartoons.

Gettysburg campaign: Maj. Gen. Jubal Early's division marches through Gettysburg, continuing east toward York, Pennsylvania.

Tullahoma campaign: Rosecrans's Federals win a sharp fight at Shelbyville, Tennessee, climaxing three days of skirmishes to break Bragg's line along the Duck River. Total casualties for the three days: Confederate 1,634; Union 521.

Saturday 27: I have only translated one exercise to day, as I read the paper till it was too hot for us to do anything. It has been hot again to day. I have cleaned my gun and blacked my traps and have been playing chess and back gammon. I won two of the neatest games of chess to day that I ever did, beating Badgero, fairly crushing him. This evening I drew a pair of pants, pair of shoes and a blouse. I have fared sumptuously to day, having two potatoes every meal. Very little cannonading yesterday and to day.

Gettysburg campaign: Maj. Gen. Jubal Early captures York, Pennsylvania. Other elements of the Army of Northern Virginia move on the Pennsylvania capital at Harrisburg. The main part of Lee's army reaches

Chambersburg. Meanwhile, Hooker and Halleck clash over control of the garrison at Harper's Ferry.

Sunday 28: It gets hot soon after daylight and keeps hot all day. Keeping hot ten or twelve hours. Company inspection at nine. Lieut Williams said our arms were in splendid condition and that we were in good trim too. Over half of our men are sick now. One in nearly every tent, besides Woodard and both of the lieutenants. There are only nineteen men left for duty. Fitts in our tent is quite sick this afternoon. I went with two men and got a good load of wood. Sykes came back from picket all right. He was below Vicksburg on the Warrenton road. He had a good view of Vicksburg and saw our four gunboats that are below town. I started with the canteens after water, but the church call sounded as men were gathering I went too. Our chaplain cannot preach but he is an old lecturer and can lecture. He spoke from "A cheerful heart doeth good like medicine" [Proverbs 17.22] and showed the power the mind has over the body and how often men might save their lives if they would only keep their spirits up. He did not speak long, yet said much and in such a manner that no one could take offense. Afterwards I went and got my water. It is a pleasant evening. I've been talking awhile with Woodard who is feeling better this evening. The moon shines bright and clear. After all this is a lovely climate and a beautiful land but Boom goes one of our old mortars. I guess I'll go to bed.

Proverbs 17.22: A merry heart doeth good like medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

Gettysburg campaign: Lincoln relieves Hooker, appointing Maj. Gen. George Gordon Meade commander of the Army of the Potomac. Stuart reaches Fairfax Court House.

Monday 29: I arose early and as soon as breakfast was over Sykes and I went and did our washing. After breakfast I went to the convalescent camp below here to see what terms I could get them to bake flour on. The baker said he gave a pound of bread for a pound of flour and would bake ours, so I took it down this evening, but will have to go again in the morning to finish the bargain as he was away when I took the flour. The Eleventh Mo went down to the river opposite Vicksburg last night; to day they brought back their colonel (Webber) mortally wounded and two men killed. Col

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Webber is one of the best officers in the brigade, young, yet brave and talented. He has won the love and admiration of the brigade. I talked awhile with Woodard this evening. He is some better. Fitts of our tent is very sick. The last few days he has gone down very fast.

Gettysburg campaign: Intent on finding Lee, Meade pushes his army rapidly north. Lee turns Hill's corps east toward Gettysburg with Longstreet to follow behind. Stuart fights a sharp skirmish at Winchester, Maryland. So far his raid is a success in prisoners and booty, but Federal troops are so numerous that Stuart is having difficulty finding a way to rejoin Lee.

Tuesday 30: I arose at just daylight and drew five days rations before breakfast. At six we had inspection of arms and were mustered for pay. Then I went down to the bakery and arranged about baking. We took Fitts to the hospital this morning. There are a great many sick now. Col Webber died last night. His remains are going north. Very little cannonading to day. Woodard is quite sick to day. I am going to stay with him to night. Davison and I had a hard tug at chequers. In six games I beat him twice and skunked him, and he beat me three times. I cleaned out Badgero quick this morning at three games of chess. I came the fools mate on him twice, which is done in four moves. I've written three exercises from *Ollendorff*. No mail for a long time. I guess it is played out.

There are a great many sick now: Three months of hard duty robbed the 8th Wisconsin of nearly a third of its strength. At the end of March, the regiment mustered 606 men present and fit for duty. By the end of June, according to Surgeon Murta's records, the number was down to 436. Hostile fire killed or incapacitated 22 men, disease 170 more. Dr. Murta worked hard to keep the death toll low, although the regimental history, in its ineffable way, gave much of the credit for healing the sick to Old Abe: "[Under] the inspiring influences of the Eagle, ever reminding them of the holy cause for which they were suffering, they conquered almost the pestilence. What but the talismanic Eagle could beacon hope and triumphant freedom amid destitution and sickness...?"

Gettysburg campaign: Stuart attacks Hanover, Pennsylvania, but Union cavalrymen under Brig. Gen. Hugh Judson Kilpatrick mount a furious counterattack. Stuart survives, but he is now in serious trouble, deep in

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enemy territory and separated from Lee by the marching columns of the Army of the Potomac. On the outskirts of Gettysburg, Confederate infantry from Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division of Hill's corps encounter Federal cavalry under Brig. Gen. John Buford. The rebel infantry falls back. Buford establishes a line on Seminary Ridge and sends word to his superiors that he has occupied a good position to oppose the Confederate advance. Meanwhile, Heth visits Hill to report the presence of a few blue soldiers, probably Pennsylvania militia, in Gettysburg. There is also a report of a large supply of badly needed shoes hidden in the town. Would Hill have any objection if Heth took his division into town in the morning to find the shoes? "None in the world," Hill replies.

Tullahoma campaign ends: Outmaneuvered at every turn by Rosecrans, Bragg abandons Tullahoma and retreats across the Elk River toward Chattanooga. Rosecrans has won a significant victory at small cost.

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Wednesday 1: I sat up with Woodard, watching the moon arise till I got to dozing several times. I then got my blankets and laid down in his tent so as to be ready if I was needed. He is some better this morning. After dinner I took a wheelbarrow and went and got our bread. It was a hot trip. Mail brought me a paper and a letter from Robert. A foraging party went out and brought back some peaches. Sykes was with the party. I drew a barrel of potatoes from the sanitary [Sanitary Commission]. Very hot since six this morning. We hear the funeral salute of some poor soldier several times a day now. Col Robbins and the adjutant went out a riding this evening. The colonels horse fell and hurt the colonel severely. Sykes wants me to hurry up as he is abed and wants to go to sleep.

Lt. Col. Jefferson: was still recovering from his wounds, and the injury to Robbins elevated Major Britton to temporary command of the regiment.

Battle of Gettysburg: Advancing early in the morning, Heth's division runs up against Buford's dismounted infantry. A fierce fight develops. Realizing that Heth faces more than militia, Hill reinforces him heavily. Maj. Gen. John Reynolds brings Federal infantry to reinforce the hard-pressed Buford. Urging the famed Iron Brigade into the fray, the highly respected Reynolds is killed by bullet through the head.

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Lee arrives to survey the situation. He is not prepared for a general engagement and is about to issue an order to withdraw when Ewell's corps, returning to the main army after its aborted foray toward Harrisburg, strikes the Union flank. Lee immediately orders Hill to renew his attack. Caught between Ewell and Hill, the Union line crumbles, the Federal soldiers fleeing through the streets of Gettysburg to Cemetery Ridge. Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock arrives to take command of the Union forces, skillfully deploying them in a line that grows stronger as reinforcements come in from the south. Lee has time for a final push, but Ewell delays until the chance passes with the fall of darkness.

Meade arrives on the scene late that night. Told his army holds an excellent position, he responds: "I'm glad to hear you say so, gentlemen, for it is too late to leave it."

Thursday 2: I arose in good season and wrote Robert a long letter before breakfast, which as usual was bread, meat and coffee. But Sykes and I had a little green corn boiled which was very good. After studying German awhile I went to the express boat *Prima Donna* and expressed fourteen dollars to William at Woodland, by Parkers Express Company. Another turn at German, four games of backgammon with Corporal Noteman, losing one. Laid around awhile after dinner, then got a wheelbarrow and got fifty loaves of bread and issued them. As I came back Col Webbers remains were being escorted to the river with military honors. Our colonel is not hurt as badly as was anticipated. I beat Davison five times and skunked him twice out of seven games. I got a letter from Phebe, a *Post* and a *Sentinel* and a paper from the Fox Lake Female College. Cannonading lively. Four exercises in German and a large days work.

Battle of Gettysburg: Over the objections of Longstreet, Lee designs a tremendous assault on the Federal line. The corps of Longstreet and Hill will advance in echelon by brigade from right to left, the attack building until the Union line cracks under the overwhelming pressure. Meanwhile, Ewell will attack the Federal right, preventing Meade from shifting reinforcements to threatened points. The attack begins in late afternoon, the two armies grappling in savage fighting for the Devil's Den, Little Round Top, the Peach Orchard, and the Wheatfield. Countless incidents of chance and courage save the Union line. Ewell again fails to attack when ordered, sending his corps forward too late to affect the day's outcome. Stuart finally rejoins the main army in midafternoon.

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Friday 3: I wrote a letter for Jacob Apple, a German in our company who cannot write English. Then I wrote to William. Mail came but brought nothing for us. Lots of cannonading. A drunken man in Co "K" was stabbed to day by a negro wench, he having kicked her. Lieut McDowell has bet with Badgero five dollars that Vicksburg will be ours before the sixth of July. I went a mile for bread as usual. Cooler this evening.

Third Vicksburg campaign: After forty-seven days under siege the garrison and population of Vicksburg can no longer endure. White flags appear along the fortifications. Generals Grant and Pemberton meet to negotiate surrender terms.

Battle of Gettysburg: In what will forever blot an otherwise shining record, Lee hurls Pickett's Charge against the Union center. The attack is a bloody disaster.

Saturday 4: Sykes bought a razor yesterday and this morning I got a strap and pitched in to shave myself for the first time while Sykes grinned at me. I got through pretty well with Mike Smiths assistance. Mail brought me letters from William and Carrie, Robert and Mrs Ezard formerly Hannah Hutchinson. All is well at home. All kinds of reports were stirring this morning and have been stirring all day about Vicksburg. The substance is that Vicksburg surrendered this forenoon at ten o'clock. Twenty five thousand prisoners were taken. So Vicksburg is ours at last. After dinner I drew and divided five days rations. We took our flour to the bakery but brought it back as we expected to move. A hot sultry day for the fourth.

Third Vicksburg campaign: The city surrenders. Federal officers begin paroling the 29,000 prisoners. Military stores include 172 cannon and 60,000 muskets. Casualties in the campaign (other than the prisoners surrendered) amount to about 9,000 for each side.

Gettysburg campaign: Meade does not attack, and Lee begins his retreat. Confederate casualties in the three-day battle are staggering: 3,903 dead, 18,735 wounded, and 5,425 missing of a total of some 75,000. Union casualties are 3,155 dead, 14,529 wounded, 5,365 missing of a total of 88,289.

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Sunday 5: We begin to get something near what was taken in Vicksburg as some of our boys have been there and returned. We have taken thirty thousand prisoners, eight thousand of whom are sick, a great many guns all unspiked, small arms and ammunition. Pemberton says we have destroyed an army of sixty thousand men since we crossed at Grand Gulf. The prisoners are to be paroled and taken by their leaders to a rebel military post. As soon as Vicksburg had surrendered Sherman started after Johnson with fifty thousand men. Johnson had better be moving or he will be surprised. Quite warm. John Morrison, who cooks for the officers made us some good bread to day for us. At six this evening we got orders to be ready to march immediately with three days rations and that we were going on boats. We got ready, but at nine got orders to remain all night and get some good rest. Co "C" buried a man this evening named Parker.

Gettysburg campaign: Lee's army continues to retreat toward the Potomac. Meade follows slowly.

Monday 6: We arose early and took breakfast getting ready to start, but the order to march was soon countermanded. We were to go to Lake Providence which had been attached by the rebels, but they got whipped and lost their artillery, so we remain. I have written to Phebe, then studied till noon. After dinner I studied awhile and then went after a barrel of water. We had quite a gale this evening which blew down several tents and made plenty of dust and there was a little rain. I've translated four pages and written four exercises. The marine brigade have drummed a man out of the service for sleeping on his post. His hair was cut off; his uniform taken from him and some old ones given to him and then drummed out to the rogues march. I saw a Katy Did or Southern cricket. They are the shape of a flea, of a light green color, about an inch long and can fly some. This one had a broken leg.

Rogue's march: A march played to announce the punishment of an offender. The melody was borrowed from the British army. The lyrics, which begin as follows, give a sense of the rhythm:

I left my home and I left my job
Went and joined the army

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If I knew then what I know now
I wouldn't have been so barmy.

Chorus:

Poor old soldier, poor old soldier
If I knew then what I know now
I wouldn't have been so barmy.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Sherman advances on the Mississippi state capital at Jackson where General Joseph E. Johnston has gathered some 30,000 troops.

Tuesday 7: Of course since Vicksburg has been taken I've been looking for a chance to go there. I could not get a pass yesterday as there were too many ahead of me, but our chance was first this morning. Sykes got the pass signed while I drew some beef and sent some men after a load of wood. We went down to the river and waited till ten before a boat started, when we went down on the *Rocket*. After turning a point three miles below we could see the spires across the point of land in the form of a peninsula between us and the town. We passed ten mortars that lay close to the bank. These mortars threw a shell weighing two hundred and twenty four pounds, first across the peninsula then across the river into town. A little lower down we passed the gunboat *Cincinnati*, which was sunk by the rebels some time ago. Her upper deck was out of water. Swinging around the point we came in view of some of the rebel works the town and a lot of steamboats. A few bulldogs of various caliber looked silently down upon us, allowing us to pass in quiet. The river is very narrow here. As soon as the *Rocket* stopped Sykes ran ashore on the plank and started up town. In front of the town and on the bank of the river there was a monster gun; the largest I ever saw. It is eleven feet long, eleven inch caliber or a hundred and sixty-pounder. It is three feet through at the breach and looks black and ugly. The necessary kinds of ammunition were piled around it in great quantities. The town is all sidehill being situated on a bluff. Up we went. Rebels without arms lay around everywhere and rebel officers were plenty. They put on more style than our officers do, which is some at least. The effects of our shot is visible all over town. There are but very few buildings that are not hit though many are not injured much. Several splendid blocks are burned. No pieces of shot or shell are laying around at all, but in the door yards they may be found carefully piled up. We passed

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the provost marshals office where the paroling was going on. They were paroled by companies. Most of the companies were small being about fifteen or twenty strong. They were laying around in regiments awaiting their turn. Many wanted single paroles so they could go home instead of to a parole camp, but they are not granted. Passing the deep cuts by the roadside we saw the holes they had dug to be out of the way of our shells. There are lots of them. We soon got tired of looking at these holes and began to seek refreshments. We searched in vain to find a place where we could get something to eat. It is the barrenest place I ever saw. Then we went down to the boat to try our chance their but could get nothing. As our boat was soon going back we waited and came with it about six, perfectly satisfied and I did not care whether ever I saw Vicksburg or not.

Bulldogs: Probably short-barreled artillery pieces.

Gettysburg campaign: Lee's army reaches Hagerstown, Maryland, but is unable to cross the flooded Potomac. Despite Lincoln's urging, Meade does not pursue vigorously.

Wednesday 8: Sykes and I went at work the first thing this morning and moved our tent about four feet. We built a table on a stump which stands in the tent and a shelf from a cracker box. We have more room and now it is away from the rest so the air can curculate all around it. It took us a long while. It rained enough to lay the dust last night and there was a great deal of thunder and lightening. I drew beef enough to make out three days rations. I've translated two exercises and read one of T. S. Aurthur's works entitled *The Bankers Wife*. It is the poorest of his works I ever read. No news. A mail came but there was nothing for us. Hartly Oliver of our company was taken to the hospital very sick to day. He is now the sickest patient in the hospital. A hot day.

The Banker's Wife by editor and temperance crusader Timothy Shay Arthur (1809–85). Ambrose had mentioned reading Arthur's *What can a Woman do?* on Aug. 17, 1862.

Port Hudson campaign ends: Port Hudson surrenders to Banks, adding another 5,500 prisoners and 60 more guns to the Union total for the week. In Lincoln's words: "The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea."

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Morgan's Ohio Raid begins: John Hunt Morgan leads 2,500 men across the Ohio into Indiana with the fanciful objective of inspiring a copperhead revolt.

Thursday 9: I did not do much during the forenoon except write a letter to Phebe. While writing it I got one from Robert. The folks are all well at home. The surgeon gives every man in the regiment a teaspoon full of medicine twice a day. It is a fluid and liquor is the principal ingredient. In playing chequers with Harry Austin this morning I got skunked twice though I got five games out of nine. Such work must stop. I have written five exercises and translated several pages. The Co "K" man that was stabbed is doing well.

Friday 10: I have been sick all day. Now it is evening I am feeling some better. My trouble is diarrhea. Sergt McCulloch of Company "F" died last night, and was buried at six this afternoon. He was a fine young man. I drew five days rations this forenoon, have taken the flour to the bakery and got some bread. I have kept as quiet as I could as I always do when I am sick.

Third Vicksburg campaign: Sherman and Johnston clash near Jackson.

Gettysburg campaign: Lee digs in at Williamsport to wait for the Potomac to fall.

Saturday 11: I felt much better this morning and have been improving since and call myself all right again. Sykes has been getting sick all day and to night he is quite sick and feverish. After breakfast I wrote to William since which I have been studying, reading and playing chequers. The river is raising and has been for some time. Fitts came back from the hospital to day. It has been trying to rain but has failed. I got a *Post* and a *Sentinel* by mail this forenoon.

Siege of Charleston: Federal forces attack but fail to carry Battery Wagner guarding the city's harbor.

New York City: The first draft is held pursuant to the Union Enrollment Act of March 3.

Brother to the Eagle

Louisiana to Mississippi

Sunday 12: Inspection at six this morning by major Britton, before inspection was over orders came for us to pack up and be ready to move on transports as soon as they should arrive. We did so and laid around till four when they came and we began to move. It took us till dark to get our stuff on the boat. Soon after we started down. We stopped a few minutes at Shermans Landing; then went down and tied up at Vicksburg. I laid around till we got orders to remain on board all night, when I laid down on deck, but they [the mosquitoes?] drove me in. The boat is so crowded that I do not think I shall get much rest to night. Sykes is no better. He has a high fever. Co "C" buried a man to day and Co "K" one. All the sick who are not able to come with us were left behind and will come tomorrow. It is raining this evening, not hard but slow and sure. I am very tired but quite well.

Gettysburg campaign: Meade arrives at Williamsport but fails to attack. Meanwhile, the Potomac has fallen, and Lee's engineers throw a pontoon bridge across.

Monday 13: We began to unload at daylight and as soon as the stuff was all on shore we put it on waggons, took it to the railroad depot and put it on the cars, then got on ourselves and started out. Funny riding on rebel cars, on a rebel railroad and drawn by a rebel engine. We took a great many cars and seven engines with Vicksburg. We went fifteen miles east on the roughest piece of railroad I ever saw. Then we got off and unloaded, it being about noon. Soon after dinner Sykes was taken again with fever. He first has a chill, then fever. We lay around till five when Co "D" went on picket and we that were left had to load the company stuff and after it was drawn a quarter of a mile we unloaded it again. Then I went and helped Sykes up to our new camp. Then I got him comfortable which was not much of a job as he only wanted to be still. Then I pitched our tent, levelled the ground made the bed and got Sykes into it and then made supper. It was now dark. I am much tireder than I was last night. I bet I will sleep well enough to night. The railroad bridge and a mile of trestle work here is burned and three transports have been burned near here. They were burned by the rebels before Vicksburg was invested. Oh hum!

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Sykes was taken again with fever: Apparently Sykes suffered a bout of malaria, a complaint that plagued the Northern troops in the "pestilential" Southern climate.

Oh hum!: meaning unclear.

Gettysburg campaign: Lee retreats across the Potomac.

Morgan's Ohio Raid: Morgan crosses into Ohio. The raid causes widespread consternation in the North but, in reality, the raiders are now fleeing for their lives.

New York City: The great draft riot erupts following the posting of the first names drawn in the draft. Some 50,000 rioters, most of them Irish workingmen, storm through the streets. Much of the violence is directed against Negroes.

Tuesday 14: Sykes was all right and bright again this morning and was up long before I was. As soon as breakfast was over I got stakes boards etc together and then revised the tent, making new stakes and built a new bunk, one that suits me. Soon after dinner Sykes was sick again. He has the regular chill fever. I think he is much better this evening than he has been for several days. Surgeon Murta came this evening with the sick who we left back. As soon as he got his medicines out, the sick call blew and he went at work. I expect him every minute to see Sykes as he has fever and the doctor is coming to see him. The Doctor is doing all he can for the sick men. Whittier, the orderly sergeant of Co "G" died to day on the way here. He has not been sick but a few days and has not been orderly but a few weeks. Fighting is going on at Jackson. Johnston is out there with thirty five thousand men and means to fight. Our forces are gradually closing up on the town. The cars brought out a great load of artillery ammunition out to day. This looks like shelling at Jackson pretty soon. Our commissary cannot get rations as they are all being sent to the front. Our rations are out this evening. I hope we can get some tomorrow. Mail brought me a letter from Joseph and one from Alice.

Chill fever: malaria.

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General Joseph E. Johnston: This is Ambrose's first mention of General Joseph E. Johnston. An 1829 graduate of West Point and one of the most respected generals in either army, Johnston had commanded Confederate troops in Virginia in the early months of the war. Severely wounded at the Battle of Fair Oaks (Seven Pines), he was replaced by Robert E. Lee. He took overall command in the West in November 1862. President Davis and Johnston disliked each other intensely, an antipathy dating from their days at the military academy. Though Johnston was too popular to shunt aside, Davis frustrated his plans by meddling in operations and refusing to agree to Johnston's strategies.

Gettysburg campaign ends: Meade advances but finds Lee's camps empty. Though badly hurt, the Army of Northern Virginia has escaped to fight again.

Morgan's Ohio Raid: Spending twenty-one hours a day in the saddle, the raiders ride through the outskirts of Cincinnati.

Wednesday 15: Hip. I never felt better in all my life than I have to day. Such hard work for the last few days has set me to rights. Sykes is much better to day and has had no chill this afternoon. I have drawn five days rations of everything except meat, there is no meat to draw. I have written to father and Alice. There is no news from the front. A man named Furgeson joined company "I" yesterday. He has been at Cario ever since we went there in 1862. A warm day.

Hip: meaning unclear.

Thursday 16: Sykes still keeps better. His fever was very light, he almost had none. I have been busy snaking a table and getting a bunk into shape. Most of the boys are building shades. About four orders came to be ready to march at five, with all the rations we had on hand. I had to draw and issue some meat and eat my supper. When this was done the bugle blew and away we went across Black River towards Jackson. I never saw the Eighth Wisconsin and Eleventh Missouri so small as they are to night. They are simply squads. The Eleventh is smaller than we are. We went out four miles and then bivouaced for the night. I am alone to night as Sykes is not able to come. This is the first time I've left him behind on a march.

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Third Vicksburg campaign ends: After several days of skirmishing with Sherman, Johnston evacuates Jackson.

Draft riots: Troops from the Army of the Potomac suppress the riots in New York City. Damage is estimated at \$1,500,000, the dead and wounded at about 1,000. Riots in Boston and other cities subside.

Western theater: An odd period follows the fall of Vicksburg and Jackson. Grant suggests moving south to take Mobile. Halleck, however, has not abandoned his concept of war in the West as a war of posts rather than maneuver. He orders Grant's powerful army dispersed to Texas, Arkansas, Natchez and other posts. Halleck's refusal to let Grant continue his successful campaign may have reflected a lingering dislike of his subordinate. Lincoln and Stanton, distracted by their attempts to get Meade to move aggressively against Lee, do not intervene. Grant, a man of abstemious habits while on campaign, reportedly let his self-control slip.

Friday 17: We were up early and after breakfast moved on again. We passed through Edwards Station where the rebels made their last stand before falling back to Black River. We halted at Champion Hill which we were to occupy but a brigade had got there before us and were pitching their tents. After resting a little we marched back two miles, stacked arms and disposed of ourselves as best we could. During the afternoon I went out a piece and got some green corn which Woodard cooked per contract, first cutting it from the cob, boiling it and seasoning to taste. It was very good and was relished. I got some boards and made a shelter so as to be ready if it rains. All the way from Black River out as far as here, the marks of the terrible conflicts that were enacted there last May are very plain. Shot and shell lie along the road and the trees are marked and bruised. I did not go to where the strife was the hardest. The road is strewn with old clothes and the debris of battle.

Saturday 18: I rested miserably last night. This forenoon I went and got lots of blackberries which were mighty good, but it made me sweat to get them. Some of the men who were left back at camp came to day bringing a mail in which I had a letter from father and a *Sentinel*. I have felt dull and have passed the day as best I could I also got some more corn. As hot as usual.

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Siege of Charleston: Federal troops mount a costly assault on Battery Wagner. The 54th Massachusetts of Negro troops suffers 25% casualties, including its commander, Col. Robert Gould Shaw. Total Union casualties number 1,515 against 174 Confederate.

Morgan's Ohio Raid: With less than half of his original force, Morgan arrives at Buffington, Ohio, where he hopes to re-cross the Ohio River into friendlier territory. His way is blocked by Union fortifications too strong to assault in the waning light.

Sunday 19: Ho hum. I did not stir around much this morning till late. Then I got breakfast and poked around as best I could. As I could not stand the ennui I went out on another scout with some of the boys. I got all the blackberries I wanted besides filling my cup. I also got some corn. At four orders came to march at five. I put my corn on the fire and got it cooked just as the bugle blew. I hurried, packed up my traps, put them on, grabbed my cooked corn and joined my command eating as I went. We went back to where we camped on the evening of the sixteenth and camped. Last night we got orders that Richmond was taken and that Johnston had evacuated Jackson and was occupied by Sherman. I was beaten out when we halted.

Richmond was taken: a fanciful rumor.

Morgan's Ohio Raid: After a 900-mile pursuit, Federal troops surround Morgan's brigade at Buffington, Ohio. Morgan's exhausted command collapses after a brief fight. The Union cavalry takes 700 prisoners. Morgan escapes with about 330 men.

Monday 20: I did not feel like moving this morning, consequently only got up in time to make and eat my breakfast. We marched back to camp arriving there at eight o'clock. Sykes was well again and on duty. After dinner I played chequers with Harry Austin awhile, but he was a little too much for me. This afternoon I drew five days rations and during the hottest part too. I nearly melted. The heat came down on poor me. But I stand my toils pretty well. Woodard is pretty sick to day. He has the chill fever. Jacob Markla my German friend was taken to the hospital while we were gone, he is doing very well. From here to Champion Hill the country is quite level and is good for farming. But Gen Grants spring campaign has

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hindered farming some. It is rumored that Fort Sumpter has been taken, also that we are going to move camp six miles up the river in a few days. We signed the payroll for May and June.

Fort sumpter [Sumter] has been taken: another fanciful rumor.

Tuesday 21: I arose early and went after a turn of water as the man who helps the cook sprained his ankle last night. I have not felt well to day, but am some better this evening. Yesterday Harry Austin rather worsted me at playing chequers but to day I beat him with interest. I beat him till he threw down the men in a rage. I was then four games and a skunk ahead. I visited the hospital to day. Markla and Christy are both some better. I have been reading one of Beadles dime novels and have commenced to read the history of the United States. I have kept quiet for me and have written a letter to Joseph.

Beadles dime novels: The firm of Beadle and Adams began selling these dime novels in 1860. The first, Malaeska: The Indian Wife of the White Hunter by Anne Stephens, sold an estimated 300,000 copies in its first year. The books were hugely popular in Civil War camps. Ned Buntline wrote for the series. Edward L. Wheeler penned the famous Deadwood Dick series for Beadle and Adams.

Wednesday 22: After all was done last night and I was just going to bed orders came to march at four in the morning. So I was up long before daylight packing up. Everything being ready at five we started looking like a lot of pack mules with our great knapsacks strapped on our backs. We reached our destination six miles up the river by nine o'clock and stopped in an old camp. I appropriated a table the first thing. The ninth corps passed to day on their way from Jackson to Haynes Bluff. There were regiments representing New Hamshire, New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. In fact the greatest amount of eastern troops we have seen yet. In the ninth Rhode Island I tried to find some one I knew. I found a Mr Gill a brother to some people I used to know in Rhode Island. They are stylish fellows and put on the parade of war. They were astonished at the audacity of us Western soldiers. They do not jayhawk any and have to walk up to the rack. One day one of them killed a pig. He was arrested and taken to the brigade officer of the day an eastern man who sent him to the division officer of the day who was one

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of our western captains. He looked at him and said, "so you killed a pig did you?" "Yes sir" answered the veteran half scared now, but usually brave enough. "And what did you do with it" sternly demanded the officer? "I took it to my tent." "Then" answered the officer, "go to your tent and eat it." The soldier went off astonished. They think they will dip in a little more than they have been doing. There is what has been a splendid mansion and plantation here but it is now all destroyed and going to ruin. The buildings and machinery on this place must have cost twenty thousand dollars at least. We are going to camp in a field near here. It rained awhile this afternoon but has cleared up again.

They do not jayhawk any and have to walk up to the rack: Jayhawk had come to mean ruthless foraging. To walk (or stand) up to the rack meant to accept one's duty without complaining.

Thursday 23: I got a candlestick and a chair, then fixed up my table and put a bottom in my chair as it had a poor one. After dinner it rained quite brisk for awhile. As our tents had come we put up our tent as soon as the rain was over. I dismissed Fitts from our tent and we have taken Sergt Boughton in his place. Boughton will now have more room to attend to his duties as acting orderly [sergeant] now Woodard is sick. I was determined to get rid of Fitts. We carried our boards and things to one new camp sixty rods and by the time our tent was up we got orders that we would have to move our camp nearly a mile on higher ground, as there was too much standing water in this one. This was rather provoking but I put up a bunk. I was bound to do it unless we had orders to move before I got one built. Then we made and ate supper eating it from a table and sitting on a chair. Corporal John Smith of company "F" died yesterday at Black River Bridge after we left. The twenty ninth Wis staid last night where we left yesterday morning. I am sorry we were not there as I wanted to see them. Sykes went on picket at five o'clock. A great many of the boys are sick with chill fever. I think this will be a healthy place. Many of the officers think we are going to stay here a long time. I went around over the ruined buildings and also in the house where there was the greatest wreck of furniture I ever saw. Pieces of gilded picture frames, broken secretaries, bookcases, bureaus and chairs were strewn all over. That which was not gilded was veneered with mahogany. There was some of the most splendid furniture I ever saw. This is the result of war and I could not feel sorry even at this wanton distruction. If we do not destroy everything as we go. The rebels

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come and harbor when we leave. When we enlisted I did not believe in the fire and sword doctrine, but I do now. And, I firmly think that had this policy been followed from the first, this rebellion would not have lasted till now. Protecting Rebel property has been the great curse of the army of the Potomac.

Friday 24: We all expected to move this morning and men were sent out to clean the new camp ground. About noon word came that our division would be along in a day or so and we would move with them nearer to the Yazoo River. An idea seems to prevail that we are going to some place on boats. Sykes was brought home sick this morning in a buggy, his fever having come on again. He was very sick then but is better now. We drew a barrel of potatoes after dinner, but there was not a good potato in the whole barrel, we had to bury them. I have written to William. We got orders to move camp about sundown and I've been tugging hard at it. We have got our tent up and that is about all.

Saturday 25: I awoke an old man this morning but had no time to bother with age or trouble as I had to hunt up some beef. After walking a mile with my knees almost knocking together with weakness I found a beef creature just shot. I waited an hour till it was dressed, then getting my share on a hoehandle with an old sack on my shoulders to keep off the blood etc, I shouldered it and carried it three quarters of a mile to camp, being helped a little by one of our boys that I overtook he having a mule. Then I made and ate my breakfast. Shermans old corps (now Steeles) began to come along this morning and either men or trains have been passing all day. Gen Tuttle our division commander passed. He told our men that he was going to find a camp for us on Bear Creek and move us there as soon as he could. Sykes kept pretty smart till about five when his fever came on but not very hard. I got a letter from Robert containing two postage stamps and one from William with seven. Tommy came along. He is quite well and has only had one sick spell since we left him at Grand Gulf. As soon as he was gone I drew five days rations, getting through just before dark. I felt quite sick this forenoon, but am better this evening. The passing troops have been running in as they always do to see our eagle. She is a great wonder. All spring that bird has been sought for by our men. They ask all kinds of questions about her and "Old Abe" gets many a cheer from our passing men. She though a female bird is named after our president. Taps have just beaten which means "lights out" but we pay no

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attention to them. I could burn a candle all night if I wanted to. But as I am sleepy I will read a chapter and turn in.

Shermans old corps (now Steeles): Ambrose was misinformed. Sherman still commanded XV Corps, as he had since January, Steele its First Division.]

Sunday 26: My limbs were stiff and heavy this morning, so much that when I went after water this morning I had to rest several times from pure exhaustion. I have not been well to day and Sykes has been quite sick, not being able to sit up. I wrote to Robert. We had quite a shower this evening and it was followed by the prettiest rainbow I have seen for sometime. Company "D" reported seventeen sick this morning. We are almost a helpless set. I am slowly getting sick and weaker. The troops near us are the greatest shooters I ever saw. They are shooting all the time. Basset of Co "F" a strong healthy man when we left Black River Bridge died yesterday. We are losing men pretty fast. Boughton our new tent mate is a married man and about thirty two years old. He takes hold and helps around the tent as a man ought to do. I think we can get along pretty well with him. We have received orders to have reville at four in the morning, strike tents at five and march at six.

Morgan's Ohio Raid ends: Cornered at New Lisbon, Ohio, Morgan surrenders.

Monday 27: Up early and getting ready, we had to carry all of our stuff on the color line. We marched at six. The waggons taking only tents and officers baggage. Sykes was unable to go with us. We marched four miles in a northwestern direction carrying our immense knapsacks; when we had orders to make dinner while a camp ground was picked out and soon after orders came that we would remain all night. I got my dinner as soon as I could, borrowed a mule, mounted him and started back after Sykes. I found our old camp occupied by other troops. I got Sykes and his things on the mule and walked back with him carrying his gun. He is some better to day. Riding the mule did not tire him much. I then got a good supper for us, of green corn, coffee, meat and biscuits. The pioneer corps are staying near here and we have seen Tommy. Capt Hickok company "I" has resigned and is going home. Some think we are not going to stay here but go to Natchez. I'm pretty well.

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Tuesday 28: At nine Capt Williams and I went and got some blackberries, when we came back orders had come to move, which we did about fifty rods setting up a regular irregular camp. Our regiment is in the shape of an irregular rhomboid. Owing to some difficulty our camp did not get marked till late, but I got one tent up just before it began to rain, which it did about five. Boughton was sick last night and has been all day. Our tents are all on one side of the street which is a narrow one. Sykes is improving. Two numbers of *Harpers Weekly* came to day. Sykes and I have sent for it, also a German testament which Robert has sent me, a *Sentinel* and a *Post*. Rost, a drummer of Co "B" died to day. He was taken out of the guardhouse just in time to die. Being too sick to do duty he refused to do it and was put in the guardhouse. He was only taken out in time to die. Orders came last night from General Sherman to grant furloughs to enlisted men of thirty days. Woodard and Davison are going from our company. Water is scarce here. I went a mile after some this evening in the rain and could not have got it if the guard had known I had belonged to the second Brigade. It is so scarce that the first brigade guard it for their own use. The work of moving has cured me up I guess for I feel all right again. It rained three hours this evening. Many of the men are very sick, making it very hard duty for those who are well.

Capt. Williams: 1st Lt. Benjamin Williams had been in command of Co. D since Capt. Dawes had been wounded at the Battle of Corinth on Oct. 3, 1862. Since companies were supposed to be commanded by captains, Ambrose occasionally grants Williams the honorific title. Williams was finally promoted to the rank in the spring of 1864.

Wednesday 29: As soon as breakfast was over I went to see if we could get our flour baked, but failed. When I came back I brought some shakes and put up a bunk, then I went and got some more shakes and a mess of corn at the same time. I then made a little table. Sykes some better. I wrote or attempted to write a letter to Phebe and I finished it but how the gnats bothered me. This afternoon Tommy came and I went back with him getting some water etc. It is a fine evening.

Shake: a shingle split from a block of wood. Cedar is best, splitting easily and making a long-lasting shingle. Since a shake was often three or four feet long, it could be—as in this case, apparently—substantial enough to build a rough bunk or table.

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Thursday 30: Oh what a horrid place for water, the last thing last night and the first this morning after breakfast was hurrying after water. We are in a central position away from water. We being a mile and a half from it in every direction. I hate to say anything against officers, but during the last month our regimental and Brigade commanders have shown an incompetency that ought to be rewarded with dismissal from the service. Company "I" buried a man to day named James Kendall. Since we first went to Youngs Point our regiment has had fifteen die of disease. I have studied German a few minutes to day and wrote one exercise. Sykes and Boughton are both much better. It has been a nice fine day and not so very hot. During the last month there has been in the company a marked difference towards me, perhaps the men are beginning to appreciate my services a little at last.

Friday 31: A hot sultry day. As Sykes did not report sick this morning he was put on duty to go after water. After drawing some meat I went in his place. It was a hard, long job filling a barrel with water where we could get it. I was glad I went for him. I have not felt like studying so I have played chequers instead. But this will never do. I must go at it in real earnest. We had a large mail this evening, bringing me two letters for me and some papers. Fanny wrote me quite a letter and sent it with one from father. The other was from Robert. I have written to Phebe. Woodard and Davison got their furloughs this evening. Another corps has gone to Natchez in our place.

August 1863

Saturday 1: I've just came in from a tramp to the creek, where Sykes and I went and had a wash. As we came back I went to an old camp and got some pieces of cracker boxes to make a table with. Then I drew five days rations. I have written two exercises in German besides doing some miscellaneous work. It rained some between four and six this evening. I bought my first can of condensed milk. It is good and makes our tea taste like tea at home. We had rather a stylish supper anyway. Good biscuits and milk in our tea. Woodard started on his furlough last night. Davison will not go till we are paid off. No mail. Down at the creek I saw the queerest little snake that I ever did see. It was eight inches long, yet no thicker than a fine knitting needle. Tommy lifted it on a dry weed. It would dart its head around regular snake fashion. It was a bright copper color. I could not

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help thinking of horse-hair snakes, little as I believe in them. It's tail came to a point almost as fine as a needle.

Horse-hair snakes: According to an old wive's tale, a horse hair dropped in a barrel of water would turn into a snake.

Sunday 2: Soon after breakfast we got paid, after which Davison started home on his furlough. Sykes and I sent home forty dollars by him, which he will express to William when he gets to an express office. I have written to William. We had a shower this afternoon as we had yesterday. Lieut Williams gave me all the company money (\$22.50) which I am to use at discretion. I have read eleven chapters in my German testament to day. I can read it pretty well. It is a bright clear night after the rain. The crickets are singing good night to us and will sing us to sleep.

Monday 3: I've not been very well to day, though when not doing duty I have been dinging away at my German. I have written four exercises. It has been a hot sultry and is quite warm this evening. I made a writing table this morning. Shermans congratulatory order to his corps (the fifteenth) was read to day.

Dinging: striking or denting.

Tuesday 4: Unwell to day. I read four pages in my German reader but have not written any exercises. I have written to Robert and Fanny. Getting restless this afternoon I made a washboard which we will use in the morning if we do not move. Lieut Col Jefferson came here this morning. He has been away a month on detached service. Just at dark the mail came bringing me a letter, the *Sentinel* and *Harpers Weekly*. Which have filled the evening hours very pleasantly. All are well at home. We have had another shower this afternoon.

Charleston: Federal attempts to capture the city continue as soldiers mount the 200-pound Parrot rifle, the "Swamp Angel."

Wednesday 5: Sykes and I went and washed this morning, as we had to go three quarters of a mile we took some washing for the other boys for which we got a dollar and seventy cents. I came up to camp for some soap and found the whole thing astir. They were moving camp about ten rods. Our

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tent came where there was a great stub to be cut out. Leaving Sykes to take care of himself, I helped Boughton to clear it out and put up our tent. This took two hours hard work, then went to Sykes who had got through and was waiting for me to come and help him carry up the things. We got back just at noon. During the afternoon I have put up our bunk and been rigging up our tent generally. I am quite tired and will go to bed early. Maxwell and Henry J Robinson were take to the hospital sick to day. During the work of to day I got the hottest I ever was.

Thursday 6: As soon as breakfast was over I got a squad of men and went and drew five days rations, but only got about half of the rations. After studying I went about two miles and filled the canteens with some poor water. Getting tired of study about four, I made a paddle and went and helped a detail to build a brick oven which took till night. Always before they have been built voluntarily. As we had some poor bread made in the last one, those who did not help any, abused me a great deal about it, so I then made up my mind the next one would be done by detail and it has been. Making ovens with me is played out. Two men were buried from our regiment to day. Worth of company "C" and a corporal of company "B." Since dark, I've been translating from *Ollendorff*. Today I have translated and written six long exercises. I feel like writing to night though I have written a great deal during the day. I wish I could get a letter from somebody; as it is about time.

Paddle: There would have been numerous uses for a paddle in camp. In this case it probably would have been for mixing mud for mortar.

Friday 7: Many people would hardly think I was cut out for a barber and I do not think I am myself. But this forenoon I scraped fifty cents from men's chins with a razor, and did good business too. They wanted me to shave them which I did for a dime apiece. This has rather enfringed on my studies though. Four exercises in all, I have translated, but they were harder and longer than those were yesterday. A man in company "B" is dead and another in company "G" named Fisher is also dead. Our men are dying fast. We had bread at supper time. Sykes is on picket. Very hot. I have written to father to day.

Saturday 8: The deeds of to day need recording as much as those of any other day. Having considerable to do I have not even looked at my studies.

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I mended my coat, sewed on three buttons and would have sewed on another if I could have found it. I pulled that old watch out of my knapsack, pulled it in pieces and put it together again and also drew the rest of the five days rations. I had a hard, sturdy tug at chequers with Mike Smith. Tommy came and we persuaded him to stay to supper and we had a good one. I went back with him to the pioneer corps and got a knife he gave me sometime ago. Mail brought me a paper and a letter from William. The heat has not been so oppressive to day. I almost begin to think the weather is getting cooler. During the spring and summer marches and while we have been in camps I have tended very closely to the rations. If the cooks wanted anything; I made it my business to get it for them someway. This almost made my position like that of a servant. Now, if a stick of wood or pail of water is wanted, the cook comes and tells me, then goes and waits for it. I am not going to keep in this fix any longer. I will draw the rations and see that the men are furnished. But I am not cook and will have nothing to do with it. I got pretty mad over it to day. As the water waggons did not come till after dinner, the cook was running to me every five minutes about it. This will play out. I have cleaned my traps and been working at some little yet needful things nearly all the time.

Sunday 9: Inspection by batallion at six, which passed off[f] well. I then wrote to William and Carrie. After dinner Boughton and I went to look at a well that is being dug. It is over twenty feet deep and no signs of water. We came back by the hospital and went in to see how Robinson was. He lay on his back looking awful. Little did we think as we looked at him that [he was] so near the end of his troubles. We had not been in camp long when word came that he was dead and soon after sunset we buried him with military honors. He is about twenty years old and is an only son. I was one of the escort for the first time and I hope it may be the last time I have to fire the farewell shot over the remains of a comrade. I hope I may not die in the service. It was like pulling teeth to get men to go and bury Robinson. To my shame I must say it. Of course men could be ordered out and would have to go, but that way was not taken. They were persuaded to go. I do not want to die among a sett of men that would not bury me if they could help it. Sykes was one of the detail to dig the grave. Several of us chibbed together and bought a barrel of good new potatoes. Eight chibbed together each paying a dollar. Rather warm to day.

Chibbed: chipped?

Brother to the Eagle

Monday 10: Another hard days toil over. Any work that will help do any good is willingly done. First I made a little box to put my dishes in, then a stationary table to put our super abundant trash upon, getting the material from a cracker box, then I went after water. Dinner was nicely over when I drew five days rations. After some miscellaneous work about the rations I went again after water going to Bear Creek after it which took till supper. Since then I have been getting crotches etc to build a shade over our and in front of our tent. I played two games of chess with Lieut McClure of Co "F" beating him in a hurry. Sykes was taken sick this morning from over work yesterday on duty. He has lain on his bunk all day. He is much better this evening. G. C. Thomas of our company was taken to the hospital to day. A very hot day. It almost frizzled me while I was after water.

Crotch: a pole with a forked end used as a prop.

Helena, Arkansas: General Steele begins an expedition against Little Rock.

Tuesday 11: We finished our shade and it has paid us already for our work, for it has been a very warm day. After studying awhile I went to Lucas of company "K." He lent me a volume of *Memoirs of Daniel Websters Public Life* which I read awhile. Then I went after water. Many may think bringing three or four canteens of water is not much of a job. Let them try it when the thermometer is blood heat in the shade, under a burning sun about a mile and a half and if they keep a diary it will be recorded as sure as effect follows cause. My blank book that I write German in I am going to use for a general scribbling book. *Ollendorffs* exercises are so long that it is to tedious to write them down. I have translated nine exercises to day. To night I stopped at the thirty third lesson and have translated the sixty-eighth exercise. Sykes has been sick all day and it has been quite warm. I have written to Robert.

Memoirs of Daniel Webster's Public Life: The great American statesman Daniel Webster (1782–1852) did not write his personal memoirs and this book was probably a collection of his orations. (The word *memoirs* in Ambrose's day had the sense of public documents or biography; *autobiography* is a more recent meaning.) As the great defender of Union, Webster was revered by dedicated Unionists like Ambrose.

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Wednesday 12: Sykes has been quite sick again all day. When not after water or waiting on him I have been studying. This forenoon I reviewed my German, the afternoon I spent in miscellaneous reading and amusements and this evening I've dug into *Ollendorff*. I mean to follow this way as much as I can. Read German and do my writing in the forenoon, reading and amusement in the afternoon and at night study *Ollendorff*. This will reduce it to a system. *Ollendorff* is getting pretty tough now. It has been a very hot day and I have not felt well. Our sick list still keeps very large, twelve in camp besides Lieut Williams and four in the hospital. Lieut Williams started home on leave of absence this morning. Co "F" buried a man named Groves. He was a large strong man.

Thursday 13: Sykes is much better to day, though he has kept pretty quiet and has not been eating much. I have gone over six pages of *Ollendorff* and I read faithfully in my reader all forenoon. Twice have I been for water and I have written to Robert. Very warm has it been and it will keep getting warmer every day till there is some rain to cool the ground. One days beef have I drawn. S. L. Burrington has returned from the hospital and is looking very well. Baker, the cook and I are the only two men in the company from Lieut Williams down who have not reported sick since we left Duckport last spring. We have not been exposed on guard like the rest and have done more work than any other two. These are the only reasons I can give for our good fortune.

Friday 14: Sykes still better. He has moved around considerable to day and this evening he has eaten something. I had just mastered one page of the reader when Boughton came and told me that I was the cooks wood and water man. He could not oblige me to go as I am exempt from all such duty, but as all the other non-commissioned officers are taking their turn I take mine. Doing this has made it so I have only read another page in the reader and *Ollendorff* has been unopened. I had to go after and fill two barrels of water and carry some rails and cut them up into wood. Christy returned to the company from the hospital. He has been there a long time. We had dress parade at six thirty, about two hundred men were present. Our company had eighteen. Hot. It was found out this morning that some negros in company "K" had stolen some money, rings and a watch, which were found on their persons. They were suspended by the neck and whipped till they owned up, when they were whipped worse. Capt Smith of Co "B" being sheriff. Two of them had lied about a third and got him

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whipped while he claimed to be innocent. They finally exculpated him, saying he had taken nothing and that they had lied about him. The two are now in the guardhouse, sore and frightened because Capt Smith told them he was going to hang them in the morning. I was after water and did not witness the whipping. I have just drawn a days beef.

Some negros in company 'K': Although Ambrose's description makes it sound like these were soldiers, they were almost certainly servants hired from among the "contrabands" in the area. There were no integrated units in the Union army during except in the sense that white officers commanded Negro regiments. (Interestingly, naval crews were frequently integrated, as was traditional on many merchant ships.)

Saturday 15: Saturday is a regular day for cleaning up our accoutrements for Sunday inspection. I have cleaned mine thoroughly. Sykes is all right again but is rather peaked. I've advanced three pages in the reader and have not looked into *Ollendorff*. I've been after water twice. Mail brought me a letter from Joseph and the *Sentinel* and *Harpers Weekly*. It has been warm, too warm to read during the hottest part of the day. Joseph has been sick.

Sunday 16: Breakfast early and inspection at six thirty after which I drew five days rations. Then I wrote to Joseph and to Alice. I have read some during the day. A shower came up about three. We set our cups disches to catch water and held our canteens. We caught two pails full. Lieut Williams is pretty sick to day. No dress parade.

Chickamauga campaign opens: After taking his time in careful preparation—much to the frustration of Halleck, Stanton, and Lincoln—General Rosecrans marches the Army of the Cumberland from the vicinity of Tullahoma toward the Tennessee River. Meanwhile, General Burnside advances south from Lexington, Kentucky, toward Knoxville, Tennessee. It is Rosecrans's plan to catch Bragg in an immense envelopment.

Monday 17: I was up early and got all the small work done before breakfast. As soon as breakfast was over I took my reader and by noon had mustered six pages beside doing some other work. After dinner I read awhile than went down to Bear Creek and washed and filled the canteens. I've been working all evening at *Ollendorff*. I cannot tell what I have done

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with it. Every exercise gets a little more complicated and harder. I studied till it all seemed to be in a knot, when I laid it down and prepared for a shower that was coming on. Sykes is on duty on company fatigue. The division surgeon had inspected the sick of the regiment. Some of the sick are getting furloughs others are going to be sent to northern hospitals. Capt Green Co "F" brought a rumor from Vicksburg that we are to reinforce the "Army of the Potomac" pretty soon as Shermans corps has been ordered there. Lieut Williams very sick.

Siege of Charleston: Federal guns open a massive bombardment of Fort Sumter, whose guns have mostly been removed to the city. Over the next eight days, over 5,000 shells will reduce the fort to rubble.

Tuesday 18: This forenoon I read four pages in the reader. At four and a half we had a general inspection by Lieut Sargent of Co "G" who is brigade inspector. The inspection and getting ready for it used up the afternoon. We had quite a shower this evening and caught a lot more water. The leaves are beginning to fall pretty fast. I have not studied much this evening as some of the boys came in to visit. Regular drill to day but no dress parade.

Wednesday 19: My left shoulder is a little lame; the cause of it I cannot tell. It seems like rheumatism. After reading three pages of German I went to Division Headquarters with our surplus hardbread four hundred pounds which I got a receipt for, after fumbling around about two hours by the commissary and he had deducted twenty pounds for lost and spoiled. They are the most bungling lot of commissaries I ever came across. I've felt so dull during the rest of the day that I have done nothing. We got some papers and I a letter from Phebe. I had got through reading them and had taken up *Ollendorff* when Boughton got scared at some of the boys making a noise, as it was after taps and he said the light must go out. I complied but it went against the grain. Day before yesterday I turned back several pages of *Ollendorff* so as to get a new start as an engine does when it gets stuck. As the exercises are difficult, I thought it better to understand them thoroughly as I went along. "Be sure you are right, then go ahead."

Got scared: Apparently, Orderly Sergeant Boughton was concerned that he might be reprimanded for not enforcing the lights-out regulation.

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Be sure you are right, then go ahead: motto of the American hero David "Davy" Crockett (1786–1836).

Thursday 20: I've done a good days work. I mean in the line of study. Everything else seems secondary to me even though they require attention first. As it was raining I stuck to my reader till noon, as it was cool I read ten pages. The reader is composed of short and interesting storys and anecdotes. During the afternoon I drew five days rations. G. C. Thomas returned from the hospital; he has not been there very long. Sykes has not been well to day but is some better this evening.

Arizona Territory: Col. Kit Carson moves against the Navajo. His campaign will rob the Indians of their winter foodstuffs, forcing them to surrender or starve.

Friday 21: This forenoon I read four pages besides other duties. I read awhile after dinner then wrote to Robert. Briggs the color bearer being away, I carried the national colors on dress parade. I've had my dress coat mended and some new chevrons put on, which Boughton gave me. It looks well and will be a good coat for next winter. Tommy came on a mule. All well.

Chickamauga campaign: The Army of the Cumberland reaches the Tennessee River southwest of Chattanooga.

Lawrence, Kansas: The raider William Quantrill burns the abolitionist stronghold, murdering 150 men and wounding another 30. It is perhaps the worst atrocity yet in a conflict that is increasingly a war on civilians.

Saturday 22: While going after water this morning I could not help noticing how quiet and still everything was in the woods and the air had a peculiar dampness as it generally has before a rain. If I had been in Wisconsin I should have expected a great shower before noon. It kept fine however till after dress parade when we had a little shower. I read four pages this forenoon and this afternoon I have cleaned up my traps. This evening I've been writing and playing chequers. Mail brought a *Post* and *Harpers Weekly*.

Siege of Charleston: The "Swamp Angel" commences firing.

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Sunday 23: It is Sunday evening and the crickets are singing as they do at home and distant voices are speaking much the same. Four of us are around a table all reading but me and I am writing as if I was at home. But we are not at home, a long thousand miles are we from there camped in an enemy's country. After inspection at half past six this morning I wrote to Father and sent fifteen cents for the *Phrenological Journal* for August. Finished reading the Book of Joshua fourteen chapters and read several chapters of Matthew from my German Testament. At four I was entirely played out, tired of reading, writing and everything else. I picked up my pencil and wrote the following, after which I went to reading.

I'm tired of reading, I'm tired of talking
I'm tired of sitting, I'm tired of walking
The bright sun is shining down on the tent
Through on my book where there is a rent.

Why all this languor, why all this need
Of some trifling want to make the soul speed
For in the great Book it plainly is told.
That moments of Sabbath are moments of gold

Cast off this languor, cast off this will
Of wanting to idle so quiet and still
Take up that volume which besides thee does lay
It gently will guide thee in the right way.

It has been very hot, at dress parade the sweat fairly ran from me. Sykes and I sang awhile this evening. I have passed a pleasant day. Oh how we can live when we do get home once again. Samuel Fausnaught was taken to the hospital to day.

The American Phrenological Journal and Life Illustrated was published in New York by Fowler and Wells beginning in 1861. Phrenology was the pseudo-science of determining character by the conformation of the skull.

Siege of Charleston: The "Swamp Angel" explodes on its 36th round, killing several of its crew.

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Monday 24: A curious change came over me yesterday. All at once it seemed as if I changed from a boy to a man. I was astonished at it but could not help it. I am getting old enough anyway and ought to take the hint. My only wish is that I may be a good one. I think there was not a game of cards played in "D" yesterday. Six pages in my reader and four in *Ollendorff* fills up my list for to day. During the afternoon I read Websters speeches on the completion of the Bunker Hill Monument and on the deaths of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Carl Mansur is quite sick. A hot day.

Tuesday 25: I've lost a day. My eyes did not feel right this morning, so after reading an "Apostrophe to Columbus," in my reader, I concluded not to read any more for the day. We carried Carl Mansur to the hospital, he is very sick and I am afraid he will [not?] pull through. A cool day for the season.

Apostrophe: an address to an absent person or a personified thing.

Siege of Charleston: Federal troops again fail to capture Battery Wagner by assault.

St. Louis: In reaction to Quantrill's raid, Brig. Gen. Thomas Ewing, commanding the Missouri Border District, issues Order No. 11, calling for the depopulation of the Missouri counties bordering Kansas. Twenty thousand residents will be rendered homeless.

Wednesday 26: Physically I have done pretty well to day. I was wood and waterman to day. I went after two barrels of water and carried rails and split them. I have not studied any and my eyes feel much better. Though I have not studied any my brain has been under a struggle all day. Reading *Self Made* by Mrs Southworth brought on the old feeling of wanting to study again. It is a story of a poor boy studying and trying to be a lawyer. It kept me almost in a whirl and almost made me despair. Oh why should I struggle thus? Why should I strive to be what I cannot be? Oh that I had a body that could stand the toil of my mind; Patience, patience old boy, do not get too fast. Yours may be a much better and happier life. Anyway wait. I've not been very well and Sykes is sick again. Lieut Williams is some better.

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Self Made by Emma Dorothy Eliza Southworth (nee Nevitte), 1819–99. Abandoned by her husband of two years in 1841, Mrs. Southworth took up writing to support her two young children. Writing as Mrs. E.D.E.N. Southworth, she became an immensely popular writer, eventually producing over sixty melodramatic novels.

Thursday 27: To day as yesterday and the day before has been cool. During the evenings we could hardly keep warm. Reading one page in my reader made my eyes smart so that I quit studying. I drew a haversack and two pairs of stockings and helped make out some clothing papers. Sykes has been sick all day. He did not report sick and had to go on duty.

Friday 28: After helping Boughton to rig a table in Lieut Williams tent to make out muster rolls on, during which I had some trouble to borrow a plane from the regimental carpenter. I went for it and he would not lend it to me. I came back and reported progress to Lieut Williams, he went to the quartermaster and got a verbal order which he gave me and I went and got the plane. I wrote to Robert and soon after the mail brought me a letter from [missing word] and a *Post*, the *Sentinel* and *Harpers*. My eyes feel some better to day. I have read a little and pitched quoits a great deal. It rained two hours this afternoon. Sykes has been pretty sick. The doctors medicine rather overdid itself making him much worse. He is sleeping now and I think will be better in the morning.

Saturday 29: I tried study again this morning, but quit though I could have endured it. My eyes did not feel quite right and I thought I had better quit. I have been pitching quoits and helped Boughton an hour on the muster rolls and played chequers some. Sykes is much better but I do not like the color of his face.

Sunday 30: As soon as inspection was over I went over to the pioneer corps to see how Tommy prospered. He has the ague but has only had it a few days and does not look very bad yet. After dinner I got a letter from William. He has got the money we sent by Davison, all are well at home. I have answered it. We had dress parade as usual Col Robbins appearing for the last time. He has resigned and his resignation has been accepted. J. W. Jefferson the Lieut Col now commands. After supper and parade I helped Boughton on the muster rolls till ten. Company "C" lost a man named William Delap. Sykes is better again.

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Col Robbins appearing for the last time: The regimental history cites Col. Robbins's injury as the cause of his resignation.

Monday 31: Last night nearly froze me. I suffered from cold with two army blankets over me. Sykes keeps gaining. We were mustered for pay by Lieut Williamson, an aid from the first brigade. I've only read one page in my reader. I've been pitching quoits and have been beaten at it. There are some pretty good pitchers in company "D." Ex Col Robbins left to day. Capt Redfield and Lieut Williams went with him on leaves of absence. I have drawn five days rations again. Orville J. Oliver was detailed from the company to day as drummer. Some time ago W. W. Badgero was detailed as clerk at the brigade quartermasters.

Lieut Williamson: It is unclear if this is the Williamson who had been forced to resign by a petition of the men in Oct. 1862.

Lieut Williams: With Williams on leave, 2nd Lt. McDowell would have taken command.

September 1863

Tuesday 1: I managed to read two pages to day and have pitched quoits a long time and with better success than yesterday. This evening some potatoes and twenty four cans of tomatoes and some butter which Lieut Williams purchased for the company at Vicksburg came. One fourth of the potatoes were bad. I have issued the butter and tomatoes out. Warmer than yesterday.

Chickamauga campaign: Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland begins crossing the Tennessee. Meanwhile, Bragg's Army of Tennessee is reinforced by two divisions from Mississippi.

Wednesday 2: After breakfast I went after and kept on to the pioneer corps to see Tommy, but he had gone to the regiment, so I hurried back and found him in camp. He is pretty well. Sykes begins to look like himself again. He is reported for light duty to day. I got a letter from Robert, one from Fanny and a long looked for one from Alice. She promises to write oftener in future. We also got the *Sentinel*, *Harpers Weekly* and two *Posts*. My eyes are better to day. I have read two pages in my reader besides

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miscellaneous reading news etc. In pitching quoits I have not been beaten to day, though I have pitched with different partners and opponents. Company "C" lost another man to day, in the hospital. Some of the furloughed men have returned. Both Woodard and Davison are sick and cannot return.

Chickamauga campaign: Burnside occupies Knoxville.

Thursday 3: While I was after water the first brigade marched past. They are going eight miles to a place named Oak Hill. I've read two pages. After dinner we had to clean up our traps for an inspection of our brigade by Maj Gen Sherman, which came off at five o'clock this evening. We had all our equipments on. Sherman looks much paler and thinner than he did last spring. Two blank furloughs came to the company to day so now all the talk is, who will go.

Friday 4: We all expected to draw cuts for furlough this morning, but last night Boughton appointed Corporal Austin and private S. L. Burrington to go. I was much disappointed as I was expecting to go and felt sure of it. I would give a great deal to go home this month. I have done more duty than any other noncommissioned officer in the company this last spring and summer. And the furloughs were to reward such men. But I am well, that is the only reason I know of that I cannot go. I have read three pages and read awhile in *Ollendorff*. Hamilton H. Hall was discharged from this company awhile ago at Memphis. Some of the sick men are going to be sent north tomorrow. Brig Gen Asboth is now commander of this division. He is a wild looking Dutchman. I have written to Robert.

Brig. Gen. Alexander S. Asboth was a 52-year-old Hungarian who had served in the Austrian cavalry. Siding with the 1848 revolutionaries, he was forced to emigrate to the United States when the revolutions failed. An acquaintance of Frémont's he became the "Pathfinder's" chief of staff in 1861. He was severely wounded while commanding a division at Pea Ridge. Demonstrating sufficient competence to survive Frémont's downfall, he served in district and division command under Halleck and Grant. He had recently relinquished command of Sixth Division and would shortly be transferred to command of the District of West Florida.

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Dutchman: mildly pejorative slang for any Dutch, German, or middle European immigrant.

Chickamauga campaign: The Army of the Cumberland completes its crossing of the Tennessee River, pushing into Georgia to cut off Bragg's line of retreat from Chattanooga.

New Orleans: Possibly inebriated, Grant is badly injured when thrown by his horse.

Mobile, Alabama: Women loot shops for food and clothing as war and the Union blockade worsen the plight of the South's civilian population.

Saturday 5: Christy and John Maxwell who have been sick a long time were sent to Vicksburg this morning on the way to Northern hospitals and Churchouse our girl corporal who we call Sis went to the hospital. He is not very sick. I went at Boughtons invitation to the recitation of the sergeants to Col Jefferson. He is giving them instruction on their duties. They did not do very well. I read three pages this morning. After dinner I drew five days rations again. Since which I've cleaned up for Sunday, brought some water and studied awhile in *Ollendorff*. My eyes feel funny. Sykes is well and is reported for duty.

Girl corporal: This appears to have been a comment on Churchouse's character, not a traditional nickname associated with a corporal of a particular position within a company. Later in his journal, Ambrose refers to Churchouse as, "the best boy in the company."

Chickamauga campaign: Rosecrans's army is now forty miles beyond the Tennessee. Realizing that he is outflanked, Bragg evacuates Chattanooga, falling back into Georgia. From LaFayette he intends to go on the offensive, attacking Rosecrans's vulnerable columns as they emerge from the mountains.

Siege of Charleston: General Beauregard orders the evacuation of Batteries Wagner and Gregg.

New Orleans: The administration has ordered General Banks to "raise the flag in Texas" to discourage intervention in the war by French troops from

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Mexico. In the opening move of the campaign, Maj. Gen. William Franklin sails with 4,000 men and four gunboats to capture Sabine Pass, Texas.

Great Britain: Responding to continued American protests, the British government seizes two ironclad rams being built for the Confederacy at the Laird shipyard in Liverpool.

Sunday 6: Inspection at six as usual, then went to the pioneer corps to see Tommy. He is sick with chill fever or southern ague. Since I have written to Alice. It has been very warm. I have read several chapters in Judges. Churchouse came back from the hospital. It was too lonesome for him. I've spent the evening in conversation with several of the boys, about wild beasts.

Monday 7: I've been wood and water man to day. I only had to go after two barrels of water and carry four rails and cut them, having to carry them about sixty rods. Sykes is on picket near the pioneer corps. He was in at noon and said Tommy was much better. I read two pages and dug into *Ollendorff* till my eyes tingled. My eyes are much better. I have pitched quoits awhile. Baker and I cleaned Stokes and Bigness but we had to work for it. We got seven games and a skunk out of ten. Quite warm. Kennedy formerly first Lieut is now captain of company "I." Woodard, Davison and Lieut McDowell are all absent from the company without leave.

Tuesday 8: I read two pages this forenoon and studied two hours in *Ollendorff* this afternoon. My eyes have not troubled me any. Now they are well my Dutch arrangement will have to dust along. I want to get through my reader next week and I have forty six pages yet. I have read eighty. I understand German ten times as well with what little I have studied it than I do or ever did Latin which I studied over a year. I have pitched quoits and played chequers awhile. I have changed the order of my studies some. I read German in the forenoon, study *Ollendorff* in the afternoon and pass the evening in conversation etc. I think I had better not read by candle light for awhile.

My Dutch arrangement will have to dust along: my schedule for studying German will have to hurry along.

Brother to the Eagle

Sabine Pass, Texas: Confederates batteries repel an assault by three Federal gunboats, capturing two and driving the third off. A humiliated General Franklin is forced to withdraw.

Wednesday 9: It has been warm and will keep so I suppose till it rains. The sweat fairly ran off me while on parade. Sykes has not been very well and has laid on his bunk nearly all day. S. L. Burrington went to the hospital again yesterday and Michael Smith went to day. I have read seven pages but have not given *Ollendorff* much time. I've been beaten badly at quoits.

Richmond, Virginia: Under the command of Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, two divisions from the Army of Northern Virginia leave Richmond to reinforce Bragg. The *New York Herald* reports the movement with great accuracy.

Thursday 10: Sykes kept pretty well till evening when he was taken worse. I read six pages this forenoon besides pitching quoits and drawing rations again. Warm. We had an inspection by Brigade, by the Brigade commander which is Lieut Col Jefferson of our regiment, Col Hubbard and Gen Mower being absent on leave. Our sick list was only three this morning. I begin to hope our men will get well again. No mail and but little news.

Chickamauga campaign: At McLemore's Cove, Georgia, Bragg's subordinates fumble an opportunity to cut off one of Rosecrans's divisions under Maj. Gen. James Negley.

Little Rock, Arkansas: Federal forces under Maj. Gen. Steele occupy the state capital.

Friday 11: Two years ago to day we were mustered into the US Service. Two thirds of our time is gone, in another year with God's Blessing and we may return home. I hope and pray it may not be as long. I trust he will bless us in time to come as he has in time past. Sykes is much better. If it does not rain pretty soon the heat will be intolerable. I read nine pages this forenoon and stud[ied] faithfully two hours this afternoon. I keep getting deeper and deeper into the merits of *Ollendorff*. I have pitched quoits and played chequers awhile as I made it a duty to exercise some. If I only had done that ten years ago, I should not be where I am now. Never mind old

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boy dont worry just before bedtime as it may disturb your rest. I got a letter from Robert and have mailed one to Joseph. We got *Harpers Weekly*. Taps, lights out. It is bedtime.

As I made it a duty to exercise some: This is a rather odd statement since no one as used to hard work as Ambrose would consider quoits or checkers exercise. One gets a sense that Ambrose is not particularly at ease making friends and perhaps he regrets not learning to be more the "hail fellow."

Saturday 12: I read ten pages, have studied as much more and cleaned up my traps. Sykes is much better. His attact this time is light. Burrington came back from the hospital. It still keeps very warm.

Chickamauga campaign: Alerted by Bragg's new aggressiveness, Rosecrans begins concentrating his army.

Sunday 13: Just as breakfast was ready and I had eaten three mouthfulls the drum beat for inspection. I had to go through it and then finish my meal. After breakfast I wrote to William. During the day I have finished reading Joshua, Ruth and several chapters, also finished reading *Louis XVII or the Dauphin*, which gives an account of the life and death of that unfortunate prince. The work ends with his death, never referring once to Eliezer Williams. I have passed a pleasant day though it has been warm. Tommy came this afternoon. He is quite well. This afternoon I heard General Sherman's report up to the twenty fourth of May giving a detailed account of the charge of his corps on the rebel works at Vicksburg.

Louis XVII or the Dauphin: This was probably *The Bourbon Prince: The history of the Royal Dauphin, Louis XVII of France* by A. de (Alcide) Beauchesne, published in New York in 1853 by Harper & brothers and published elsewhere with variations in the title. The never crowned Louis the XVII (also called the Lost Dauphin) was the son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoniette. A boy of eight at the time of his father's execution in 1793, he died in prison two years later according to official statements. However, the secrecy surrounding his death caused many rumors about an escape and attracted many later claimants. The Rev. Eleazer Williams was the most widely believed in America; Mark Twain's con man in *Huckleberry Finn* the most amusing.

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Chickamauga campaign: At Lee and Gordon's Mill, Bragg again attempts to deal Rosecrans's army a crushing blow before it can concentrate. Again his subordinates fail him.

Monday 14: Mansur is doing pretty well, he comes up to the company sometimes. I thought he never would be well again. Burrington is detailed for regimental carpenter. I read nine pages this morning but it was hard and not very well done. I studied awhile this afternoon. *Ollendorff* now requires very hard study. I am now on the one hundredth page and am getting into the depths of the language. It has been warm. I've pitched several games of quoits. Sykes is not very well. He is out of sorts with the doctor. Doctor Murta came back to day. I hope he will cure him up. No mail.

Northern Virginia: Lee withdraws from the Rappahannock, taking new positions behind the Rapidan as Meade advances. Lincoln urges Meade to attack but his cautious general demurs.

Tuesday 15: I read five pages this morning, finishing the reader. Since then I have had a holiday in the mental line. I intend going through it again more carefully. Mail brought a *Post* and a letter from Joseph. Woodard came back to day. He is not well. He has passed most of the evening with us, we having a good sing. M. Smith returned from the hospital.

Washington: Lincoln suspends the writ of habeas corpus throughout the Union.

Wednesday 16: Inspection at eight by Lieut Woodruff of company "C" who is now brigade inspector. After this I read German till noon, beginning at the beginning and reading it carefully. I read eleven pages. This time I want to understand it thoroughly. I mean to understand every complicated expression completely. Woodard gave me a novel yesterday entitled *The Mystery*, in which I read two chapters last night. After dinner I took it and have stuck to it and have finished it. It is a very good novel. I hope it will not make my eyes sore again. Samuel Asbury Co "I" died last night.

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The Mystery: Either a novel by John Young (1805–81) (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & co., 1856) or a novel by Thomas Gaspey (1788–1871) (New York by E. Daykinck, 1820).

Thursday 17: Wood and water man to day. I read four pages before I went after water. We had filled our barrels and had started back when it began to rain. I got dripping wet through before I got to camp. I changed clothes at once but for over an hour I thought I was going to have the ague. I was quite feverish after being so chilly. I think I had the chill fever. We were out for Brigade inspection at four and lay around till nearly [missing word] waiting for the General (Sherman) but he did not come. It began to rain this evening again and is raining now. I have written to Robert.

I was quite feverish: Ambrose was apparently having his first attack of ague (malaria), an illness that would trouble him for the rest of the war. Ague was commonly blamed on "bad air" originating in swamps. The actual culprit was the anopheles mosquito that harbored the malarial parasite. The parasites invaded the victim's red blood cells, bringing on the attack of the "chill fever" and profuse sweating associated with ague. The intermittent nature of the disease was caused by the maturation cycle of the parasites. The best treatment was quinine, but doctors also attempted to treat ague with whiskey, iodide of potassium, sulphuric acid, blue mass (mercury and chalk), morphine ammonia, cod-liver oil, sweet spirits of niter, iron, soda, and a plethora of herbal treatments.

Friday 18: Last night was very stormy and cold, the trees roared and moaned all night. As soon as breakfast was over, Sykes and I lowered the tent so the wind could not blow all over us, then went after some boards and have fixed it up so it will be more roomy and comfortable. I've passed a miserable day and have not read a line and have only looked into *Ollendorff* a little. I have shivered away the day as best I could. It has been cold. After dress parade we of the color guard with the colors and eagle had our likeness taken together. I have not seen it yet.

Chickamauga campaign: Bragg attempts to envelope Rosecrans's left while striking hard at his right, but Federal cavalry delays the Confederate crossing of Chickamauga Creek and the attack has to be canceled.

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Saturday 19: Last night was very cold again. I only read four pages when my eyes wanted me to quit, so I have pitched quoits and kept employed as best I could during the day. At four we went and had our pictures taken again as the other was not good. Dress parade.

Battle of Chickamauga: A Federal infantry probe toward Chickamauga Creek touches off a day of savage fighting through the thick woods. Neither side makes significant progress. In the afternoon, Longstreet's two divisions from the Army of Northern Virginia begin detraining at Ringgold, Georgia, half a dozen miles from the battlefield.

Sunday 20: Brigade inspection at half past seven by Brig Gen Mower, which went off all right. Last night I traded my Enfield rifle musket to Sykes for a Springfield. After inspection I wrote to Phebe, then went with a team and a man after some wood and drew five days rations as soon as we came back. The mail came after dinner bringing a *Post*, that *Phrenological Journal* I sent for and a letter each from father and William. My eyes would not allow me to read much. About four a man came and said that a furlough had been sent up to headquarters for Tommy and that he was expecting it back again and that Tommy wanted one of us to go up there if we had anything we wanted to send home. I got a pass to go in the morning but Tommy had an opportunity to come in an ambulance and he came, so I shall not go in the morning. Sykes is on guard. It still keeps pretty cold. News came to day that John Maxwell who was sent north sick awhile ago had died at Memphis. He was a married man and had three or four children. He was a watchmaker by trade and was a good one. Several of the men tell me that shaving my upper lip is what troubles my eyes, so I will quite it.

Springfield: Ambrose's new weapon was probably an 1861 or 1862 Springfield rifle-musket firing a .58-caliber Minié ball. There was little difference in quality between the Springfield and Enfield.

Battle of Chickamauga: For the first time in the West, a Confederate army outnumbers a Union army in a major battle. Bragg attacks Thomas's corps on the Federal left in the morning. Hard-pressed, Thomas calls for reinforcements. Meanwhile, Longstreet prepares a massive strike against the Federal right. The blow falls shortly before noon, striking an accidental gap in the Union line and shattering the weakened Federal right wing.

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Rosecrans and two of his three corps commanders flee to Chattanooga. Thomas, however, remains on the field, rallying the Union left and holding off repeated assaults. That evening he skillfully withdraws. His action saves the army and wins him the sobriquet "The Rock of Chickamauga."

Chickamauga campaign ends: Chickamauga is the second most costly battle of the war. Both armies suffer some 28% casualties: Union 16,170 (1,657 killed, 9,756 wounded, 4,757 missing) of 58,222; Confederate 18,454 (2,312 killed, 14,674 wounded, 1,468 missing) of 66,326.

Monday 21: After reading two pages my eyes obliged me to quit, so I went and got some boards and fixed our bunk so we could have some hay placed in it. Sergt Davison came back from his furlough just after dinner. He has been more than two weeks over his time. He is not very well. He saw Tommy at Vicksburg on his way home, he having got his furlough last night and hurried away as soon as he got it. This makes it so I cannot send anything home by him. I have pitched quoits and studied *Ollendorff* alternately during the afternoon.

The Eagle Regiment: About this time, Col. Jefferson left for Wisconsin on a leave of absence to recruit replacements for the regiment. He carried with him a letter from Maj. Gen. Sherman:

Headquarters 15th Army Corps
Camp on Big Black, Sept. 21, '63
To his Excellency the Gov. of Wis.

Sir:

Col. J. W. Jefferson of the 8th Wisconsin is about to start for his home on a short leave of absence—during the period of rest allowed us by the lull of Military events in this quarter.

I avail myself of the opportunity to express to you my personal and official approbation of this officer and the entire regiment. Since I have had the honor to count it as one of my command. The 8th Wisconsin has ever done its duty in the camp, on the march, and in battle.

It has shared with us all the honors and success of our conquest of the Mississippi and has displayed peculiar

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zeal and courage under its gallant Jefferson at Jackson, May 16 and throughout the siege of Vicksburg.

It also cleared the west bank of the river, driving the enemy out of Richmond and bore patiently and manfully the deadly sickness of Young's Point until the fall of Vicksburg admitted of its recall, to join us on this higher and more healthy ground.

I am glad to report that the men are fast recovering from the sickness caused by that exposure and I hope it will share with us our future labors and honors.

If within your power, I hope you will fill its thinned ranks and then I will promise all I can ensure its return to your State, bearing a full share of honor and fame in the establishment of our general Government on a basis so firm, that no internal or external power can shake it during this generation.

With great respect &c.
W. T. Sherman, Major-General

Second Chattanooga campaign begins: Rosecrans's battered army prepares to defend the town. Despite urging from Longstreet and Forrest, Bragg does not order an attack.

Tuesday 22: This morning I started a slop hole and worked at it an hour or two and read six pages besides. Lieut McDowell came back to day. He is looking very well. He also has been two weeks over his time. Yesterday and to day have been much warmer. I've done pretty well with *Ollendorff*. Boughton came back to our tent to day. He has been staying in Lieut Williams.

Slop hole: A hole for the dumping of dishwater and food waste.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Bragg orders an attack but cancels it when he determines the Federal positions are too strong. He sets up siege lines on Lookout Mountain and along Missionary Ridge.

Wednesday 23: Last night I lay thinking what a lot I would study to day as I intended doing a good days work at it. As soon as breakfast was over I

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dug about an hour, then began to read. As soon as four pages were conquered one of the color guards came for me to go again to get our pictures taken. Now I wish that daguerreian was either in the ranks or in Wisconsin. Six different pictures were taken and none suited. I stood at the camera till I almost wished it annihilated. After this my eyes smarted so I would not read so I wrote to father. I was very lazy till four after dinner when I studied till supper time. I drew a days beef this evening. Sykes is on picket.

Daguerreian: one of the early photographers who made pictures on copper or silver plates i.e. daguerreotypes.

Thursday 24: I awoke with a severe cold this morning and my head feeling like a stewed pumpkin. Bound to be as miserable as possible I sat down and read twelve pages. I studied but little after dinner as our weekly inspection by Gen Sherman came off at three thirty. Very warm yesterday and to day. Sykes came in all right.

Friday 25: I studied as usual three hours in the forenoon and two in the afternoon. After dinner I drew five days rations. We got a *Post*, the *Sentinel* and I a letter from Robert. Robert says he is bound to get an education. I read eight pages. I have burned up my old writing book that I found at Haynes Bluff as I had filled it full.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Under the command of General Hooker, two corps from the Army of the Potomac start for the West and the relief of Rosecrans's army in Chattanooga.

Saturday 26: After reading two pages I made out the monthly report of rations we have commuted this month. We have this month commuted rations to the value of \$39.59, quite a sum for one month I think. Owing to its being Saturday and our cleaning up day I have not studied any this afternoon. I have written to Robert this evening. Gen Tuttle took command of our division again to day in place of Gen Asboth.

Rations we have commuted: returned to the commissary for credit. (Foraging must have been good.)

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Sunday 27: We were nicely warm and sleeping in our beds last night when orders came to pack up, strike tents and be ready to move immediately with one days rations in our haversacks. We were ready at eleven pm when we fell in and marched away. It was a splendid night though dusty. I had my knapsack full with books and other trash so it cut my shoulders. We plodded steadily on, arriving at Black River Bridge at about four this morning entirely tired out. Spreading my rubber and wrapping my blanket around me I laid down and slept till sunrise, awakening an old man. I got some bread and butter and ate a little though I had no appetite. We have since moved on to the ground we occupied when we were here before. As our tent was along Boughton and I have put it up and found bunks which we have put in it. I've felt old all day. The troops stationed here left on as short notice as we did. Tis pleasant to day, now we hear the cars again. I have partially written to William. Sykes is still on picket at the old camp.

Monday 28: Wood and water man to day. I've carried a right smart of water up that long hill. I took the flour to a bakery this morning and got some bread. The oven the bakers used was one the Eleventh Missouri men made. They made the bakers give it up and I had to bring my flour back again. Then I finished writing to William. After this Boughton and I went after some boards and other stuff with which we made some tables etc. I also found a good rebel knapsack which I gave to Sykes who arrived this evening. It was much better than his. I read six pages in my reader this afternoon. I mean to stick to it entirely till I read it through when I will send it home. *Ollendorff* must lay aside awhile. One of the boys gave me a pretty German Hymn Book bound in red morracco. I shall keep it. A warm, sultry day.

Tuesday 29: It began to rain slowly during the night and has continued so during the day. I sent my German Reader to William to day and sent Willis a *Harpers Weekly*. We took our flour about a mile and this afternoon got some bread. I began reading my German Testament through. Cario F. Mansur returned to the company to day. As he came late he will stay to night with us. I've felt ugly all day. Owing to sundry premature remarks of sundry chattering fools, that will not know anything anyway.

I've felt ugly all day. Owing to sundry premature remarks: Ambrose was probably taking some criticism in his role as company commissary.

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Wednesday 30: Wet and rainy again nearly all day. I have written to Joseph. We have been transferred from the fifteenth to the seventeenth army corps under General McPherson. Some rebel cavalry are prowling around and an attack is apprehended. Sykes is on picket.

Brig. Gen. James B. McPherson was 35 and widely considered the most promising young general in the army. He had graduated first in the West Point class of 1853 and served in the Corps of Engineers until the beginning of the war. He was an engineering officer on Halleck's staff and then Grant's, becoming a brigadier general in Aug. 1862. He commanded a small division in the pursuit of Van Dorn after Rosecrans's victory at Corinth. The praise Grant heaped on McPherson for his minor part in this action reflected both Grant's growing regard for McPherson and his diminishing trust in Rosecrans. McPherson was shortly promoted to major general and took command of XVI Corps in January 1863 in time to play a large role in the Vicksburg campaign. Brilliant, kind, and "full of bounce and fun," McPherson charmed nearly everyone from the lowliest private to the commanding general.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Maj. Gen. Joe Wheeler leads the Army of Tennessee's cavalry on a raid to sever Rosecrans's supply lines.

October 1863

Thursday 1: It rained again till about ten when it cleared off and has been fine and dry but cold ever since. I have read and studied considerable to day. No mail to day. I cannot see why it does not come. I am looking anxiously for a letter. Rosecrans has had a great battle with Bragg. We do not know the result yet.

Bragg: This is Ambrose's first mention of General Braxton Bragg. An 1837 West Point graduate, Bragg became an artillery officer. He feuded frequently with his superiors, gaining a reputation as the most disputatious officer in the army. At Buena Vista his flying battery saved Taylor's army, and Bragg became a national hero. He resigned from the army in the mid-1850s to become a planter. Thought among the most promising to the South's officers, he fought at Shiloh and then succeeded Beauregard in command of the Army of Tennessee. A competent administrator, he was a poor combat commander: indecisive, inflexible, and hostile to

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subordinates. He became, in the words of the diarist Mary Chestnut, "the most hated man in the Confederacy."

Friday 2: Last night was pretty cold we could scarcely keep warm. Having to arise an hour earlier to be ready for the rebels if they came made it no better. After breakfast Sykes and I went and did our washing and had a bathe in Black River. Woodard now messes with the company again. He has been messing with the officers about a year. No mail yet.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Hooker's men begin arriving at Bridgeport, Alabama. In the next two days, 20,000 men and 3,000 horses will detrain, having traveled 1,159 miles in just over a week. The immense logistical, manpower, and industrial might of the North is beginning to tell in the conflict.

Saturday 3: The anniversary of the battle of Corinth. A year ago to day was a busy and hard one for us. It has passed quietly enough here. I received a letter a *Post* and *Harpers Weekly* this morning. Dress parade this afternoon. I have cleaned up my traps so if we have an inspection tomorrow I shall be all right. In the next tent they are very noisy; talking about spades, clubs, bowers and aces, mixed in with a great deal of swearing. Can there be any amusement in anything that takes so much swearing to keep it running. Swearing always keeps cards company. I used to think father was wrong and that there was no harm in playing cards for amusement. Their very character is evil and no one can play them habitually without injuring his moral character. I have read a very pretty little book named *Mary Bell*. It is one of a series of story books for children, published by Harper and Brothers. It is very interesting.

Bowers: in euchre each jack of the same color, providing that one of their suits is trump.

Mary Bell; a Franconia story by Jacob Abbott, 1803–79 (New York: Harper, c1850).

Second Chattanooga campaign: Wheeler continues his raid, cutting the main Union supply line to Bridgeport and forcing the Union army at Chattanooga to depend on a single mountain road.

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Sunday 4: Inspection by company at nine this morning. Between that time and noon I wrote to Phebe sending it with one Sykes wrote to Robert. During the afternoon our chaplain delivered another of his lectures on morality cleanliness etc. Speaking from the text "Do thyself no harm." [Acts 16.28] He is a very singular man. His remarks were good. I sincerely believe he cannot preach a sermon. After supper Sykes and I went to the depot. The train was ready to go. An elderly lady came to go to Vicksburg but was told they took no passengers. She went to the provost marshalls but in vain. She had to go back again to her home.

In *Acts 16*, Paul and Silas are called to preach in Macedonia. There they run afoul of the local authorities and are cast into prison:

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas.

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Monday 5: We put our tent down on the ground so it would be warmer sleeping. We had to pull down all of our tables etc and build them up again. Sykes was taken with the ague while we were at work. I got a pass to go to Vicksburg after potatoes and some other stuff for the company. At three I got on the train and started, arriving at Vicksburg about four. Getting my traps I started for the soldiers home. Registering my name and leaving my things I started up town and travelled around till dark when I returned to the soldiers home. After supper a whole mess of soldiers came, about two hundred which crowded the establishment. The proprietors name is Johnson. Mrs Johnson is a very lady, quite pleasant looking,

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resembling Grace Greenwood very much. There are only a very few boats at Vicksburg. I got a letter from Joseph.

Chattanooga campaign: The garrison in the embattled city is in serious danger of starving as Wheeler continues to wreck Rosecrans's supply lines. Horses and mules die by the hundred hauling loads across the tortuous sixty miles from Bridgeport.

Tuesday 6: Up and round early. There were so many at the soldiers home I did not get breakfast till nine at the third table. I then put off down town again. I went from one place to another till two when the train came. At this time a review of Gen Logan's division began, through the streets of Vicksburg. Both McPherson and Logan were there with their staffs. Logan is a stern, swarthy looking man with enough of the indian to make him look more masculine. Some of the batteries got behind and the way they flew with horses on the gallop made the citizens stare and soldiers laugh. Being tired and sleepy I went to bed early. Last night I laid on the floor with my blanket. To night there are not many so I will get a bed.

Maj. Gen. John A. Logan was an Illinois congressman and Mexican War veteran. Arguably the finest of the political generals, he commanded Third Division, XVII Corps at this time.

Baxter Springs, Kansas: Clad in Federal uniforms, William Quantrill's guerrilla band ambushes the staff of Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt, killing some 65. Reports will circulate that the guerrillas refused to grant quarter and mutilated the bodies of the dead.

Wednesday 7: Wishing to get the team started early I went away from the soldiers home minus breakfast. I purchased my things immediately, hooked up and started off the team, then went down to the depot. While there two citizens came along having only one leg apiece. Sad relics of their treasonable work. The train did not start early on account of something about the engine being out of repair. I got to camp about noon. In due time the waggon came with all of our stuff. We had company drill and dress parade this afternoon. It has been pretty cold. Co "G" buried a man to day who was apparently well three days ago. I have drawn a hat.

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Thursday 8: As soon as breakfast was over I wrote a letter to Joseph and nearly froze while doing it. Then I was poking around till noon. After dinner the color guard went again to get their likenesses taken. After standing three times looking at the sun till my eyes were full of tears I came away. Then company drill by Lieut McDowell. Rebels are prowling around and an attack is expected. Maj Gen McPherson and Brig Gen Tuttle both were here this evening. "Old Joe" is fortifying. No mail. It has been a fine day. Furloughs for Corporal Austin and S. L. Burrington came to day. Peter Newman went to the hospital to day.

Old Joe: probably Brig. Gen. Joseph Mower, the brigade commander.

Friday 9: The great question is, well what shall I write down for to day? And, simply what I have done to day. I have been busy all day and might almost say I have done nothing. I've read nearly all day. Our company was so small that we had no drill this evening, but had dress parade. Owing to one thing or another I did not study any this evening. Now the drums are beating tattoo. I have written to Fanny and Willis. A fine day. Sykes and I are both well. Austin and Burrington started home on their furloughs this afternoon.

Bristoe campaign opens: With both the Eastern armies weakened by the detachment of troops to the West, Lee and Meade maneuver for position. Lee is the aggressor in the month-long campaign.

Saturday 10: Directly after breakfast I drew five days rations, drawing hard bread instead of flour. Our cook accidentally burned his tent to day so we gave him ours and Sykes and I moved into another tent, while Boughton went to another tent to what we did. We have been working all afternoon getting things into shape. It is the general impression that we will leave here soon.

Chattanooga campaign: President Davis arrives to mediate the increasingly hostile relationship between Bragg and his generals.

Sunday 11: Inspection by Battalion at half past seven by one of Gen Mowers aids, after which I wrote to William. I've spent the day mostly in reading. Some in the Bible and some in *The Lady of the Lake* by Walter Scott. Our chaplain spoke again at three this afternoon from "Evil

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Communications corrupt good manners" [1 Corinthians 15.33]. His remarks simply showed the different ways a person may communicate good or evil. He laid the blame of this war on the southern ministers more especially on the Methodists, saying at a convention of methodist ministers at New York, the southern ministers seceded and left the convention, because a resolution was passed asking a bishop to resign, who owned slaves.

The Lady of the Lake (1810) by Sir Walter Scott, a long narrative poem of romance and war on the Scottish border.

1 Corinthians 15:

33 Be not deceived: evil Communications corrupt good manners

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

Monday 12: Up at reville an hour before daylight and under arms on the color line. After remaining awhile we stacked arms and returned to quarters, having orders to keep our cartridge box on. Baker at the request of the company quit cooking and Bigness took his place. Last night I finished reading the *Lady of the Lake*, and to day I have read a work of travels in Germany, by Anne Johnson. It is an able work. It began to rain at dusk. During this Sykes and I sang our songs, getting through as it stopped raining. Mail came bringing only *Harpers Weekly*. I wonder why I do not get a letter. I begin to think something has happened.

Anne Johnson: reference unknown.

Tuesday 13: I wrote a letter to father this morning, then read till noon only while I pitched a few games of quoits. It was warm this morning and looked much like rain, but it cleared off and has been cooler since. It is now (eight pm) very cold and windy. We will need all of our blankets to night. Owing to a late dinner it has been a short afternoon. Drill, duty, supper and dress parade followed each other like clock work. I spent an hour this evening in another tent in pleasant conversation. Once in a while two or three of us get together and can have a decent chat. Since then I have worked away at *Ollendorff*.

Elections in The North: Republican candidates do well in state elections. Clement Vallandigham, the copperhead leader in exile in Canada, loses his bid for the governorship of Ohio but polls enough votes to worry the administration. National elections are only a year away, and the Union armies must win victories to keep the Lincoln administration in office.

Wednesday 14: It rained nearly all night, slow and soaking. This morning it came off cold and windy. About eleven we had orders to pack up and be ready to march immediately and to leave our knapsacks but carry our blankets. About one we fell in and marched to within two miles of Messengers Ferry and camped for the night. Soon after Gen Logan with his division arrived from Vicksburg. Our whole division is here. We are going on a scout into the interior of the state. Besides these two divisions there is about two thousand cavalry. All commanded by Maj Gen McPherson.

Bristoe campaign; Battle of Bristoe Station: Though holding an 8–5 numerical advantage, Meade begins withdrawing. Lee orders Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill to cut off the rearguard of the Army of the Potomac. The impetuous Hill attacks without proper reconnaissance and suffers a heavy repulse. Meade's army retreats to safety behind Bull Run. Losses: Confederate: 1,900; Union 548.

Thursday 15: We marched early taking a north east direction and camped at dark at Brownsville having marched seventeen miles. It has been cool and good marching. There are very few inhabitants in the country. All are gone. After camping it took a long time to find water, which is scarce here. Then I had to draw and divide rations. I'm tired enough to night.

Friday 16: Up early and on the way after a hasty breakfast. We halted awhile in Brownsville and soon cannon began to play in the front. We kept moving on a little and resting awhile. Artillery kept on at intervals but always ahead of us. At five we marched on five miles and then bivouaced along the road. Only six miles to day and in a north western direction. Brownsville is a poor delapidated [village] in which only a few families are living. The buildings are old and few.

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Washington: The administration overhauls the army's organization in the West, combining the Departments of Ohio, Cumberland, and Tennessee and giving overall command to Grant.

Saturday 17: We started about seven, passing waggons artillery and everything military till we came to where everything was crowded together near a creek. On a hill across the creek were the enemy, their skirmishers being in plain view and were on a good position. One of our batteries opened and threw a few shells among them which made them hurry over the hill in good time. We got on stumps and fences to see better as we had a good view of the affair. Presently a long black line of skirmishers started out of the weeds in our front and marched steadily up the hill. The hill is long and not steep and it takes them a long time to ascend it. About thirty rods behind them a brigade advances in line of battle. It is a splendid sight. The skirmishers are almost to the top of the hill and every moment we expect they will get a volley. Then one man on the right has fired, now another and so on along the whole line, we cannot hear the report but can see the little puff of smoke. The skirmishers are over the hill. The line of battle is there, our little bugle blows and on we go across the creek. At the top of the hill we rest awhile, then move on a little, stack arms and are told we are to remain all night. Only three miles. We are a mile from water which we get at a cistern at a splendid plantation mansion. Entering it I found everything broken up and torn to pieces. In one room were two women and a child all crying and about scared to death. Outside the boys are catching hens, geese etc. Destruction is the order of the day. At sunset three of us went after water, seeing a great smoke near the house we hurried to get our water as the cistern was near the house. We had only just time enough to fill our canteens when the smoke drove us out. The women were under a tree with a bed, some barrels and a few chairs. They did not belong to the house but were left in it to keep it from being burned. As soon as this was found out the building was fired. It looked hard, but if we burned everything it would soon end this war. On our way to camp we met the husband of one of the women going after her. I was glad of this as it would have been terrible for her to have remained there all night.

Military Division of the Mississippi: Grant replaces Rosecrans with Thomas as commander of the Army of the Cumberland.

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Sunday 18: It began to rain about eleven last night. I got up and laid three rails side by side, folded my blanket around me, laid down and covered myself with my rubber. I slept pretty well but one of the rails was so sharp that it almost cut me in two. We fell in at eight and marched to Clinton twelve miles, then turned west and marched eight miles towards Black River. I was so tired that I could scarcely eat any supper.

Monday 19: We fell in at seven after a light breakfast and marched back to camp at Black River sixteen miles arriving at four. We passed over the battle field of Champion Hills. The scarred trees told us the mute story of that conflict and the mounds and graves told how many brave men fell there for the union. Champion Hills was the decisive battle of Gen Grants spring campaign. Our defeat would have lost our army and the defeat of the rebels ultimately cost them theirs. It was a good position, but no position could have held back our men. I take the liberty to say that there never was an army of men in better fighting spirits than Gen Grants was after it was across the river. We found all right in camp. I got real cold about dark and shivered a great deal. As I cannot get warm I'll go to bed. It has been a warm day.

Tuesday 20: I shivered a long time after going to bed last night and this morning I awoke sick and feverish, yet I have been getting better all day. I have drawn rations done other duty and written to Robert. I have kept as quiet as I could, doing these little things required an unpleasant effort. The mail brought a *Post* and *Harpers Weekly* but no letters. It has been a nice, warm day. David Hatton presented me with a pretty Bible to day. It being wet and nearly ruined, I hope I can dry it so as not to ruin it. It is bound in morocco. I studied a little this evening commencing in the beginning of *Ollendorf*.

Wednesday 21: Sykes and I immediately after breakfast did our washing and cleaned up generally as our things needed it after the march. About four I was taken with ague and had a regular shake the first I have had since the fall of 1847. I shook quite hard for about an hour, then came the fever. By tattoo the worst of it was over and I felt half way decent. Mail brought us nothing.

Thursday 22: I felt much better this morning and have done all day, but when I tried to do anything I soon tired and had to quit. I reported sick and

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got three powders from the doctor one of which was to be taken every three hours, which has been done. I have written to William and to Carrie sending them together. After dinner I drew five days rations. Being excused from duty by the surgeon I have not been on duty. I've read and studied a little.

Friday 23: It blew cold all night and at daylight it began to rain and has been blowing and raining all day. I went to the doctor who gave me three powders again, one to be taken every two hours. I sat outside in the rain by the cooks fire with a rubber over my shoulders nearly all forenoon. As soon as dinner was over I went to bed and staid there till supper time. Fearing a shake of the ague if I went out to get my supper, I did shiver some but kept around the fire and did not have the ague.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Grant arrives in the city after an exhausting ride over the muddy road from Bridgeport. Along the way, he passes the bodies of some 10,000 horses and mules killed hauling loads across the mountains to the starving army. Grant determines that before all else he must open a river route for supplies. This will become the famous "Cracker Line."

Saturday 24: Last night it froze. Ice was a quarter of an inch thick on the water barrel. A cold raw wind blew, keeping it cold till after dinner. We banked up our tent some and shivered over the fire till noon. After dinner I got Sykes and Hatton after a wheelbarrow load of brick while they were gone I got an opportunity to get some with a waggon which I did, getting back at five with a hundred. We then all went at work, Sykes mixing mortar, David waiting, I laying the brick. By dark our fireplace was done and now all three of us are around it enjoying it. It draws well when our tent is banked up all around we will have a good warm place. I do hate to stand shivering over the cooks fire which is eternally crowded. No mail. My lips and mouth are very sore and pain me much.

We banked up our tent some: piling straw or earth around the bottom of a tent to keep out the draft.

David waiting: carrying.

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Sunday 25: Our fireplace kept us nicely warm last night. Our company has been a busy one all day building fireplaces and fixing tents. We had inspection by batallion at nine. I think I never went to an inspection in a poorer condition. Being sick the last few days I have not prepared for it. I have written to Joseph and sent my chessmen to Robert in a *Harpers Weekly*. Sykes had a light shake to day. Peter Newman went to the hospital again to day. Dress parade at five thirty. No mail.

Monday 26: As soon as breakfast was over we to work to make our tent warm. Banking it up and hanging old sacks around where there were any holes. Then came batallion drill for an hour which completely tired me out. I was ready to drop down when we were dismissed. The mail brought me three letters and a paper. One of the letters was from Alice, one from William and one from Robert. It is warmer to day. Sykes had a light shake again, but felt pretty well after it was over.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Hooker crosses the Tennessee from Bridgeport, Alabama, in the first stage of opening the "Cracker Line."

Tuesday 27: I've not felt well at all to day yet have done duty. After breakfast I built our chimney some higher getting done in time for batallion drill which lasted till noon. Then drawing rations took till brigade drill which lasted over two hours. I was completely tired out when we were through. We have a pleasant fire this evening in our tent and have had a good time through my head has ached some. My mouth is some better though sore enough yet.

Second Chattanooga campaign: In a daring night attack, men of Brig. Gen. William B. Hazen's brigade capture Brown's Ferry below Chattanooga. They throw a pontoon bridge over the river, opening the way for Hooker and the movement of supplies.

Wednesday 28: Reported sick, got three pills which I took immediately and three powders, one to be taken every three hours. I have a headache and am feverish. I wrote a letter to Robert. Just before dinner Tommy came having just arrived on the cars from home. He brings good news from home generally and some mittens, housewives, currants, preserves, handkerchiefs etc etc all of which were welcome and will be very useful now. Mail brought me *Harpers Weekly* and a letter from Robert. It has

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been a nice, warm day. I have kept pretty quiet. I should have read some but my head would not allow it. I'm much better this evening. I cleaned up my gun this forenoon so it look nice again. A man was murdered last night two miles up the railroad. He was a railroad hand. When Gen McPherson heard of it he ordered Gen Mower to put on a strong camp guard, saying that his men were prowling around too much. It is the first time we have had a camp guard since Black Creek.

Housewives: small sewing kits.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Bragg attempts to close the "Cracker Line" by sending Jenkins's division of Longstreet's command against Geary's of Hooker's. The night action at Wauhatchie, Tennessee, is pandemonium, the charge of a herd of crazed mules causing consternation on both sides. Both sides lose about 450 men. The "Cracker Line" remains open.

Thursday 29: I went to the doctor again and got eight pills to be taken two every three hours. I read and studied awhile this morning. About noon Lieut Williams and privates Christy and Herman arrived from furlough. All appear well and are quite fleshy. Lieut Williams looks better than he has for a long time. Mail brought a letter from N. E. Goldthwait and *Harpers Weekly*. This afternoon we were paid two months pay for July and August. It began to rain about dark. I think it will rain all night. We stewed some of those currants making some sauce which was very good. They with some cake which Lieut Williams brought for David made us a dainty supper. I am tired of being sick. I hope I may be well tomorrow.

Charleston: In the seemingly endless and pointless bombardment of Fort Sumter, Union guns fire 2,691 shells.

Friday 30: It began to rain this morning and has rained all day. It stopped at seven pm and is growing cold. I reported sick, got four pills which I took immediately and three powders, one to be taken every three hours. I took two and threw the other in the fire as it got wet. I have felt pretty well to day. This forenoon I sent for *Adlers German* and English and German Dictionary, price \$1.50 published by Appleton and company, New York. Sykes and I sent a dollar for *Gleasons Literary Companion*. I have studied a few pages in *Ollendorff*, but have not read any.

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Gleason's Literary Companion: a short-lived magazine published in Boston starting in 1861, edited and published by Frederick Gleason.

Second Chattanooga campaign: The small Federal steamer *Chattanooga* arrives at the city with 40,000 rations. The siege is broken, and Grant begins to prepare an offensive.

Saturday 31: At nine we mustered for pay fully equipped. Sykes and I each sent fifteen dollars to William by express. I also bought a photograph of our eagle and sent it home. I have drawn and distributed five days rations. I have felt pretty well all day, but do not like studying. It has been a nice fine day. Several of the boys came in this evening and we passed the evening pleasantly. Pedlers are very plenty now. Almost everybody is indulging a little.

November 1863

Sunday 1: It was very foggy this morning and almost rained, but it cleared up in time for inspection at nine. I've read considerable during the day. There has been no mail. Quite warm this afternoon. All is quiet in camp. The world moves another month has come.

Monday 2: I've not felt very well to day, in fact I've not felt well since we came back from the march. I think it is the effect of over study, anyway it is my old headache that is hanging around me. I have not read or studied any. Battalion drill this morning tired me out. At noon I got two good letters from William and Carrie. I felt like a new man after reading them. Col Jefferson came back to day. It has been a very hot dry day, too hot for us to keep in our tent. We also got two *Posts*. I made a table this forenoon. I do hope I am not going to have a sick spell. I have wanted to lay down a great deal this afternoon. I made a mistake at Bear Creek for I arranged my time so as to get the greatest amount of time for study and I only ought to have studied to reasonable proportion. Now to pay up for it I must quit study awhile. My mouth and lips are entirely well.

Tuesday 3: Election. I wrote a long letter to William, voted the straight Republican ticket. James Lewis being for governor. Our company polled forty two votes all straight republican. Brigade drill this afternoon. I'm much better to day. It has been very warm. Tommy came to vote. He is quite well.

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James Taylor Lewis (1819–1904), born in Clarendon, NY, a career politician who had served as a district attorney, judge, legislator, and lieutenant governor.

Wednesday 4: I'm much better again. In fact I feel well. Batallion drill in the forenoon and Brigade drill in the afternoon. Our colonels need some drilling as well as the men. I have studied a little this evening and read some during the day. Very warm again. No mail to day.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Bragg detaches Longstreet and Wheeler to attack Burnside at Knoxville. Learning of Bragg's move, Grant decides against sending aid to Knoxville. He is willing to sacrifice the city, Burnside, and the president's good opinion all to achieve a breakout at Chattanooga. It is a risk few other generals in the war would have the strength to take.

Thursday 5: It began to rain during the night and has rained steadily all day. Patter, patter as ceasless as the ticking of a clock. Like the rain the day has been monotonous. Drill we could not, study I dare not and to play outside was impossible. Out in the rain till nearly wet through, then in again. I've played chequers, read through a *Waverly* and watched it rain. Warm. We had a fire in our tent this morning, but now it is warm enough without. I have written to father and mother. No mail for us. The *Waverly* is a pretty good magazine to while away time with, being filled mostly with short, interesting stories.

Waverly Magazine, first published c1842, eventually assumed the title *Illustrated Waverly Magazine and Literary Repository*.

Friday 6: The morning was dry and clear overhead. I began my duties by drawing ten days rations which was scarcely done when the bugles blew for batallion drill which took till noon. Then I had to take flour to the bakery and as the meat I drew was poor and had to be inspected I bothered awhile with it. No drill this afternoon. It is the impression that we will not stay here long.

Gulf Coast: Federal forces under Banks occupy Brownsville, Texas.

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Saturday 7: At reveille we got orders to march at eight. Bustle soon began. The company stuff had to be got ready and knapsacks packed. About seven we struck tents and at eight we marched away to the railroad depot. Troops to relieve us had arrived. About ten we got on the cars and soon were in Vicksburg. After stacking arms and resting a few minutes we went on board of the *Continental*, one of the largest and best boats on the river. I saw Tommy on the *Swan*. He is not very well. We had a hard time getting all the company stuff on the boat, there seemed to be no order about the concern of loading up. I finally got mad about an hour after dark and soon made things move on board. But I got mighty tired. Our regiment is quartered on the hurricane deck.

Bristoe campaign: Becoming the aggressor, Meade forces a crossing of the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford. Confederate losses number over 2,000 to the shock and chagrin of Lee's army.

Mississippi to Tennessee

Sunday 8: As I sold the company flour yesterday, I had to get a certificate and buy a box of hard bread which took a long time as the government stores are closed on Sundays. Then I had to run around town to keep myself busy. It has been a cold raw day on the boats. After dinner we could not go on shore so we had to shiver around as best we could. About an hour after dark we started up the river. Our whole division is moving. We expect we are going to join our army corps.

Monday 9: A cold, raw day and we have suffered much. Too cold to keep still or even to eat. I've kept running from one deck to another as best I could, but could not keep warm. Shiver, shiver has been the order of the day. We sailed all last night and all of to day. The river is pretty low, there is not one third as much water running between its banks as there was last spring when we came down. Sandbars are plenty. During the day I finished reading through a poor, half-alive novel that was given me on Saturday. Yesterday I got a letter from Phebe, a *Post* and *Harpers Weekly*. Sykes lent *Harpers* and the man lost it so I did not see it.

Bristoe campaign ends: Meade breaks contact and withdraws northward.

Brother to the Eagle

Tuesday 10: It was cold this morning. In the water pails standing on deck ice was plenty, but it soon grew warm and has been much more pleasant than it was yesterday. We passed Napoleon, which is a small village just below the mouth of the Arkansas River. It is on a nice level place. The Arkansas River is very low. We also passed the mouth of White River which is only a few miles above the mouth of the Arkansas. We met four boats and several gunboats going down. I spent an hour or two in pleasant conversation with Lucas of company "K" who is like myself a member of the color guard. He is one of a very few in the regiment with whom I can have a quiet chit chat. We ate all of our soft bread for breakfast. Hard tack is now in demand.

Wednesday 11: Just at daylight we passed Chuckaluck Island then the mouth of the St. Francis River and Helena. After this we waited a long time for the fleet to come up. It has been pretty warm, which has made it more agreeable. I wrote to William which I intend to mail at Memphis. There is a great deal of gambling on board.

Thursday 12: Morning found us at Memphis. But getting on shore by a pass or running the guard was impossible. About ten we signed the payroll and soon after went ashore and stacked arms. The Seventh Wisconsin Battery is here. I saw Rodgers and took dinner with him at a restaurant. Lieut Williams and corporal Mansur got papers to go to Wisconsin recruiting and went at three pm. So it is, the greatest shirks get the best places. Mansur has been sick. But he is a lazy shirk. It made me vexed this toiling and working all the time and getting no credits for it is played out. I will not work for company "D" any more as I have done. If a shirk fails the best I am bound to try it awhile. So I have had very little to do with the company stuff. At five we marched to the depot, got on the cars and at dark started east. When we got out about eight miles our train was fired into by guerillas. A negro boy was killed and two men belonging to the fifth Minnesota were wounded. Three shots were fired at the engine hitting it in the center. About ten we stopped at La Grange, unloaded, stacked arms and bivouaced. Our regimental dog "Frank" was missed on this trip. He was missed when we stopped to wood up. He started with us but did not arrive at Memphis. He came with us from Camp Randall and has stuck with us till now. Dogs are no favorites of mine, but I would have liked very much to have had him and the eagle go through with the rest of us.

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The greatest shirks: Ambrose's outburst seems aimed at Mansur not Williams. Although Ambrose did not have a particularly high opinion of officers in general, he seems to have respected the hard-working, low-key Williams.

Friday 13: We lay around till ten when we marched to where we are going to set up camp, on the west side of the town. We got some boards and are ready to put up our tents when they come. I've spent the day running around town. It has been badly used and is nearly destroyed. There are quite a number of people living here.

Saturday 14: It rained considerable last night, but I was prepared for it and on my boards, rolled up in a quilt with my rubber spread over me I slept dry and warm. It has been cloudy and windy to day and is cold to night. I have felt curious all day, tired like and my limbs have ached. I have not done much and Sykes has been on guard. Simply putting up our tent is all we have done. H. C. Chamberlin returned to the company for duty to day. He has been at some hospital on duty ever since we left camp at Clear Creek. It is going to be a cold night.

Sunday 15: Cold and windy. I've been cold all day. I wrote Joseph a letter and have drawn five days rations. The pioneer corps came last night Tommy is pretty well. Mail brought me a *Post*. I've not read any to day, it has been too cold. If we do not get moving orders we will rig up our tent tomorrow so that it will be comfortable.

Second Chattanooga campaign: Sherman arrives at Bridgeport, Alabama, with 17,000 men.

Monday 16: Up early and hurried off to the cavalry camp to get lumber etc as they were leaving and got a good bunk two chairs and a piece of a tent. I took the flour to the bakery then went to rigging up the tent which was done by noon. After dinner I drew a pair of shoes, two pairs of socks and two shirts. Then we pitched in, got brick and built a fire place. It took till pretty late to get it high enough to have a fire in, but we did it and now we have a nice warm fire which I am writing by. I've been mending my clothes this evening. Co. "B" buried a man named Hodges.

Brother to the Eagle

Knoxville campaign: At Campbell's Station, Longstreet fails to cut off Burnside's retreat into the city.

Gulf Coast: Federal forces under Banks occupy Corpus Christi.

Tuesday 17: After getting bread, which I have to bring three quarters of a mile; I went and got my shoes changed a small pair for a larger. I then with Davids assistance finished our chimney. Then I wrote Phebe a letter and have been running around ever since getting a pass and transportation papers to Memphis. Jacob Noteman and I are going tomorrow. I am going to get some stuff for the company.

Wednesday 18: I was choring around as usual till ten, when Noteman and I went to the depot and at eleven we got on a freight train and started. We arrived in Memphis at four. We went to the Webster Hospital in which Avery Robinson of our company is on duty and at his earnest request took quarters there. After a good supper we went to the theater. It is the first time I ever attended one. There were two plays and a dance between them. First *The Lost Ship* then *The Cabin Boy*. I was completely interested and spell bound. The scenery was very good and of course they had their regular waves, rain, hail, thunder and lightening. The actors were only fair, there being only a very few good ones. It closed about eleven.

The Lost Ship was based on *The Lost ship, or The Atlantic Steamer* by William J. Nelson Neale (London: H. Colburn, 1843). Neale published at least eleven novels of the sea between 1831 and 1863.

The Cabin Boy was based on *The Cabin Boy's Story: a Semi-nautical Romance, founded on fact* by the popular novelist James A. Maitland (New York: Garrett, c1854.)

Thursday 19: I awoke wonderful to tell in the third story of the Webster block in the very bed and room I laid down in last night, but my head felt funny probably from getting too much interested last night. I commenced trying to get transportation for what I wanted to purchase, directly after breakfast and have been ever since but without success. I can buy anything I want but cannot get it out of town. It is now almost impossible to get anything carried out of the town. I've run from one headquarters to another till I am tired out and now it is played out and tomorrow we will have to

go back without anything we came for. I've just been taking a walk to cool down a little and am returning feeling much better. During my little walk I saw a woman brought dead drunk on a common dray to the police station. She was carried there to be taken care of. It was the first time and I hope the last that I ever saw a woman drunk. This and the events of the day have made one serious and thoughtful. It is now past one o'clock on Friday. As the rest of the boys went to the colored dance and I was left alone, I went to the theatre again and saw *The Reformed Drunkard*, and *Chamelion* performed. *The Reformed Drunkard* was splendid. First the hero was made a drunkard by villians, then reformed by his wife and good men. It probably effected me more than it would have done because the drunken woman was ever before my mind. Coming back at eleven and finding no one returned I laid down and was soon in quiet slumber. All at once the door banged open awakening me and in came several guards bringing in a drunk man who while trying to strike a man with a saber fell down stairs and broke his leg. Oh how must a man feel when awakened out of one of his drunken stupors and finds himself this injured, perhaps lamed for life. I am a great deal stronger a temperence man than I was this morning. It is best to leave liquor alone.

The Reformed Drunkard may have been based on an early edition of the popular story by "Mrs. O. M. of New York" entitled *The Reformed Drunkard: an interesting temperance story written for Arba Lankton*. There are other books, stories, and songs of similar title.

The Chameleon may have been based on a short book of that title by Thomas Atkinson, 1801?–1833 (London: Longman and co., 1832; New York: Smith, Adams & Smith, 1848.)

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Lincoln delivers the Gettysburg Address. Few in the crowd can hear him. The newspapers and Lincoln himself consider the speech a failure.

Friday 20: Wet and raining all day mixed in with cold. Taking an early breakfast we were soon on the railroad and going towards camp. I was glad to leave Memphis. We got back just in time for dinner and found Burrington returned back from his furlough and also a new recruit named Palmer had joined the company. He is a brother of Joseph Palmer of our company. I have drawn ten days rations and taken the flour to the bakery.

Brother to the Eagle

Woodard wants Sykes and I to go in his tent and live with him as he is all alone. He is almost helpless from long sickness and has no fire. He has hardly a friend and is suffering. Though I hate to leave our tent for his sake we will go and live with him. I'll not leave Woodard as he now is without a friend. We now drill twice a day.

Woodard had been orderly sergeant since January 1862, not a position designed to win friends. Yet his loss of popularity seems unfair for he appears to have done his best for the company.

Chattanooga campaign: Sherman's forces begin arriving at Brown's Ferry below Chattanooga.

Knoxville campaign: Longstreet has his army in position to attack but delays, waiting for reinforcements.

Saturday 21: It was quite cold and chilly this morning and has been cold and cloudy all day. Gen Hurlbut has issued an order forbidding any more furloughs and leaves of absence. Harry Austin arrived today. He was quite sick while at home but is well now. I got a team and Sykes and I drew brick to build a chimney with in the tent we are going into. Then we built the chimney and fireplace. This afternoon we drew two months more pay and settled our clothing account for the year ending November first. I had two dollars and eighty five cents coming to me on my account. No mail lately.

Maj. Gen. Stephen A. Hurlbut: An Illinois politician given a star at the beginning of the war, Hurlbut was a marginally competent commander, a better administrator, and a bold grafter. Unable to dismiss him outright, Grant took him out of the field by making him commander at Memphis.

Sunday 22: Inspection at half past seven by one of Gen Mowers aids. After this I went to Sunday School. It seemed curious to be in Sunday School again. Then I wrote to Robert and received one from him and one from Phebe before I finished writing it. At noon companies "A. D. I. E." and "K" received orders to prepare to move on the cars immediately. The color guard were to remain which meant me. They left as soon as ready. They left Sykes as he was sick with ague. Cold and windy. Since dark I have written to Alice.

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Monday 23: Sykes is much better to day, but yet stays with me. I studied *Ollendorff* about an hour this morning. At noon the mail brought me My German Dictionary that I sent for and *Gleasons Companion*. The evening I have spent in study. We sent our money forty seven dollars to William by express. I sending twenty two and Sykes the rest. The pioneer corps have begun to build a large fort. I sent Willis a *Harpers Weekly*.

Chattanooga campaign: Grant has disposed his forces, placing Sherman on his left facing the north end of Missionary Ridge, Thomas in the center facing the main part of the ridge, and Hooker on the right facing Lookout Mountain. This day, Thomas advances against Orchard Knob, capturing the position that will become Grant's viewpoint for the upcoming battle.

Tuesday 24: I wrote to William, then studied awhile mixed with smoke and fixing the chimney. Sykes being well went to the company at eleven leaving me alone. I've been reading and studying most of the time since. By order of the adjutant I reported to Captain Wolf of company "C" and now belong temporarily to that company. I have only to answer to roll call and take care of myself. I am going to use my time profitably and govern myself better than I have been doing and try and do what I do better, take matters calmly and coolly, practicing self denial more than I have been doing. The fact is I have been taking things too easily. Joseph has enlisted in the Seventh Wisconsin Battery.

Chattanooga campaign: On the Union left, Sherman crosses the Tennessee, seizing the northern approaches to Missionary Ridge. However, he faces a deep declivity between his position and Tunnel Hill, which is held by the redoubtable Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne. On the right, Hooker attacks Confederate positions on Lookout Mountain, winning a spectacular victory in the legendary "Battle above the Clouds."

Wednesday 25: Last night was a stinger. I saw ice this morning an inch thick. As Lucas Lathrop of company "K" was in the same fix as myself, I persuaded him to come and tent with me. He moved this morning. It took me all forenoon working hard to line my coat with my blouse. I feel paid though for the trouble as my coat is much warmer. I've studied about an hour this evening and read German as much more. One of my teeth has ached enough to day to make me feel cross and ugly. A cool clear day.

Brother to the Eagle

Chattanooga campaign; Battle of Missionary Ridge: Grant orders Sherman to attack the north end of the ridge while Thomas threatens the center. But Cleburne holds against repeated Federal assaults. Grant orders Thomas to demonstrate against the ridge. This feint turns into an all-out assault led by junior officers and enlisted men. As the horrified and then amazed Union generals on Orchard Knob look on, the attack sweeps up and over the crest. Bragg's army is thrown from the ridge, retreating in near chaos toward Ringgold, Georgia. Cleburne saves a total rout by covering the retreat. In addition to 2,000 prisoners, Grant's army takes 37 guns. More important, Grant has opened the way into Georgia and the heart of the Confederacy. Casualties: Union 753 killed, 4,722 wounded, 349 missing; Confederate 361 killed, 2,160 wounded, 4,146 missing.

Thursday 26: Lathrop is one of the oddest chicks I ever saw. He drinks neither tea or coffee neither eats any meat. He has a turn for peddling too that brings him many a penny. We had reville at four and stacked arms on the color line, but no rebels came. After breakfast I wrote a letter to father then studied till noon. A curious thought came into my head just before dinner, it is only singular that I have not thought of it before. It was not to study too hard when I do study. I've always pitched in as hard as I could, thus tiring myself quickly, now I am going to try and take it easier, probably by this means I can accomplish more. If a man has a waggon to fill with dirt; it is not the best for him to work with all of his might and get exhausted before it is filled, but to take it moderately so that he may hold out. This is a lucky idea for me and I may profit much by following it. I have not done much this afternoon besides talk. When the company left Woodard was taken to the hospital.

Chattanooga campaign: Grant sends Sherman and Thomas after Bragg's retreating army.

Friday 27: It has been warm and cloudy and probably will rain before tomorrow morning. We had to turn out under arms on the color line this morning. Rumor says there are seven thousand rebel cavalry hovering around and are going to make a dash on this place. I've studied nearly all day. I have spent the evening with Tommy, he is well, but tired with working on the fort which is being built here. It will be a large and strong one.

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Mine Run campaign opens: Meade has again become the aggressor in the sparring in northern Virginia. He hopes to get around Lee's right, forcing the Confederates to fall back on Richmond. The Army of the Potomac pushes across the Rapidan at Germanna Ford only to come up against Lee's virtually impregnable position along a stream called Mine Run. In an act of great moral courage, Meade refuses to bow to the politicians' insistence that he attack at all costs.

Columbus, Ohio: Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan and several of his officers escape from the state penitentiary.

Saturday 28: It rained all last night and some this forenoon. Since then it has grown cold and windy. I spent nearly all the forenoon in cleaning up my gun and the afternoon in getting an ax and cutting some wood though I studied about an hour. I received a letter from Phebe and a *Post* from father. Lathrop is not very well this evening. So another week has gone and I have accomplished but little. Next week I expect to commence study in earnest. I am going to rise at reville and get ready for study by guard mounting which is at eight. There is a rumor that General Grant has had a great battle with Bragg near Chattanooga, that the rebels were defeated with the loss of ten thousand prisoners besides the killed and wounded. It is also stated that Murphy has been reunited as colonel of volunteers.

Murphy has been reunited: The report of Murphy's reinstatement was false.

Sunday 29: Oh it was cold this morning. My toes and fingers ached the worst they have this year while going through inspection which was a short one. Besides writing to Phebe I have read some. Tommy came this afternoon, took supper with us and staid the evening. This has been the coldest day we have had this fall. Gen Grant has beaten Bragg taking three hundred prisoners instead of seven thousand. This week I am going to see how much I can study without doing myself any injury.

Knoxville campaign: Longstreet assaults the Union lines at Fort Sanders but is easily repulsed.

Monday 30: Besides studying a great deal this forenoon, I made a canvas gun bag to keep my gun dry. I received a note and *Gleasons Companion*

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from Sykes and have written him an answer this evening. After reading awhile this evening I went and saw Lovell Horton and Orland Orvis who are in the Thirty second Wisconsin which came here yesterday. We had marching orders this morning but they were countermanded. Lathrop has had another shake to day. As our rations are out to day we will draw with company "C" tomorrow. Fine but cool.

Chattanooga campaign ends: In a postscript to the Confederate disaster, General Braxton Bragg resigns as commander of the Army of Tennessee. Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee takes temporary command.

December 1863

Tuesday 1: I'd like to know how taking a cold gives me the tooth ache. My lame tooth aches as often as I take cold and last night worse than ever. I've been unwell all day, almost having a chill this morning and have been feverish all day. But am feeling better this evening. I studied about an hour this forenoon. It was too much and I had to quit and I have only read a little this afternoon. I mess with company "C" and will do well as the "Wolf" makes his cooks attend to his business. It has been pretty warm to day. Second Lieut Willoughby of company "H" has been promoted to captain in that company over first Lieut Munsell. Estee the captain died from wounds received in the charge at Vicksburg. Some of the boys got an owl and brought him up to the eagle. Old Abe would not fight at all, but kept flying away. She is a regular coward.

Mine Run campaign ends: Meade withdraws the Army of the Potomac across the Rapidan and goes into winter quarters.

Wednesday 2: Reville was at four with orders to march at half past five and just as the stars were melting into daylight we started with three days rations and a blanket, leaving our knapsacks packed in the tents. Our course was east. When we arrived at Saulsbury the other five companies joined us. Just at dark we came to a large swamp which stuck the teams. We being rearguard did not get through till after dark. We are twenty two miles from La Grange. Cool and good marching.

Thursday 3: Reville at three and at four we marched again on the back track. We did not get across the swamp till after daylight after which we marched pretty fast. Soon we loaded our guns and artillery was heard in

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front between us and Saulsbury. It was our cavalry skirmishing with rebel cavalry. At Saulsbury they had burned part of the town, torn up the track and gone away in a southern direction. We arrived in La Grange again before sundown, but oh! how tired and sore. Forty-four miles since we left here yesterday morning.

Knoxville campaign ends: With Sherman approaching, Longstreet abandons his positions outside Knoxville. He puts his army into winter quarters at Greeneville, Tennessee.

Friday 4: I had the ague after going to bed last night. I felt I cannot tell how mean this morning and was entirely without ambition. About nine we had to fall in [in] a great hurry and march to the southern part of the town as the rebels were expected in on that road. We soon marched back again. At noon the five companies went again to Saulsbury on the train repairing the railroad track and came back at dark. We have heard a great deal of artillery firing west of us all day and hear that the rebels made an attack on Moscow but were driven off. When the company went away I moved into McDowell's tent to watch his stuff. At his invitation Sykes and I will remain in it over night. I'm pretty tired yet.

Saturday 5: It rained all night, but soon cleared off and has since been fine. After writing William a letter, Sykes and I moved from McDowell's to our own tent but have not rigged up much. I've loitered around not doing much yet ever busy. I drew five days rations, took the flour to the bakery, bought some potatoes, got a late and cold supper and have spent the evening in reading. Our company drew new tents before they went to Saulsbury. Sykes and I now tent with Boughton and Hatton. I am not fairly rested yet. The rebels burned a bridge between here and Memphis yesterday though they were beaten at Moscow.

Sunday 6: Inspection at seven. At ten the chaplain's wife who has lately arrived spoke to us. She is a good speaker rather better than her husband. I have written to father during the day. Bush of company "F" who was taken prisoner at Jackson last spring has come back to the company. Lieut Col Jefferson is very unpopular with the men in the regiment. He is too strict and stylish besides being too lenient with citizens. Dress parade at half past four. It has been a fine warm day.

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Monday 7: I had a shake of the ague again last night. So this morning I reported sick to "Aunt Betsey." He gave me four powders two of which I have taken and burned two. Soon after dinner companies "A. D. I. C." and "K" received orders to pack up and go to Saulsbury again which was done, leaving me alone and minus a tent. Lathrop and I got some boards together and commenced a shanty as we could not get a tent from the quartermaster. As it looked like rain we have moved into an old building where we will remain over night. It began to rain soon after dark and is going to be a wet, stormy night. The boys were glad to go to Saulsbury again.

Aunt Betsey: Asst. Surgeon Murdock.

Tuesday 8: We worked hard till noon to get our shanty covered by which time I was pretty tired. This afternoon we have battened a few of the cracks and cleared up a little. It has been cold and gloomy all day, drizzling some during the afternoon and is now blowing coldly from the north. Before supper I wrote to Robert and have been studying some this evening. This afternoon instead of building castles I have been thinking some looking at the future with an eye to prepare for it, seeing what would come and how to meet it. It probably started from some pointed remarks in a letter from William on my ideas of study. I admit it does look rather funny to see a farmer studying the learned languages. Choose your business then devote time money and labor to it is what I wrote to Robert to day, while here I am a prospective farmer talking as if I never meant to see a plough. I am no believer in middle courses and a farmer should of all things study farming, but I would study ancient literature too. Past experience should teach me not to overtask my mind. If I argue thus much longer I shall cast my Latin and Greek notions from me forever. I guess I will ponder on the matter and see what can be done.

Washington: With the war going in favor of the Union, Lincoln delivers a "Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction" in his annual message to Congress. The terms are liberal: a full pardon to all but the highest Confederate officials and officers on the swearing of allegiance to the United States; return of all property except slaves; and readmission to the Union for a seceded state once slavery is abolished and ten percent of the population takes the oath of allegiance.

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Wednesday 9: It has been a wet and drizzly day not quite raining yet very near it. I went down and got all the bread belonging to the company and sent it to them on the train, but I had to wait about two hours in the cold and damp as I was there too early. Yesterday and today detachments of colored troops from Corinth have been conscripting all the loose negroes that could be found. They are hiding everywhere. During the afternoon I've been reading and studying. Tommy came during the afternoon and staid awhile. As I begin to feel very much like shaking I am going to bed early. No mail.

Thursday 10: I had the ague very hard, as hard a shake as ever I can remember having, which was followed by a very hard fever. I reported sick and got four powders to be taken one every four hours. I have felt sick and light headed all day. It has drizzled all day as it did yesterday and has been quite warm. I have written to Phebe and received a nice little letter from Fanny, full of news that older persons would not think of. I've read a little during the day. Of course study has been out of the question.

Friday 11: I reported sick again and got three powders to be taken as those yesterday. Then I went down to the depot to see about getting the flour baked and sending the bread on the cars to them. It rained a great deal this forenoon and began again at three this afternoon. I studied two hours this afternoon and this evening have written to Fanny. I am feeling quite well again. I hope my ague is gone away.

Saturday 12: Another wet rainy day. Lathrop and I went down to the depot and sent two days rations of bread to our companies, all of which time it was raining hard. From then till noon I studied two hours and have studied one hour this afternoon. I have cleaned up ready for inspection tomorrow. I am going to bed early as I feel the ague coming on. No mail to day.

Sunday 13: I passed a miserable sleepless night caused by the fever which followed the ague. I've been a sick boy all day and have kept quiet, but am feeling some better this evening. It rained about two hours this forenoon, then cleared off and is quite cold. I reported sick and got my regular four powders to be taken every three hours which has been done.

Monday 14: I had a very good nights rest last night. It seemed all the sweeter as it was such a great contrast to my rest last night, but I have not

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been well to day. I reported sick and got three powders to be taken one every four hours. At four the regiment got orders to march taking everything but leaving the sick of which I am one. They went at sundown all gone to Saulsbury to the rest of the regiment. Davison of our company came to draw rations and is staying with me to night. I've been to see Tommy who is all right and gay.

Tuesday 15: A fine clear morning, the first in over a week. We went down to the depot and loaded our stuff then had to wait shivering as best we could till four when the train came along. We got to Saulsbury pretty soon where I found the boys all as busy as they could be as they had to move camp a little. I got a letter from William telling that our money had arrived safe. Sykes is on guard. It is getting quite cold and windy. I reported sick and got six powders but have only taken three. Woodard who is quite low was sent to a general hospital at Memphis. Since the company came here Avery Robinson has joined he has been absent since the battle of Farmington in May 1862, also James Richards who was detailed at Cairo in the spring of 1862 and has been absent ever since.

Wednesday 16: It commenced raining during the night and has rained hard during the day except a very few minutes and is raining and blowing hard now. As there was a great deal to do about the tent we went at it in the rain. Where our tent was placed was about eight feet from a fireplace, so we built a building of boards from the tent to the fireplace. Before noon I was tired out and wet through. The others finished it and now we are well rigged again, having plenty of room, good bunks and a fireplace. We have had a good fire and are partially dry and feel somewhat repaid for our toil. I reported sick per order and was ordered to take the rest of my powders. I have written an answer to Williams letter as it was on important business and have read some during the afternoon. I am feeling tolerably well. Col Jefferson is making the whole regiment enemies by his littleness about military [missing word]. He is hated and detested. May tomorrow be fine.

Col. Jefferson was the only regimental officer with significant pre-war experience in military matters. In his new role as commanding officer he was apparently attempting to institute a more military bearing among the soldiers of the 8th Wisconsin, a course of action sure to be unpopular with veteran "citizen soldiers" like Ambrose.

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Army of Tennessee: Despite a long mutual antipathy, President Davis appoints Gen. Joseph E. Johnston commander of the Army of Tennessee.

Thursday 17: It was clear and windy this morning and has been all day and been growing colder. It is now cold and windy. I drew and distributed rations which took till noon. The boys were glad to see me issuing rations again as the acting commissary in my absence did not do his duty. I have had an opportunity to look around a little. The rebels burned nearly all the town when they passed through. There is a good substantial fort here which will be hard to take if properly defended. I feel pretty well but work tires me out.

Friday 18: Last night was bitter cold, the coldest we have had this winter. Sykes and I could hardly keep warm. He is on picket to day. I busied myself this forenoon with battening cracks and stuffing up holes with cotton. This afternoon I've cooked some rice and read some, but have not studied any. Lieut McDowell has been as drunk as a fool this afternoon and got to fighting with Capt Green and behaving shamefully. Much warmer this evening. No mail.

Saturday 19: A beautiful day. I wrote a letter to father. When the mail came it brought me a letter from Joseph who is now at Camp Randall, also one from Phebe. I have felt much better this afternoon. McDowell is quite sorry for his spree yesterday.

Sunday 20: Beautiful and cold. We had company inspection about nine and I drew and divided eleven days rations, enough to last out the year. It almost seems as if I had more to do on Sunday than any other day. I have written to Joseph. This afternoon the chaplains wife addressed us in the fort and after her the chaplain spoke awhile. The Forty seventh Illinois and Eleventh Missouri of our Brigade passed east to day on the cars. It is said that they are going to Pocohontos and from there march to Jackson Tennessee to attack Forrest who is now there with a rebel force. Several columns are said to be advancing on that place on different roads. Col Jefferson has orders to hold this post to the last man. They want to try and catch Forrest. Rollenhagen of our company returned to duty in the company to day. He stole a revolver from a guest of Col Jeffersons for which he was duly punished and now has to return to the regular duty of a soldier. He had a very good place as Surgeons hostler. He left the company

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at Clear Creek. August Bartz went to the hospital yesterday. I am feeling much better.

Hostler: a man employed to look after horses or a vehicle. Rollenhagen probably looked after the surgeon's horse and ambulance both.

Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest: One of history's great cavalry commanders, Forrest had little education and no military training. Financing a cavalry battalion with his own funds in October 1861, he was elected lieutenant colonel. His genius as a leader and tactician was quickly apparent. In Dec. 1863, he was promoted to major general.

Monday 21: Cloudy but fine. I'm not as well to day, but studied a little this forenoon.

Tuesday 22: I've felt first rate all day and it has been a nice fine day too. It was warm enough to go without a fire a long time. I studied about an hour during the forenoon and two in the afternoon. A regiment of cavalry came here last night and their colonel (Hurst) is commander of the post. Duty is pretty light. Somebody got our candles last night. They probably rolled out of the tent and were picked up, so we will have to live ten days now on one candle.

Wednesday 23: It was cold and misty this morning and almost snowed. A few flakes fell, but it has cleared up. I was taken with diarrhea last night and have been pretty sick all day, but am feeling some better to night. I have not studied any but have written to Robert. Sykes went out with three others to get some fresh meat. They were out about four hours and came back well loaded. Sykes share was a pig weighing forty pounds and a quarter of another besides a nice fat hen. We are pretty well supplied with fresh meat. The mail keeps coming but brings no letter for me.

Thursday 24: Another fine, beautiful day, but I have [been] sick all day. It is christmas eve and the moon is shining so bright and clear. All is peace and quiet yet we are guarding ourselves against our fellow men. No mail nor study.

Friday 25: Merry Christmas. I'm much better to day. I begin to feel natural though weak. We had a chicken for dinner, with some good chicken soup,

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besides bread, biscuits and butter. Supper tea with a nice apple pie. Pretty well for the army. I got a long letter from father telling us all were well at home and I wrote a long one back again. It was very fine this morning but soon grew cloudy and windy and cold at first but it is warmer this evening. Sykes and I made some landmarks for every year since we came into the woods seventeen years ago to day. We reckoned for every year but 1851 which baffled us. The mail also brought us a *Post* and *Gleasons*. Robinson from one of the other tents came in and the evening has been spent in telling stories, yarns etc. After the rest were all gone to bed Boughton and I staid up a long time talking "pro et con."

Saturday 26: It rained some this morning, but soon stopped and has been cloudy and windy all day. I am much better. If I am so much better in the morning, I shall suppose myself to be entirely well. I studied awhile this forenoon but soon stopped as I did not feel right. I have cleaned up my traps ready for inspection tomorrow. It is not cold.

Sunday 27: It rained during the night and long enough this morning to stop inspection which was to come off at half past seven. I am about well but any small amount of work tires me out. I'd a miserable time last night trying to sleep but am sleepy enough to night. I have not done much besides reading some. I am going to LaGrange tomorrow.

Monday 28: I got my papers and by tight pinching got myself and load on the passenger train and by an hour was at LaGrange. I sold my rations and went up to the pioneer corps and am staying with Tommy who is now assistant cook in his detachment. I remain with him to night. Forrest has crossed the railroad at Lafayette and is trying to escape south with a large drove of cattle and mules. Rumors plenty.

Tuesday 29: I remained with Tommy till nearly noon near which time the train was expected from Memphis. It came about one. The road after Forrest was quickly repaired as men only went out yesterday to repair it. The train was hurried through, it fairly jumped over the rough road. I found all right at Saulsbury and since I arrived I have been hanging around the bakery to get some bread. I have got half a ration. Yesterday and to day have been quite warm. I'm getting tougher and stronger.

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Wednesday 30: Quite fine and clear during the day but is drizzling this evening. I made an ax elve this morning and put it on the ax. I also put up a shelf for my many books. No mail to day. I feel as well and full of fun as ever I did. Another day will end the year.

Elve: helve, handle.

Thursday 31: The last few hours of 1863 are passing away. In five more hours it will be 1864. It began to drizzle slowly this morning and changed into rain about ten and at one from rain to snow, with a cold and freezing wind. It stopped snowing at dark and is now very cold. I was up at revielle and went to the bakers for bread, which I got after waiting for outside about an hour. We were mustered for pay at nine and were just through when it began to rain very hard. At noon I got a letter from Fanny. Ik came. We've been gay and happy in our tent to day. Henry Chamberlain was taken suddenly sick last night and has been taken to the hospital. Our fire burns bright and clear. The hard storm outside does not harm us. I'm writing my last during this year. A new year tomorrow should be a sign for us to strive anew to be good and useful. Let us try and so do. Hoping next year may find me home from the war as well and as happy as I am to night. I close.

Ik: reference unknown.

A. Armitage

Civil War journal by a Wisconsin soldier.

Brother to the Eagle: The Civil War Journal of Sgt.
Ambrose Armitage, 8th Wisconsin Infantry

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