

# Campaigning with the First Minnesota

## A Civil War Diary

*Edited by Hazel C. Wolf*

[THE THIRD SECTION of the diary kept by Isaac Lyman Taylor during eighteen months of service with the First Minnesota in the Civil War appears herewith. The entries that follow fill the second volume of the original diary and carry the narrative of events to April 15, 1863. Earlier installments, in which Taylor recorded his experiences from January to September, 1862, were presented in the March and June issues of this magazine. A fourth and concluding section, constituting the third volume of the manuscript diary, will appear in December. ED.]

### *Diary No. 2*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Please forward this diary to J. H. Taylor, Prairie City, McDonough Co., Illinois. By so doing you will exhibit your magnanimity accommodativeness & divers other virtues, besides conferring no small favor on a defunct individual.

Respectfully yours

ISAAC L. TAYLOR

Co. E. 1st. Regt. Min. Vols.

ALEXANDRIA VA. Oct. 1st. 1862.

### DIARY FOR 1862

Sun. Sept. 21. This fine Sabbath finds me in a land of Liberty & plenty. I left Belle-Isle, Richmond, Va. last Sunday morning, marched twelve miles to Aiken's Landing, and, with other paroled prisoners, was delivered over into the hands of Uncle Sam and, by that kind Old Gentleman, conveyed, via. James River & Chesapeake Bay, to "Camp Parole," Annapolis, Md. where I arrived Tuesday morning, Sept. 16th. Since my arrival at this camp I have been endeavoring to recruit & make amends for the "starving time" on Belle-Isle. Fruit is plenty & the

guards allow us to rove outside of camp when we please. What a contrast between the freedom & plenty of Camp Parole and the close confinement & famine of that hated Belle-Isle. Our army news for the past week has been cheering & depressing. Little Mac has driven the rebels out of Md. but about ten thousand of our men have been surrendered at Harpers Ferry & our Western & frontier sky lowers.<sup>46</sup> Indians (Sioux) quite troublesome in Minnesota.<sup>47</sup> Two members of Co. D. 12th Ill. cavalry dined with us to day. They report that D[anford] Taylor was "all right" on Sunday night when he started, with his comrads, to cut his way through the Secesh lines at Harper's Ferry. Granville Currier, Co. D 12th. Ill. Cavalry calls on us. He says Chet Warren escaped with Daf [Danford] from Harper's Ferry & that [Adolphus] Marsh, of Avon, was taken prisoner in the hospital.<sup>48</sup> Paroled prisoners from H'r's Ferry express much dissatisfaction at the surrender of the place by Col. [Dixon S.] Miles. We have no tents yet but our condition is so much better than when on Belle-Isle that we do not complain

Mon. Sept. 22. "Ike" Painter, Co. D, 12th. Ill. Cavalry gives Henry & I each a clean shirt. This morning the boys "charge" on a sutler shop, carry off three or four thousand dollars worth of goods, tear down his building & carry off the boards.<sup>49</sup> *Alledged* cause, insult to *private* soldiers. *Real* cause, propensity for plunder.

Pres. Lincoln emancipation proclamation<sup>50</sup>

Tues. Sept. 23. A portion of the paroled prisoners are being paid off. It is reported that all prisoners delivered at Aiken's Landing & City Point are exchanged.

Wed. [September] 24. The "one house" groceries in camp were "charged" upon last night. Granville & I go fruiting. Quite a number Belle Islanders have been sent to Washington or Alexandria & some of the H'r's Ferry prisoners have left for Camp Douglass, Chicago.

<sup>46</sup> In the early fall of 1862 McClellan sent Lee retreating across the Potomac after the battle of Sharpsburg, Harpers Ferry surrendered, and in the West the Confederate forces retired after the battle of Iuka. *Dictionary of American History*, 1:81, 3:11, 164.

<sup>47</sup> Taylor probably did not know of the Sioux Outbreak in Minnesota, which began on August 18, 1862, until after he reached Camp Parole. For a detailed account of the uprising and the measures taken to suppress it, see Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:109-190.

<sup>48</sup> Currier had been a neighbor of the Taylors in Illinois. Charles H. Warren and Adolphus Marsh were members of the Twelfth Illinois Cavalry. Adjutant-General of the State of Illinois, *Reports for the Years 1861-66*, 8:340, 346, 352.

<sup>49</sup> Disorder was prevalent in all the parole camps in the fall of 1862. *Official Records*, series 2, vol. 4, p. 692, 727, 771.

<sup>50</sup> Lincoln's preliminary proclamation was issued on the day of Taylor's entry. *Dictionary of American History*, 2:206.

Thur. [September] 25 The members of the 12th. Ill. Cavalry who were taken prisoners at H. Ferry left for Chicago this A.M.

Fri. [September] 26. Left Anapolis in A.M. on a small steamer bound for Washington. We take one day's rations Fair day

Sat. Sept. 27 Entered mouth of Potomac River between 5 & 6 A.M. Passed Mount Vernon towards night & about dusk anchored opposite Alexandria. Saw but few gun boats on Potomac One of them boarded our vessel at mouth of river.

Sun. [September] 28. Steamed up to Washington this morning, lounged about the wharf a few hours, marched up to "Soldier's Retreat" for breakfast & then returned to Alexandria & went into camp, with other paroled prisoners, near Fort Ellsworth. Find Corp. Sam. Stites, Co. E. 1st Min. in convalescent camp near by.

Mon. [September] 29. Slept in the open air last night. We have had the same kind of tent ever since we were released from Richmond Paroled prisoners here are so organized that the members of each "Army Corps" form a distinct squad or company. We find [John W.] Davis & [Israel] Jackins of Co. E in Conv[alescent] camp. Peddlers are plenty — some "charging"

Recd. a tent this evening

Tues. Sept. 30. A Dutch Col. [*William Hoffman*] assumes command of all paroled men. He makes a speech in which he says we shall have plenty to eat if he has "to steal it." A rumor is afloat that Secesh have proposed terms of peace to our Government. I judge it is a hoax. A[lexander] Shaw, Co. K, 1st. Min. starts for Washington to visit his uncle, armed with a *citizens suit*. No passes are allowed to *soldiers*.

Wed. Oct. 1st. Hurry up Uncle Sam & get us some clothing & money Moved our camp nearer town.

Thur. Oct. 2. Twelve of us Minnesotans occupy one Sibl[e]y tent.<sup>51</sup> Gen. [Franz] Sigel is reported in the vicinity of Warrenton Junction. A good many new troops encamped in this vicinity

Fri. [October] 3. A fine day. Gen. Banks & staff visits our camp in P.M. A part of paroled prisoners draw clothing.

Sat. [October] 4. I draw a new suit of cloth[e]s from Uncle Sam, wash up, put it on & feel like a *new man*. We move our camp still nearer Alexandria

<sup>51</sup> The cone-shaped Sibley tent was usually occupied by sixteen men. Fred Shannon, *Organization and Administration of the Union Army*, 1: 200 (Cleveland, 1928).

Sun. [October] 5. Henry & I attend "Washington's Church" (Protestant E.) in the city of Alexandria. The first sermon I have heard since we were encamped at Eltham, on the Peninsula, in May last. The church service awakens recollections of home. Thanks to a sentinel of 33d. Regt. Mas. Vols. who allowed us to enter the city without a pass. Fine day.

Mon. Oct. 6. Fine day. Pie, cake & fruit peddlers plenty

Tues. [October] 7. Ole Oscar (Co. F) & I take pork, soap & candles to a stingy grocer in Alexandria & trade them for potatoes, onions & molasses. In P.M. we are ordered to "fall in" to go to our Regts. Embark at Alexandria, debark at Washington, take supper at "Soldier's Retreat" & lodging at "Soldier's Rest" Reported Union victory at Corinth, Miss. on Sat. last.<sup>52</sup>

Wed. Oct. 8. Remain in Washington all day awaiting transportation. We find Sergt. [Myron] Shepard, Co. B, here to take charge of Minnesotians. Pay a visit to the capitol grounds & take a view of the "Godess of Liberty" (bronze) which is to be placed upon the dome of the Capitol. It's height is 19½ feet. Her right hand grasps a sword, the left, a shield & olive branch.<sup>53</sup> Quite a number of men at work upon the steps on the East front of the Capitol.

Thur. [October] 9. Left Washington sometime last night & proceeded by R.R. to Harper's Ferry. Being weary and a little "under the weather," Henry and I "make down" our bed upon the grass between Camp Hill & Bolivar Heights

Fri. Oct. 10. Came into camp of our Regt. early this morning.<sup>54</sup> Find a good many familiar faces but many are absent. The diminutive size of our Regt. tells a sad story of this summer's campaign. Less than three hundred on dress parade. Harper's Ferry, Bolivar & region round about is covered with sutler shops. I receive six months' pay minus

<sup>52</sup> Union troops occupied Corinth on October 4, 1862. *Dictionary of American History*, 2:59.

<sup>53</sup> This statue, which was the work of Thomas Crawford, was called "Freedom or Armed Liberty" by the sculptor. It was permanently set on December 2, 1863. Inna T. Frary, *They Built the Capitol*, 220 (Richmond, 1940); Noah Brooks, *Washington in Lincoln's Time*, 9 (New York, 1895); *Encyclopedia Americana*, 8:166.

<sup>54</sup> The Taylor brothers rejoined the First Minnesota at this point. After they were captured at Savage's Station, the regiment went on with McClellan's army to Harrison's Bar, returned to Alexandria on August 29, and participated in General Pope's Manassas campaign. It took part in the battle of Sharpsburg on September 17, marched to Harper's Ferry on September 22, and established an encampment at Bolivar Heights, where it remained for six weeks. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:22-28; *History of the First Minnesota*, 226; Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, 164-229; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, 87-130.

twelve dollars stoppage for extra clothing drawn up to July 1st. 1862. Have a feast of good things.

Sat. [October] 11. Maryland, Loudon & Bolivar Heights covered with troop. Gen. Couch now in command of Sumner's Army Corps. No drill this P.M.

Sun. [October] 12. 1st. Min. goes on picket. I remain in camp, having no equipments yet. It seems that [James E.] Stewart's [*Stuart's*] rebel cavalry have made quite a bold dash into Pa. & Md. making a complete circuit of the Army of the Potomac. We have fresh oysters for supper. The Western sky begins to brighten. Give it to them Buel & Grant.<sup>55</sup>

Mon. Oct. 13. Acting Corp. of the guard. Quite rainy last night — cloudy to day. Co. drill in A.M. & Brig. drill in P.M. P.H.T. is detailed for color guard.

Tues. [October] 14. In camp

Wed. [October] 15 We are ordered to move at day light tomorrow in "light marching order"

Thur. [October] 16. A strong reconnoitering party left Bolivar Heights early this morning. 53d. Pa., (Col. [John R.] Brooks [*Brooke*]) 1st. Minn. & [John A.] Tompkin's Rhode Island battery and some cavalry in the advance. When a short distance beyond Hall Town the 53d. Pa. & 1st. Minn. formed in line of battle on the left of the Charleston road. Several Secesh shells dropped in our vicinity one of which wounded Adj. King's horse. After an artillery "duel" of an hour or two's duration our skirmishers were thrown out & we advanced towards Charleston, sometimes in line of battle, sometimes in "column by division" & sometimes "by the right of companies to the front."<sup>56</sup> We occupied the town without resistance, remained in its vicinity till towards night when we were moved about two miles beyond, towards Winchester, & halted in a piece of woods. We couldn't exactly "see the point" of this move but rumor said it was designed to "draw the rebel cavalry into a trap." Co's E & G of 1st. Minn. sent on picket after dark.

<sup>55</sup> For accounts of Stuart's circuit of the Union forces from October 9 to 12 and of the Union operations against Vicksburg, which at this time were intermittently successful, see the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 18:171, and the *Dictionary of American History*, 5:367.

<sup>56</sup> The reconnaissance to Hall Town and Charlestown, both about ten miles to the west of Harpers Ferry, was made in order to determine the whereabouts of the Confederates. The Minnesota and Pennsylvania troops engaged in a skirmish with four regiments of Virginia cavalry from an encampment on Apequan Creek, about ten miles west of Charlestown. *History of the First Minnesota*, 229.

Thick clouds, lightning, thunder, rain & dark as Egypt. About 9 P.M. the pickets were called in & Regt. ordered back to Charlestown [Norman] Fowler & I were "omitted" in the darkness & left on post "alone in our glory." A special expedition however succeeded in finding us & we rejoined the Regt. We start for Charlestown. After moving in divers directions it becomes evident that our "guide" is bewildered. Consultation held in which field & line officers and privates participate. Not much concord of sentiment as to the direction we ought to take but the opinion prevails quite generally that the "*veteran 1st*" stands a good chance to fall into the "trap" instead of the Secesh cavalry. We finally succeed in finding the Charlestown road & after wading through mud & water join our forces & encamp south of the town.

Fri. Oct. 17. I ap[p]rehend the Secesh miss some of their fence this morning. It is reported we have secured a considerable amount of wheat & other forage. Stacks of grain are numerous in these parts. At 1-30 P.M. we move back to Hall Town & encamp for the night in a beautiful white oak grove

Sat. Oct. 18. Return to our camp at Bolivar this morning. Brig. Gen. [Winfield S.] Hancock had command of the expedition. Reports from our Western Army are favorable.

Sun. [October] 19. A fine day—cloudy at night

Mon. [October] 20. A fine day. The Federal balloon "Intrepid" up again as usual.

Tues. [October] 21. Strong, cool wind. Min. 1st. vote for members of Congress & county officers. The votes are sealed in an envelope & directed to the judges of election. Commissioners are here to receive the votes & transmit them to their destination<sup>57</sup> I do not vote.

Wed. Oct. 22. Minn. 1st. goes on picket about two miles up the Potomac. Cool day. Secesh cavalry fire on our pickets. We arrest an old negro & detain him over night.

Thur. [October] 23. Sent the old negro home this morning. Relieved in A.M. by 69th. Pa. We have very cool nights of late. Gen. Gorman in "hot water" this evening because a number of Minn. boys are attempting to enlist in the regular cavalry, pursuant to an order from the War Department.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> For an account of votes cast by Minnesota soldiers, see Josiah H. Benton, *Voting in the Field*, 67-72 (Boston, 1915).

<sup>58</sup> A general order of October 9, 1862, directed commanding officers of regular army regiments, battalions, and batteries to have recruiting agents obtain enough volunteers

Fri. [October] 24. On guard. Gen. Gorman orders double guard to be placed around our Regt. to prevent the boys from going down to the recruiting office. He also sends out a patrol to catch the wayward soldier of the "veteran 1st." and orders that no passes be granted. Notwithstanding all this, the boys occasionally "leak out." Guards not *over vigilant*. A large number of our boys are at Sandy Hook waiting to be "sworn in." [Albert B.] Combs of our company pays two dollars for a pass which takes him safely across the river to the recruiting office.

Sat. Oct. 25. Recruiting excitement continues. Some join the regular cavalry & others the "Engineer Corps" McClellan's order requiring those wishing to enlist in the Reg. army to give in their names to the Adj. of their Regts., read on dress parade.<sup>59</sup>

Sun. Oct. 26. Rainy, disagreeable day.

Mon. [October] 27. 1st. Min. goes on reserve picket. A corporal & three privates, including myself, are detailed to guard the premises of a "Union man." When not on post we sit in the house by the fire conversing with the old gentleman's daughters & enjoying ourselves hugely. It is a long time since I was in a private house and as the "gals" are quite sociable I enjoy this treat "right smart." They amuse us with a warm dinner & Secesh songs. It becomes our "painful duty" to col[1]ar three of Baxter's Zouaves & forceably eject them from the domicile. Zouave oaths & women's screams commingle. A fine clear day.

One of our special duties is to keep the boys from milking the old man's cow

Tues. Oct. 28. Relieved this A.M. by 65th Pa. Sarah & Mary invite us to "call again"

Henry & I register our names as candidates for the U. S. Marines. Troops left Loudon Heights to day for some unknown destination. Fair day.

At dress parade four or five prisoners of 1st. Minn. were brought before the Regt. and their sentences read. Among them are Randal[1] (Horace) & James T. Ewarts of Co. E. Randal forfeits three months pay & wears a ball and chain for thirty days at hard labor. Ewarts

from state units to fill regular army groups to the legal standard. *Official Records*, series 3, vol. 2, p. 654.

<sup>59</sup> The order of October 9 was modified by another on October 24, which specified that officers of the regular army could visit state regiments only after obtaining permission from corps headquarters. Whenever possible, however, they were to select men from among those who had signed transfer request lists prepared daily by the adjutants. *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 19, p. 476.

forfeits all his pay & is put to hard labor for the remainder of his term of enlistment.

Wed. Oct. 29. Fair day. We are ordered to be ready to march at 5 A.M. tomorrow. Some troops are leaving this evening. The opinion is prevalent in camp that a general advance is to be made.<sup>60</sup>

Thur. [October] 30. We strike tents at 11 A.M. & march at 1-30 P.M. We cross the Shenandoah at Harper's Ferry, wind about the base of Loudon Heights, move up Loudon Valley and at dark encamp in a fine grove. This is a narrow pleasant valley extending N.E. & S.W. The leaves lie thickly upon the ground making a fine mattress for the weary soldier. Warm & pleasant.

Fri. Oct. 31. Very fine weather. We are mustered for pay. We lie around all day with arms stacked. "Prudential reasons" make me avoid giving our numbers &c.

Sat. Nov. 1st. Capt. Lewis Muller assumes command of Co. E. A little before noon we march up the valley & bivouac at night in two parallel lines of battle at "Woodville." We hear cannonading to the South West. Very fine weather.

Sun. [November] 2. Marched early this morning & before noon reached "Snickerville" near "Snicker's Gap." We hear much cannonading & some musketry of [f] towards Bull Run Mts. Towards night we move about four miles towards the firing & bivouac. If the Secesh dont skadaddle there may be a big row tomorrow

Mon. Nov. 3. Move about 11 or 12 A.M. Hear artillery firing to the S.W. of us. At 3 P.M. our cavalry skirmish with the enemy near Upper-ville. Skirmishers thrown out & our brigade (Sully's) advances in line of battle. Secesh skadaddle & we bivouac not far from Ashby's Gap in the Blue Ridge Range. The boys are hungry & the sheep, porkers & poultry have to suffer. I buy some milk & corncake of a contraband.

Tues. [November] 4. This A.M. we occupy Ashby's Gap & the village of Paris. On guard to day. A nice pig generously introduces himself to the guard & is accepted as a martyr to the cause of the Union

McClellan & staff reconnoitre the enemy from Ashby's Gap.

Wed. Nov. 5. Remain in camp at Paris.

<sup>60</sup> This movement marked the beginning of McClellan's advance down the east side of the Blue Ridge range, which divided Lee's forces. Before McClellan could strike at the weakened Confederates to his west, however, Lincoln's order removing him from the command of the Army of the Potomac reached him at Warrenton. *Dictionary of American History*, 2:330; Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, 225-227; McClellan, *Own Story*, 612-661; *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 19, p. 545.



Thur. [November] 6. We move to the Southward in rear of the wagon train. Move a few miles & encamp. The boys buy apples & poultry with Secesh mon[e]y of Phila. manufacture.<sup>61</sup> Cool raw wind

Fri. [November] 7. Wintry to day—ground white with snow. Get first beef to night

Sat. [November] 8. Leave camp this morning. March a mile or two & halt. At dark our brigade resume the march in rear of a large wagon train. Minn. gets into camp at 1 o'clock next morning. H[enry] C. Winters & myself being about "played out" "make down" our bed about a mile from camp & come in the next morning.

Sun. Nov. 9. March early this morning & about noon encamp near the town of Warrenton. Henry is sick & comes a part of the distance in ambulance. Tolerable fine day.

Mon. [November] 10. Remain in camp. In A.M. the different Regts. of Couch's Corps form along the road in column by division, present arms & give McClellan three hearty cheers as he passes on his way to Washington. Much indignation & "tall swearing" among the soldiers on account of McClellan's removal from the command of the Army of the Potomac. Why Little Mac is superceeded & disgraced at this stage of the game is a mystery to the uninitiated. The army like Burnside well but Little Mac better.<sup>62</sup> Let us see what the result will be. At dress parade McClellan's Farewell address & Burnside's Inaugural is read. Fine day.

Tues. Nov. 11. We remain in camp. Weather continues fine. Israel Washburn, Gov. of Ma[i]ne is in camp & reviews the 19th. Regt. Maine Vols. Weather mild & a little cloudy this evening. The nights of late have been very cool.

Wed. [November] 12. Mild & pleasant though somewhat cloudy. Sprinkles this evening. Gov. Washburn reviews the Maine troops. I hear from home for the first time since last June. Get N.Y. Herald & Balt. Clipper.

Thur. Nov. 13. Bright clear day. Division drill in P.M. When

<sup>61</sup> Residents of the Shenandoah Valley preferred Confederate money when selling their produce to Union men. A Philadelphia concern supplied the Army of the Potomac with counterfeit Confederate notes. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:28.

<sup>62</sup> Burnside's appointment was even less pleasing to him than to the soldiers. Couch had replaced Sumner in the command of the Second Corps on November 7. Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, *Report*, 1:650 (Washington, 1863); *Dictionary of American Biography*, 4:463; *History of the First Minnesota*, 226; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, 128-130.

will our new Gen. get ready to move against the enemy?<sup>63</sup> This fine weather can't last always. At dress parade this evening, was read the finding of a court martial which tried [William M.] Reynolds of Co. C 1st. Minn. Vols. for "misbehavior before the enemy" He is sentenced to one year's hard labor on the public works & to forfeit his pay for that length of time.

Fri. [November] 14. Fair weather. On guard. We have orders to march tomorrow morning.

Sat. Nov. 15. Marched about 8 A.M. Reached Warrenton Junction at 1-45 P.M. From W. Junction we move two or three miles along the R.R. towards Culpeper & encamp. Very fine day.

Sun. [November] 16. Reveille at 4 A.M. March about 8 A.M. Encamp at 4 P.M. Quite weary to night. Cool morning. Pleasant day.

Mon. [November] 17. March between 7 & 8 A.M. At 1 P.M. we encamp in the woods within 3 or 4 miles of Fredericksburg. Artillery fighting in the advan[ce] this P.M. Distance from Warrenton to Fredericksburg, forty miles. Cloudy & a few sprinkles of rain. In our march from W'ton we moved in three columns, in & on either side of the road.<sup>64</sup> I hope that Burnside will hurry up this campaign as fast as prudence will allow.

Tues. Nov. 18. For breakfast we have a rich dish in the shape of rice, boiled potatoes which our cook bought on the road yesterday. Lowery with occasional sprinkles of rain. We remain in camp. Moderately warm.

Wed. [November] 19. Lowery & some rain. Troops move past us towards Fredericksburg. Our pickets are on this side the Rappahannock & Secesh on the other. We pay 12½ cts. per lb. for flour & make minute pudding for supper. The organization of Burnside's Army is announced in Gen order as follows:<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Instead of striking immediately, Burnside halted for ten days at Warrenton in order to effect the arrangement of the army into grand divisions of two corps each. See *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:29; *History of the First Minnesota*, 241; Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, 231. The grand divisions are listed by the diarist in his entry for November 19, 1862.

<sup>64</sup> The First Minnesota was in the van of the advance on Fredericksburg, which Burnside believed would make an ideal base for operations against Richmond. On November 17 the Union forces reached Falmouth, on the Rappahannock above Fredericksburg, and the Confederate artillery opened on them from the heights behind the city. *History of the First Minnesota*, 242; Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, 232-234; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, 139.

<sup>65</sup> For the text of Burnside's order, see *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 19, pt. 2, p. 583.

Grand Divisions.		Commander
Right	2d. & 9th Corps	E. V. Sumner
Left	1st. & 6th. "	W. B. Franklin
Center	3d. & 5th. "	Joseph Hooker
Reserve	11th Corps &c.	F. Sigel

Thur. Nov. 20. We move our camp this morning about one mile down river. Rainy in A.M.

Fri. [November] 21. Move our camp some fifty rods, into the wood. Rained steadily nearly all last night & until late this morning. Cloudy all day. Balt[imore] Clipper of 20th. inst. says Sigel is at Centerville with his command.

Sat. [November] 22. Quite pleasant — some clouds. I pay twenty-five cents for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a beef's liver Go on "cattle guard" at 4 P.M. From our "guard-house" we can see numerous Secesh camp-fires across the Rappahannock

Sun. Nov. 23. Fair day. Gen. Pleasanton's cavalry encamped near us. A beef "dies" near our guard house & each of the guard secures a generous piece. It is a pity that we can't find out who killed that steer. Went to Falmouth to buy bread &c. Pay 25 cts. per loaf Get a good view of Fredricksburg. Relieved at 4-30 P.M.

Mon. [November] 24. Fine day. In camp cleaning an old rusty gun. We get orders to be ready to march at a moments notice with two day's rations.

Tues. Nov. 25. Fair day. Cloudy at night Reading & writing.

Wed. [November] 26. Rained hard all last night. 1st. Minn. goes on picket at 9 A.M. Cloudy & cool. Clears off at night Starlight evening.

Thur. [November] 27 Clear fine weather. Relieved at 11 A.M. by 1st. Cal. Regt. Henry buys a can of "chicken" for \$1.25 & we have a Thanksgiving supper. Companies formed & Thanksgiving proclamation of Gov. Ramsey read to them by the Adgt.

Fri. [November] 28. Tolerably fair — some clouds & quite windy. Henry has the ague & I am not very well.

Sat. [November] 29. Get a pass & go to Falmouth. Pay twenty cents per lb. for fresh pork. Weather quite fair — clouded up in P.M. & sprinkling this evening

Sun. Nov. 30. Tolerably fair though somewhat cloudy. Cloudy & quite windy this evening. Sermon in A.M. by Chaplain F. A Canwell

[Conwell] of our Regt.<sup>66</sup> It is the first time I have heard him preach

Mon. Dec. 1st. This first day of Winter is mild & cloudy. We move our camp a short distance. The indications are that we shall not cross the river at this point very soon.

Tues. [December] 2. On fatigue to day. Quite pleasant

Wed. [December] 3. A party from 1st. Min. worked all last night on fortifications on left bank of the Rappahannock. We get the President's Message to day. He seems very earnest in the advocacy & confidence of the adequateness of his emancipation plan for ending the struggle between the North & South.<sup>67</sup> We await Congressional proceedings with interest. Fine day.

Our chaplain delivers a lecture on Geology this evening

Thur. [December] 4. Fine day. Nights, of late, have been quite cold. We have now company drill in A.M. & P.M. also inspection of arms every night. We hope to hear good tidings from our Western armies soon.

Fri. [December] 5. Cool weather. Rains & snows all day, nearly. We hear that Franklin's command has embarked at Aquia Creek for the Peninsula

Sat. Dec. 6. Cool wintry day. Clear. Ground still white with yesterday's snow. We build a fire place of sticks & mud to our tent. 'Tis pleasant sitting by the fire this cool evening. Five of us have our "shelter tents" pitched upon a base of pine logs about eighteen inches high.<sup>68</sup>

Sun. [December] 7. Cold day — ground white with snow. On brigade guard.

Mon. [December] 8. Pleasant day — some snow yet on the ground

Tues. [December] 9. Pleasant weather. We have orders to be ready to march in the morning with three days rations & sixty rounds of ammunition.

Wed. [December] 10. Warm & fair. 1st. Min. remains in camp.

Thur. Dec. 11th. We are awakened at 4 A.M. & ordered to be ready at 6 A.M. to march. At 5 A.M. the "ball" opens with cannon & musketry. We march at 6 A.M. We pack our knapsacks & leave them in camp.

<sup>66</sup> Conwell succeeded Neill, who left the regiment in July, 1862, to become a hospital chaplain in Philadelphia. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:23, 49.

<sup>67</sup> The text of Lincoln's message of December 1 is printed in John G. Nicolay and John Hay, eds., *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 8:93-131 (New York, 1905).

<sup>68</sup> Individual shelters, which were commonly called dog or pup tents, were made of lightweight canvas and measured six by four feet. Shannon, *Union Army*, 200.

At 8-30 A.M. Sully's brigade form in column by Regt behind a hill near the river road, & I make the above record. There has been a continuous roar of artillery since 5-30 A.M.

We move about sundown & at dark cross the Rappahannock on a pontoon bridge & occupy the city (a portion of it) of Fredricksburg.<sup>69</sup> A street fight is raging as we cross the river & lasts till late in the evening. After the fighting ceases we build fires along the bank of the river cook coffee & eat our supper. The boys forage through the town & bring in flour, honey, preserves, potatos, wine, whiskey, & tobacco by the wholesale. They find a fiddle & after getting a little tight have a dance. The city was set on fire by our artillery sometime during the day & burns all night. Sully's brigade is a "gay old crowed" to night. The boys sit around the fires in rocking chairs.<sup>70</sup> Heavy cannonading all day

Moon about 30° high at sunrise

Fri. Dec. 12. Early this morning we move to the back part of town where the Rebs. in the course of the day compliment us with a good many shells from their batteries which line the heighths back of the city. Nearly every house I have seen is pretty effectually "gutted" Dead men lie in the streets. A bombarded & pillaged town illustrates the hideousness of war. A few citizens remained in cellars during the bombardment. We are obliged to the Secesh for potatoes & fresh meat for dinner. 1st. Min. goes on picket this evening.<sup>71</sup>

Sat. Dec. 13. Relieved this morning by 15th. Mass. About noon artillery & musket firing commenced. At 1 P.M. Sully's brigade move towards the front & support a battery. From our position we have a

<sup>69</sup> Pontoon bridges were constructed across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg only after some days of sharp fighting, during which Michigan volunteers rowed across the stream to capture Confederate sharpshooters who made it impossible for the Union engineers to carry on their work. When the bridges were completed, Union troops swarmed up the steep banks at Fredericksburg to fight their way through the city street by street. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:29, 2:158; *History of the First Minnesota*, 246-248; Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, 238-242; Walker, *Second Army Corps*, 146-152.

<sup>70</sup> One Minnesotan wrote that the boys played on pianos that had been moved into the streets. He reported that "anything a millioner [*sic*] could wish for was scat[t]ered all around," including "splendid china," jars of preserves, bottles of wine, sugar, watches, gold pens, paintings, carpets, ladies bonnets, and mattresses. Charles Goddard to his mother, December 16, 1862, Orrin F. Smith Papers.

<sup>71</sup> The First Minnesota spent the night of December 12 on picket duty in the western section of Fredericksburg. All during the day Union troops had poured into the city. Some were sent to the rear of the town in order to clear it as a preliminary to the storming of Marye's Heights, where the Confederates had set up fortifications and mounted guns with which to sweep the streets below. *History of the First Minnesota*, 265-268.

good view of the battle field. The fight continues with occasional lulls, till after dark. I judge that our loss has been greater than the Confederate's. They have much the advantage of position. I don't know which side commenced the attack. Our men have gained some ground but the enemy still hold the heights. We hear distinctly, this evening, the cries of the wounded on the field. After dark we are relieved & march back a short distance into town. 1st Min. loses but eleven wounded. Gen. Sully is slightly wounded. [James S.] Brower brings in a sack of apples to night & distributes them among Co. E. Warm, fair day — foggy in A.M.

We hear heavy cannonading on the left in A.M.

Sun. Dec. 14. 1st. Min. sleep on the sidewalk last night. This morning, just at day-break our Regt. moves a few streets nearer the river. Not much firing from either side to day. The red flag of the hospital is hoisted on many buildings. Late this evening the 1st. Min. goes on picket. We hear spades & pickaxes busily at work in front of us. No one appears to know whether they belong to our men or the Secesh. Corp'l [William N.] Irvine, Co. D, sent out to reconnoiter is shot down by a Rebel picket. We hear his moans but can not go to his assistance as he is close to the Rebel lines. A few spades & shovels are procured & we dig some rifle pits. Some picket firing to night. Rebel pickets but a few rods from us. Fair day.

Mon. Dec. 15. Hill, [George W.] Goulding, Brower & myself occupy a rifle pit in front of our line of battle. Secesh sharpshooters keep blasing away all day but only get an occasional shot in return. In P.M. the enemy open upon us with artillery causing the Regt. on our right (said to be 127th. Pa.) to skadaddle to the rear like a flock of sheep. The Secesh then opened with musketry but the rest of our line standing firm they didn't think it prudent to advance on us. As our indignation subsides we indulge in some merriment at the expense of the skaddadders. Between 9 & 10 P.M. our Regt. is relieved by the 61st. N.Y. of Hancocks Division. Between 10 & 11 P.M. we recross the Rappahannock & march back to our old camp.<sup>72</sup> Burnside has touched off his "big

<sup>72</sup> For detailed accounts of the experiences of the First Minnesota at Fredericksburg, see *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1: 29, 30, 2:159, 162; *History of the First Minnesota*, 226, 250, 268, 270-274, 476. General accounts of the battle appear in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 3:105-118, 121-125, and the *Dictionary of American History*, 2:331. When Burnside found that he could not hold Fredericksburg, he ordered his men to recross the river, and by daylight of December 16 the Union forces were back in their old camp in the rear of Falmouth.

thing" & lost twenty thousand men. "Little Mac" used the *spade* at Yorktown Burnside "*stormed*" at Fredericksburg. Fine day Gen. [Oliver O.] Howard sends us his "tear felt thanks" for our good conduct to day<sup>73</sup>

Tues. Dec. 16. Quite high wind & a rain storm in after part of last night. Clears off this morning & is quite pleasant throughout the day. Growing cool. Gen. Howard makes a speech to us complimenting us for our conduct while over the river. Sigel's command is in this vicinity

Wed. [December] 17. In camp. Fair day. General inspection. [Charles A.] Ber[r]y, Cundy, [Vincent] Middlestadt & [Benjamin] Fenton, taken prisoners at Antietam, rejoin Co. E.

Thur. [December] 18 Cool, fair day. Acting corporal of the guard. Corp'l [Benjamin F.] Staples, Co. E arrives from Camp Parole Anapolis. Reading Dr. Bartlett's "Essay on the Philosophy of Medical Science"

Fri. Dec. 19. Fine day. We remodel our "house." To day, for the first time, I get a paper containing an account of Saturday's battle. Min. boys generally busy fixing up their quarters. The loss of our Regt. in the battle of Sat. is now reported at ten or eleven.<sup>74</sup> Corp'l Irvine Co. D returns to day; he was not shot, as supposed, but taken prisoner & exchanged or paroled.

Sat. [December] 20. Clear, cold day. Reading, chopping wood &c. The "Banks Expedition" seems to have gone to the Gulf. To day's Washington paper says Secretary Seward has tendered his resignation.<sup>75</sup> Gen. Sully is now in command of a Division & Col. [Turner G.] Morehead of the 106th. Pa. assumes command of our brigade. Col. Morgan has gone East for medical advice

Sun. Dec. 21. Clear, cool day. Our fireplace smokes awfully this evening. The boys are wishing that "Little Mac" would come back to us. I pay 25 cents for a lb. of *souse*.

Mon. [December] 22. Weather fine & moderate. A little lowery this evening. We remodel our chimney—it dont smoke this time. Our chaplain gives us a lecture this evening.

<sup>73</sup> After Sedgwick was severely wounded at Antietam, Howard took command of the Second Division, to which the First Minnesota belonged.

<sup>74</sup> The officers and men wounded, fifteen in all, are listed in the *History of the First Minnesota*, 274.

<sup>75</sup> For an account of Seward's attempt to resign as secretary of state, see Gideon Welles, *Diary*, 1:196–205 (New York, 1911). Banks went to New Orleans to maintain the Union hold on the city. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1:579. His appointment is recorded in *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 15, p. 590.

Tues. [December] 23. 1st. Min. goes on picket at 9 A.M. We relieve the wrong pickets. Towards night we are removed to another part of the picket line and relieve the 127th. Pa., the Regt. that skadaddled from our right while on picket over the river. Clear warm weather.

Wed. Dec. 24. Relieved this morning by 72d. Pa. Fine, warm weather. How are the young people of Prairie City enjoying this "Christmas Eve"?

Thur. [December] 25. A dense fog all this forenoon. Clears up considerably in P.M. Henry & I get a pass & go to Falmouth.<sup>76</sup> We get one dollar's worth of "soft bread" for Christmas dinner.

Upon this "merry christmas" morn deep fog enshrouds the camp. Thick vapor doth the soldier's vision limit and dim the luster of the rising sun. If once assured this fog would always shroud the hills & valleys with its pale mantle, and shut forever from our view the radiance of yon sun, "how drear & desolate the earth." But no; the fog must "lift," the vapory curtain rise, revealing Nature's face more beautiful by contrast with the mist that marked its loveliness. Would 'twere as certain that the hellish fog of treason and the ghastly pall of war, red with burning cities and the crimson field, might vanish. May the peerless ray of Freedom's sun dispel the thickning gloom & bring us peace & unity.

Fri. Dec. 26. Warm day—clouded up in P.M.

Sat. [December] 27. Warm, lowery day. We have no fire in our "house"

Sun. [December] 28. Fine day. Sermon by Chaplin in A.M. & lecture on geology in evening.<sup>77</sup>

Mon. [December] 29. Pleasant, warm day. Gen N. P. Banks has superseded Gen. [Benjamin F.] Butler in the Department of the Gulf. Texas is added to that Department. Co. drill is to day resumed. To night we get the Phila. Inquirer containing Jeff Davis' proclamation of the 23d inst. in which he orders Gen. Butler to be hanged in case he is captured & directs that all officers of Butler's command, when captured, be held for execution; also that no more officers of the United States be paroled until the said Butler has recd. "the punishment due to his

<sup>76</sup> The pass has been preserved with Taylor's diary.

<sup>77</sup> In a long letter written on this December Sunday to his two young sisters, Isaac encouraged them in their efforts in school and then continued: "Would circumstances allow it I should feel myself the happiest of mortals, could I but resume my studies at school. As it is, however, I content myself with the perusal of such books as I chance to get hold of in the country through which we march. I am now reading a book which I got in Fredericksburg." The letter is addressed to Alvira and Mary.



crimes." All negro slaves captured in insurrection, and all officers commanding them are to be handed over to the state authorities <sup>78</sup>

P. H. Taylor is notified of his appointment as sergeant.

Tues. Dec. 30. We receive orders this morning to hold ourselves in readiness to march with 3 days rations and sixty rounds of ammunition A lowery day — sprinkling in P.M.

Wed. Dec. 31. Strong, cool wind. 1st. Min. mustered for pay.

"Yes, the Year is growing old."

### 1863

Thur. Jan. 1st. A bright, clear day. This is almost precisely like the first day of 1862. The cause of the Union seems to have progressed little during the past year. The South is gaining & the North loosing confidence in its cause A decisive victory may restore confidence. Let us hope for it. For breakfast, baked beans & "dunderfunk." <sup>79</sup> Dinner, fried pork coffee & hard-bread. Supper, rice & coffee. 1st. Min. goes on picket reserve near the Rappahannock after dark.

Fri. Jan. 2. Relieved about ten A.M. Warm, beautiful day. Reading "Johnston's Lectures on Agriculture."

Sat. [January] 3. Warm & pleasant. Dense fog in morning. Rumors of a great battle at Murfreesboro, Tenn. <sup>80</sup>

Sun. [January] 4 Cloudy with high wind Cleared off in evening. Saturday's Herald gives a telegraphic account of the fight in Tenn., in which [William] Rosecrans "defeated" [Joseph E.] Johnston To day I have attended church, read several chapters on the "Relations of Science to Agriculture" and made a set of chess men.

Gen. Butler's farewell address to the citizens of New Orleans is *decidedly rich*. <sup>81</sup>

Mon. Jan. 5. On detail loading and unloading rations for our bri-

<sup>78</sup> The text of Davis' proclamation is printed in Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Confederacy*, 1:269-274.

<sup>79</sup> Hard bread that had been soaked in water and then baked was known as "dunderfunk," "lobscouse," or "dung-slide." The Taylor boys spent New Year's Day in a comfortable tent, and they rejoiced that Henry's pay as sergeant would be seven-teen dollars a month. P. H. Taylor to his parents, January 1, 1863, Taylor Papers.

<sup>80</sup> For a brief account of the battle near Murfreesboro on December 31, see the *Dictionary of American History*, 4:146.

<sup>81</sup> Butler, who had been serving as military commandant of New Orleans since the city fell to the Union in April, 1862, prepared a pompous, flowery, and lengthy recitation of his accomplishments when he learned that he had been assigned to another area. In view of the citizens' hostility to his regime, the address was ludicrous. See Benjamin F. Butler, *Butler's Book*, 373, 530, 538-541 (Boston, 1892).

gade. At 2 P.M. our division is reviewed by Maj. Gen. John Sedgewick, now in command of the 2d. Army Corps. Warm & pleasant.

Tues. [January] 6. Another fine day. Skirmish drill in A.M. Doubt still hangs over the result of the prolonged contest[s] at Murfreesboro & Vicksburg. The iron-clad Monitor has gone to the bottom of the sea off Cape Hatteras N. C.<sup>82</sup>

Wed. Jan. 7. Fine weather. Skirmish drill in A.M. N.Y. Herald of 6th. inst says Rosecrans is victorious at Murfreesboro, and Vicksburg is taken by Gen. Sherman's forces. Gen. Banks not "up to time." Our cavalry have made a brilliant raid into East Tenn.<sup>83</sup>

Thur. [January] 8. Battalion drill in A.M. conducted by Maj. [Charles P.] Adams. Dress parade this evening Fair day though cool. News to night that Vicksburg is *not* taken. [Braxton] Bragg's forces retreating toward Tullahoma, Tenn.

Fri. [January] 9. Davis & I go to Falmouth on a pass. We visit the cemetery and find the following inscriptions upon tombstones.

"Sacred to the memory of J. B. Hesard, a native of France, exiled by Louis 18th. in 1815, and died in Falmouth, V<sup>a</sup> October 11, 1834. Aged 79 years."

"In memory of Osborn Merricks, servant of Maury Forbes, aged 85 years.

'Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord.' Math. 25-21"

"Here lies the Body of John Gaskins, Born the 13th of July in the year of our Lord 1734 He departed this Life March the 12th in the year of our Lord 1758."

Cloudy in morning but soon clears off. Pay 75 cents per pound for butter. We get Gov. [Horatio] Seymour's Message to day.<sup>84</sup> Henry & I take a game of chess this evening.

<sup>82</sup> The "Monitor" sank on December 31. For accounts of General William T. Sherman's unsuccessful assault on Vicksburg on December 29 and his retreat in the first days of 1863, see Francis V. Greene, *The Mississippi*, 72-90 (New York, 1882); *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 3:462-470, 607.

<sup>83</sup> The raid was made by Colonel John H. Morgan's men. Banks, who was ordered to New Orleans to open the Mississippi in co-operation with General John J. McClernand's column from Cairo, Illinois, was delayed because he did not know in advance that he would have to deal with a considerable Confederate force below Vicksburg. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 3:586-588, 605.

<sup>84</sup> Taylor refers to the inaugural address of Governor Seymour of New York, who was elected in the fall of 1862. He declared that the war was not the unavoidable result of slavery and that abolition was not necessarily a prerequisite for the restoration of the Union. *Encyclopedia Americana*, 24:633.

Sat. Jan. 10. A drizzly day. The 12th. Ill. cavalry is at Dumfries, Va. The 2d. Min. Battery is reported captured at Murfreesboro on Dec. 31st.<sup>85</sup>

Sun. [January] 11. Quite pleasant—some clouds The route of [Alexander M.] McCooks corps on the 31st. ult looks to us rather disgraceful.<sup>86</sup> *Shilo[h] reenacted*. [Robert] Anderson's (Pa) cavalry recruited for Gen. Buell's "body-guard," *sneak back to Nashville & refuse to fight*. All honor to the "Noble Three Hundred" of that Regt. who "faced the music."<sup>87</sup>

Mon. Jan. 12. Fine, clear day. On camp guard. Galveston, Texas is reported recaptured (Jan. 1st.) by a Confederate force under Gen. Mc Gruder. The Harriet Lane also captured by rebel "rams" at Galveston<sup>88</sup>

Our balloon up to day.

Tues. [January] 13. Lowery day. 1st. Min. goes on picket at 9 A.M. The old guard remain in camp. I read the first ten chapters of Deuteronomy. The latest news is that our army near Vicksburg has reembarked & is returning up the Mississippi. Another Fredericksburg!

Wed. Jan. 14. Warm & cloudy. A contraband dies in our regimental hospital from effect of gun-shot wound inflicted by a "brave" Union soldier. The negro refused to get off from his masters horse & deliver it over to a stranger. That soldier has immortalized himself by that *brave* act.

Thur. [January] 15. Warm, cloudy & high south wind. Cutting wood, reading &c. Gen. Rosecrans has ordered Confederate officers into confinement in retaliation for like treatment of Union officers. Since the battle of Fredericksburg the Army of the Potomac has spent a month of fine weather in idleness.

Fri. [January] 16. Rained nearly all last night. Cloudy with high wind—growing cold. We have orders to be ready to march at an "early hour" tomorrow morning.

<sup>85</sup> This report was not correct. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:659–661.

<sup>86</sup> This incident occurred at Murfreesboro. *Dictionary of American History*, 4:46.

<sup>87</sup> Because of difficulties over the commissioning of officers, most of the members of the 160th Pennsylvania, which was known as Anderson's Cavalry, stacked arms and refused to move when the unit was ordered to advance to Nashville with the main army on November 26, 1862. The officers and three hundred men joined the advance. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers*, 4:902.

<sup>88</sup> The capture of Galveston by Union forces and its recapture by the Confederates are described in the *Dictionary of American History*, 2:368. The "Harriett Lane," a steamboat of six hundred tons, surrendered on January 1 after its captain and other officers had been killed. Mahan, *The Gulf and Inland Waters*, 55, 108.

Sat. [January] 17. We don't march to day. Cool & tolerably clear. The 2d. Army Corps is reviewed by Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside.<sup>89</sup> Gen. Burnside is large, full faced, bald headed, black whiskered, and rides a sorrell bobtailed horse with three white feet.

One Regt. on review (said to be the 127th. Pa) *has no colors*. The colors of the 127th. were taken from them for bad conduct at Fredericksburg on Mon. Dec. 15th.

Sun. [January] 18. Clear, cool day. To day I have been reading an account of Joshua's campaigns in Canaan. We get Jeff Davis' message to the Confederate Congress, in which he states that all Federal officers hereafter captured in states embraced in the proclamation (Pres. Lincoln's Emancipation) will be handed over to state authorities to be dealt with according to the law for the punishment of criminals engaged in exciting servile insurrection.<sup>90</sup> You'll find that a bad policy, Mr. Davis.

"Arkansas Post", a fort up the Arkansas river has surrendered to our land and naval forces under [John] McClelland & Com. [David D.] Porter. Nine guns & from five to seven thousand prisoners captured.

Mon. Jan. 19. Fine, pleasant day. I finish reading the book of Joshua this evening & play a game of checkers with Henry C. Winters of Co. K.

Tues. [January] 20. Cloudy & a little cool. On fatigue in A.M. At 1 P.M. 1st. Minn. forms on the parade ground to hear orders from Gens. Burnside and Sumner. Ordered to be ready to march at an "early hour tomorrow." Gen. Burnside says that our late victories in N. C., Tenn. & Arkansas have "weakened & divided the enemy on the Rappahannock" and that the "auspicious moment" for striking a decisive blow, seems to have arrived. Hope we may achieve a decisive victory. I see some artillery moving up river this P.M. It is my opinion that Burnside will find the enemy *not very much* divided or weakened; however, I think we can whip them on a fair field if every soldier will do his duty & not go whining around laying all the blame on the generals. Raining this evening & pretty high wind.

Wed. Jan. 21. Violent rain storm all last night. A very stormy day.

<sup>89</sup> Despite the commanders' insistence upon cheers for Burnside at this review, the only response was dead silence, according to the *History of the First Minnesota*, 276, and Walker's *Second Army Corps*, 198. A similar account is given in the Marvin Diary for the same date.

<sup>90</sup> For the text of Davis' message, see Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Confederacy*, 1:290.

The weather seems to have interrupted Burnside's proposed movement against the Confederates. Raining lightly this evening. I have read eighteen chapters of the book of Judges to day & played several games of "seven up".

Thur. [January] 22. Stormy last night & very high wind. Drizzling throughout the day I hear that the troops that marched up the Rappahannock with the intention of crossing have been ordered to return, the roads being impossible for artillery.<sup>91</sup> Providence don't seem to favor us this time

Fri. Jan. 23. A cloudy day. This A.M. Franklin's Grand Division passes our camp on their return from up river They have been out during the past three days & look rather the "worse for wear" Some of them threaten to "sit up nights to curse Burnside" for taking them out in the mud & storm. I think, myself, that Burnside ought to be removed for allowing it to rain. If Burnside is not smart enough to out-wit the Lord in these matters, it is clear that he is not the man to handle the Army of the Potomac. It is said that a good portion of our artillery and pontoons is "stuck in the mud." up river Hooker's & Franklin's Grand Divisions were out in the storm but Sumner's remained in camp.

Sat. [January] 24. Sunshine & clouds—weather moderate. Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter has been tried by court martial & found guilty of violating the 9th & 57th. Articles of war. His sentence is dismissal from the service of the U. S.<sup>92</sup>

Sun. [January] 25. Quite severe rain storm last night. 1st. Minn. goes on picket. Sky clears up & we have warm, pleasant weather.

Our 1st. Lieut. John N. Chase is promoted to captaincy & assigned to Co H.

Mon. [January] 26. Relieved this A.M. Warm, pleasant day. Cloudy this evening.

Tues. [January] 27. Cloudy with some rain We hear that Gen. Hooker has superseded Burnside and that Gen's Franklin & Sumner have resigned.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Although the First Minnesota had remained at Falmouth, on January 19 Burnside had ordered other troops from that place to cross the Rappahannock for another attack on Fredericksburg. Rain and mud interfered with their progress, and after four days they returned to their old camp. Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*, 257-260; *History of the First Minnesota*, 276.

<sup>92</sup> On Porter's trial and sentence, see Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*, 175.

<sup>93</sup> The order which relieved Burnside and appointed Hooker also granted Sumner's request for release from service with the Army of the Potomac. A short time

Wed. Jan. 28. Rained last night. Snowing all day — ground white — snow melts quite fast.

N. Y. Herald of yesterday contains Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker's address to the Army of the Potomac. If Gen'l's Franklin & Sumner can't conde[s]cend to give their "invaluable services" to the Country in her hour of need, I say "*let 'em went.*" Report says that a soldier, the other day, asked Gen. Burnside, "When are you going to *butcher* again?"

Thur. [January] 29. About six inches snow on the ground this morning. Pleasant day — thawing. On camp guard. Recd. of Maj. King, U. S. paymaster, twenty six dollars in "Legal tender" notes.

Fri. [January] 30. A pleasant day — some clouds — thaws a little & is quite muddy in the roads. Recd. a letter from Jonathan Taylor of 2d. Min. Battery. He writes that that battery lost ten killed and wounded, one prisoner & one missing, at the battle of Murfreesboro

Sat. [January] 31. Pleasant day. Gen. Couch now commands the Right Grand Division of the Army of the Potomac. Gen. Sully is off on twenty day's furlough.

Sun. Feb. 1. Warm & pleasant. The hills of Stafford begin to look quite bare again.

Mon. Feb. 2. Fine, warm day. Snow nearly all gone. I hope that our army before Vicksburg may accomplish something.

Tues. [February] 3. Snows a little this morning Cold, wintry day — strong wind. Clear this evening

Send to Hon. Cyrus Aldrich at Washington for \$2.00 worth of postage stamps.

Wed. [February] 4. Clear, cold day. 1st. Min. goes on picket. I play my first game of whist.

Thur. [February] 5. Relieved in A.M. Snowing the greater part of the day. Rains this evening & melts nearly all the snow. While coming in from picket we see quite a body of troops (Sigel's) moving.

Fri. [February] 6 Rains this morning — is nearly clear this evening. Moderate weather & plenty of mud. On camp guard. According to Secesh accounts, two Rebel Rams under command of Capt. [Duncan N.] Ingraham, on the 31st of Jan., made a "raid" upon our blockading fleet off Charleston harbor (S.C.) captured one gunboat, burnt several & made

later he took command of the Department of Missouri. Franklin was removed and was called before the Congressional joint committee on the conduct of the war on the charge that he had not done his best with his division at Fredericksburg. Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*, 201-203, 264-267; Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, *Report*, 1:707-712.

the rest skadaddle. Beauregard & Ingraham com'drs of Army & Navy of Con. States (at Charleston) "proclaim" the blockade of Charleston, "raised"<sup>84</sup>

Sat. [February] 7. Clear & moderate weather Two brigades of [Daniel] Sickles old Div. passed our camp on their return from a reconnaissance to U. S. ford up the Rappahannock. General inspection to day.

The ninth army corps is said to be moving to day.

At dress parade was read the finding of a court martial in the case of Capt. W. F. Russell Co. L 1st. Min. Vols. He is convicted of violating the thirty ninth Article of War & sentenced to forfeit 15 dollars & be publicly reprimanded by the commanding officer of his Regt. [Emil A.] Berger [*Burger*], 1st. Lieut. Co. L, arraigned for violating 52d. Art. of War is "honorably acquitted."

Sergt. [Milton L.] Bevans, Co. F, is reduced to the ranks for "disobedience of orders" in refusing on one cold morning, to "tie up" [*blank in MS*] who was under arrest for groaning for Burnside while on review. The "tying up" was ordered by 2d. Lieut. [Charles H.] Mason, Co. C.

Sun. Feb. 8. Very fine, warm day. Our balloon is up frequently of late

Mon. [February] 9. Fine clear day. Reading Job. *Federal* accounts from Charleston puts a brighter aspect on the late naval engagement there. The Grand Division Commanders of the Army of the Potomac are,<sup>85</sup>

Right,	Darius N. Couch
Center,	[George G.] Meade
Left,	W. F. Smith
Reserve	Franz Sigel

Tues. Feb. 10. Very fine, warm day. Col. [George H.] Ward now commands our brigade. Gen. Hooker has abolished the Grand Division arrangement of the Army of the Potomac. Report says the 9th Army Corps have gone to Fortress Monroe

Maj. of 15th. Mass in inspection report says "1st. Min. a 1st class Regt. in every respect."

Drew "soft bread["] for the first time since I rejoined the Regt. in Oct. last. A loaf to a man.

<sup>84</sup> On this Union defeat, see the *Dictionary of American History*, 1: 344.

<sup>85</sup> These commanders are listed also in *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 25, pt. 2, p. 15.

Wed. Feb. 11. 1st. Minn. pickets on the Rappahannock just above Falmouth. The river here is about 400 yds. wide. A dam extends across the river at the head of the canal which supplies the city of Fredericksburg with water. Pickets converse across the river. Cloudy in A.M. rainy in P.M. High bluffs on either side the river. Circular grape-vine swing

Thur. [February] 12. Rained a good portion of last night. Three Secesh ladies, from an island, talk with our pickets on the North bank. Relieved about eleven A.M. by 106th. Pa. Cloudy day. High wind & some rain this evening.

Fri. [February] 13. Fine warm day. Some of Hancocks Div. having moved, we seize upon their shanties for wood, that article being very scarce in our vicinity. On detail in P.M. loading & unloading rations. The provost guard of our Div. passes through the different camps "drumming out" a man said to belong to the 20th. Mass Vols. The prisoner had a board tied to his back labeled "*Coward*"

Sat. [February] 14. Pleasant day. Corpl H[enry] D. Obrian [O'Brien] of Co E, detailed at Adjutant's office. Growing cold this evening. J[oseph] G. Trever [Trevor], Fowler, P. H. & I take a game of eucree this evening. J[ohn] McKenzie gets a *soup* valentine.

Sun. Feb. 15. A drizzly day. O. D. Thatcher returns from Aquia Creek & reports that 2 Regts. of the Ninth Army Corps went by R.R., yesterday, to Aquia, on their way to Old Point [Comfort]. O. D. "draws" a new ax at Aquia

Mon. [February] 16. Warm & pleasant. P. H. & I go down to Falmouth in A.M. Batalion drill in P.M. conducted by Lieut Col. [William] Calwell [Colwill]<sup>96</sup> For some time past it has been rumored that a new Regt. from Minn. is to be sent here & we ordered to Min. to recruit, but I guess the story has no very solid foundation.

Tues. [February] 17. Does it require more canvas to "double-roof" than to "single-roof" a shantie; the "pitch" of the roof being the same in both cases?

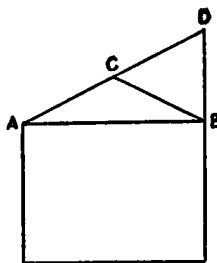
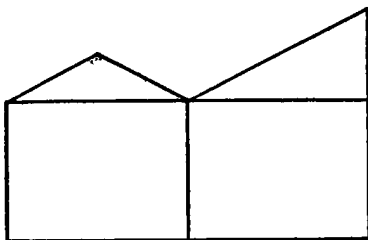
Aff. Elijah Weaver

Neg. Thomas L. Doble.

The Court having convened Herself, the disputants proceeded to argue the question with great learning & ability. After mature deliberation the Court announceth Her opinion as follows.

<sup>96</sup> Colvill, who was destined to lead the First Minnesota in its fateful charge at Gettysburg, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in September, 1862. *Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars*, 1:27.





Let AC & BC be the 2 sides of double roof

" ACD " " single roof.

Now, Angle CBD =  $90^\circ - CBA$

And, " CDB =  $90^\circ - CAB$

But, " CBA = CAB  $\therefore$  CBD = CDB.

Hence, the triangle BCD is isosceles and BC = DC

Therefore, the Court rendereth Her verdict in favor of the Neg.

Dr. Fowler, Chief Justice

Patrick Henry, Associate "

Ike " "

Several inches of snow fell to day. Cloudy this evening though not snowing A number of the boys are arrested for throwing snowballs but are held in custody only a few minutes. We draw "soft bread." I send to G. W. Pitcher's "Gift-Book Store" for "Geology of the Globe."

Wed. Feb. 18. The heavy rain-storm which commenced about 11 A.M. has not abated at 9 P.M. We cut down stumps for wood. Read the "Song of Solomon" to day. Have had no news papers for 2 or 3 days past.

Thur. Feb. 19. Cloudy day—partially clear this evening. A news boy passes through camp but refuses to sell his papers to any one except *officers*. Report says an order has been issued allowing but one news-paper vender to a division. No wonder that the army is "demoralized" if they are to be deprived of all information respecting the progress of the cause in which they voluntarily peril their lives. Gentlemen of the Star fraternity, you can take our hard-bread & welcome, but for God's sake do us the favor to let us read your old papers when you get through with them, if you can possibly work yourself up to so generous a pitch.

Fri. [February] 20. Pleasant & quite warm for this time of year. By dint of much perseverance I succeed in hunting up a Washington

Chronicle of the 18th. inst. which contains a synopsis of the Conscription Act which passed the Senate on 16th. inst.<sup>97</sup> I say amen! No papers to night. I would like to hear from Port Royal & Vicksburg; also how Gen. Gorman gets along with his hydraulic enterprise at Yazoo Pass, Miss.<sup>98</sup>

Sat. [February] 21. Pleasant day. Snowing a little this evening. On detail building corduroy road at brigade commissary. At noon they give each man on detail, a ration of whiskey. I get the Chronicle to night.

Sun. Feb. 22. Snowed all last night & most of to day. About eight inches of snow on the ground this evening. Cold day. Washington's birthday. Several of our batteries fire (about noon) a salute of thirty four guns. Some fire once per minute; others, more rapidly.

Mon. [February] 23. A clear, pleasant winter day. We get the Tribune (N.Y.), Mercury & Chronicle. In response to our inquiries the news-boy says the N. Y. Herald is not "allowed" now. We have no great love for "Old Bennett" but we would like his paper for the news it contains.<sup>99</sup>

Tues. [February] 24. 1st. Minn. goes on picket above Falmouth. We have a snow-ball battle which reminds us of school-boy days. Clear & pleasant — thawing.

Wed. [February] 25. On out post from five till twelve last night. It being against orders to have fire on the out-post at night, we shiver with cold while the Secesh sit around cheerful fires toasting their shins. Relieved in A.M. by 1st. California. The Herald makes its appearance again. Clear & warm. Our cavalry pickets on the right are driven in by Secesh cavalry. Our Regt. left Camp Stone, Md., for Harper's Ferry, one year ago to day. 2d. Lieut. George Boyd arrived from Washington to day. He is assigned to our company (E).

Thur. Feb. 26. Considerable rain last night & to day. "Zollicoffer" of Co. F. 6th. Regular Cavalry reports that our cavalry had a fight with Stewart to day. Capt. Mark W. Downie of Co. B arrives from Minnesota. Dan Adams & Miss Susan Shaw of Philadelphia.

<sup>97</sup> The Conscription Bill of 1863 drafted for military service all men between twenty and forty-five years of age. *Congressional Globe*, 47 Congress, 3 session, 1454; Appendix, 209.

<sup>98</sup> Gorman was helping General Grant's staff engineer in an attempt to open the Yazoo Pass bayou above Vicksburg. Greene, *The Mississippi*, 97; William T. Sherman, *Memoirs*, 1:305-314 (New York, 1875).

<sup>99</sup> The reference is to the elder James G. Bennett, who founded the *New York Herald*. For a sketch of his career, see the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 2:195-199.

Fri. [February] 27. Cloudy but quite warm. The snow has nearly all vanished. P. H. & I receive a letter & stamps from W. F. Tomlinson, Co. I, 34th. N. Y.

Sat. [February] 28. Cloudy & moderate. 1st. Min. mustered for pay I finish reading the book of Isaiah.

Sun. Mar. 1st. Drizzling rain in A.M. Fair but high wind in P.M. James S. Brower of Co. E left this morning for New York, on a furlough of fifteen days. Yesterday several boxes of liquor for the officers of our Regt. arrived, & to day certain officers & privates are "slightly inebriated"

I send "Bartlett's Philosophy of Medical Science" to Dr. H. W. Kreider, Prairie City, Ill.

Mon. [March] 2. Very fine, warm day On detail in A.M. Newspapers state that the Pa. Reserves in front of Washington refused to do picket duty because they are not allowed to go home & see their mothers & recruit &c. The "Conscription" bill, as amended by the House, has passed the Senate. I suppose "Old Abe" will give it the finishing touch & then, Mr. Copperhead, you can have a chance to fight for your Country. The report that the 1st. Minn. is going home to fight Indians forms the principal topic of conversation among the boys & some bets are made on the subject. P. H. & Fowler go down to the R.R. depot. They bring home Harper's Weekly, "Nix Nax," "Budget of Fun," "Phunny Phellow" &c.<sup>1</sup>

Tues. Mar. 3. Clear sky most of the day, light showers about mid-day. The "Saint Paul Press" of the 21<sup>st</sup> ult. contains a letter from Gov. Ramsey to Sec'y Stanton, asking that the 1<sup>st</sup> Minn. be sent back to the State to recruit and fight Indians; also a Resolution of the State Legislature asking the same thing.<sup>2</sup> It would not be altogether disagreeable to go to Minn. & fill up our ranks, but if denied that indulgence we don't propose to follow the example of the Pa. Reserves. Two men (citizens) from St. Anthony arrive in camp.<sup>3</sup>

Wed. [March] 4. Quite pleasant but cold with considerable wind.

Thur. Mar. 5. Very clear, beautiful day In A.M. the 2<sup>d</sup> Army Corps

<sup>1</sup> An example of these humorous periodicals of the 1860's, the issue of *Phunny Phellow* for June, 1861, is owned by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The first ten volumes of *Harper's Weekly*, covering the years from 1857 to 1866, are included in the Minnesota Historical Society's file of this pictorial magazine.

<sup>2</sup> Both the letter and the resolution appear in the *Saint Paul Daily Press* for February 21, 1863. A file of this paper is owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>3</sup> St. Anthony, on the east bank of the Mississippi opposite Minneapolis, is now a part of that city.

is reviewed by Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker, on the same ground where it was reviewed by Gen. Burnside on the 17th. of Jan. last. Gen. Hooker is a little more than medium size, gray haired light complexion, red faced &c. He had his face shaved smooth & rode a light-grey horse. This review had, at least, one redeeming feature; *there was no cheering*. I never wish to hurrah again till we *do something worth cheering for*. The troops were drawn up in column by brigade, open order, & Gen. Hooker & staff passed in front & rear of each line, the colors of each Regt. saluting him as he passed in front of them. The troops then "passed in review" in column by company. The Corps was fifty five minutes passing "Fighting Joe".<sup>4</sup>

Fri. [March] 6. Cloudy & cool Division drill in P.M. conducted by Brig. Gen. [Joshua T.] "Paddy Owens" formerly Col. of the 69th. Pa. Lately we get soft bread "every other day."

Sat. [March] 7. 1<sup>st</sup> Minn. goes on picket Cloudy & some rain

Sun. [March] 8. Smart shower early this morning. A lowery day. I am on post No. 1, opposite an island. A pair of Secesh damsels promenaded up & down the island opposite our post. A little urchin who is with them says his name is Montgomery & that his father owns the entire island which comprises "eighty acres of level land." I call Sergt. [William L.] Wakefield down to the river bank & he goes into ecstasies at the sight of the fair ones, & sighs "oh this war." At post No. 6 the S[c]esh & our boys put one another through the manuel of arms, giving the orders across the river. Thatcher "pats" for Secesh "John" to dance. Secesh sing "Come, come away," "Old John Brown" &c. Though we are stationed in plain sight of the enemy we are not allowed to have fires *even in the day time*. I suppose a fire would enable the Rebels to see across the river by *day light* & thus *reveal our position* to the enemy. What fertile brains our generals seem to possess! We are allowed fires on the reserve behind the hills. We get an account of the capture of 4 or 5 of our Regts. by Gen. [Earl] Van Dorn at Springville [*Spring Hill*], Tenn.<sup>5</sup> Just before dark our squad is relieved from out-post duty & goes back on reserve

Mon. March 9. A thunder shower last night. Clear, pleasant day. Gen. Meagher visits us as "corps officer of the day." Capt. Muller is in command of our Regt. as none of the field officers came out on picket.

<sup>4</sup> Another description of this review appears in the Marvin Diary for the same date.

<sup>5</sup> On the Confederate victory at Spring Hill, see *Official Records*, series 1, vol. 23, pt. 1, p. 116-118.

Gen. [Edwin] H. Stoughton & staff captured at Fairfax C. H. by the Rebel Capt. [John S.] Moseby [*Mosby*]<sup>6</sup>

Tues. Mar. 10. Snowing in A.M., cloudy in P.M. Raining this evening. Gen. Meagher appears to be "slightly inebriated" to day & invites Capt. Muller to take a "cocktail." The Gens. face is shaved smooth, with the exception of mustache. I should judge he is about five feet eight inches high. He has dark hair. In A.M. we are relieved by 72<sup>d</sup> Pa. & march back to camp where I find that my "Geology of the Globe" has arrived.

Gen. Sully has returned

Wed. [March] 11<sup>th</sup>. Weather moderate & quite pleasant. Reading "Geology of the Globe." To night the entire guard and one of the drummers are ordered to remain at the guard-house instead of sleeping in their quarters "as was the custom in times past." It is rumored that certain bold pranks of the "Confeds" is the cause of this increase of vigilance. We hear that the 6th. Army Corps has left. Capt. Muller started for Minn. this morning. He has a furlough of 15 days. According to the Pres. Proclamation of yesterday "all soldiers now absent x x x x without leave" must report at designated rendezvous on or before Apr. 1<sup>st</sup> or be arrested & punished as deserters.<sup>7</sup>

Thur. [March] 12. High flying clouds & cold N.W. wind. Additional Secesh camp fires visible this morning. About noon we get orders to be ready to march at a moments notice. Gen. inspection at 2 P.M. Ordered to draw all the clothing that we want for a "long march"

Fri. Mar. 13. A little snow this morning — some clouds — clear this evening. Reading Geology. "Nigger Joe" comes into our tent this evening & gives us a history of his life & escape from slavery. "Baptist Joe" is a smart lad.

Sat. [March] 14. Cool — some clouds — clear to night. I see some of our batteries moving up river. Reading & writing. I send to G. W. Pitcher, N. Y., for Hitchcock's Elementary Geology & a pocket dictionary

Sun. [March] 15. Cloudy & some thunder in P.M. Hailing this evening. I buy Frost's Hist. of U. S.

Mon. [March] 16. Ground white with fine hail this morning. At

<sup>6</sup> Mosby was made a captain as a result of this achievement. With a small band of rangers, he captured Stoughton and about a hundred men. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 13:272.

<sup>7</sup> Lincoln's order is printed in *Official Records*, series 3, vol. 3, p. 61.

5 A.M. Corp'l [Edward A.] Austin, Thatcher, A[dam] Stites, three of Co. B & myself start for the R.R. depot to report to the Brig[ade] Q.M. We go to Aquia Creek to get clothing &c. At a high bridge at Brook's Station, about five miles from Aquia Creek, are two small forts, one of them surrounded 'by abattis'.<sup>8</sup> Dis. from Fred'g to A.C. 15 miles. At A.C. I meet with George Stewart, Co. K, 60th. N.Y.<sup>9</sup> He was taken prisoner at the last Bull Run battle where he saw & talked with my cousin, Capt. Leonard Johnson of the Secesh army. We get back to camp late this evening. Cool day—tolerably clear in P.M.

Tues. Mar. 17. A fine, pleasant day. A large concourse of soldiers assemble near the camp of Meagher's Irish Brigade to celebrate "Saint Patrick's Day." The race-course, I should judge, is about a mile long with alternate ditches & poles for the horses & mules to jump. All ranks, from Maj. Generals to High Privates, are represented in this gathering. Field officers are thrown sprawling into the mud to the great delight of the "audience." Some of the equestrians are killed or dangerously hurt, while a great many more of them are *dangerously drunk*. Several ladies enter the "lists" & their steeds jump the pole in the most approved style. About 3 P.M. cannonading commences on the right & we return to our camps. I suppose the Rebs are making another raid. To night, at Gen. Meagher's H'd Q'rs, there is to be a "festive gathering in honor of the Patron Saint of Ireland"

Wed. [March] 18. Tolerably pleasant—somewhat cloudy. Co. drill in A.M. Reading, writing & playing ball.

Thur. [March] 19. Cloudy. The up river fight of last Tues. proves to have been a creditable affair for [William W.] Averil's [Averell's] Brig. of cavalry. They crossed the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford & "went in" *with the sabre* routing the Rebs & capturing eighty prison[er]s. I am glad to see our cavalry redeeming their waning reputation. Hurrah for Gov. W<sup>m</sup> Cannon of Delaware!<sup>10</sup>

At retreat Trever reads to the company "Bige Weaver" letter to Miss "Juduth" published in the "Minn. State News."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> A barricade of felled trees with sharpened branches pointing outward was known as an abatis.

<sup>9</sup> For Stewart's record, see New York State Adjutant General's Office, *Commissioned Officers and Privates*, 2:575.

<sup>10</sup> Cannon, a former Democrat who was elected governor of New Jersey on the Union ticket in 1862, told his state legislature on March 11, 1863, that he would not co-operate in the enforcement of a law to prevent federal supervision of elections in the state. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 3:478.

<sup>11</sup> Since the *Minnesota State News* of Minneapolis for the early months of 1863 does not seem to have been preserved, this reference cannot be identified. The *Minnesota*

Fri. Mar. 20. Abo[u]t 2 inches of snow falls. Reading Hist. of U.S. Hiram Drake of Co. E who was sent to the hospital from York Town last may, returns.

Sat. [March] 21. Snow & rain.

Sun. [March] 22. Cloudy in AM.—partially clear in P.M. Papers state that the “colored brigade” is making fine progress in Florida Sermon by Chaplain Canwell, in Hosp’l in A.M.

Mon. [March] 23. Cloudy—quite moderate Playing ball is quite a common sport in our Regt. now-a-days.

Tues. [March] 24. A lowery day—moderate rain towards night On picket detail. “Daff” & “Chet” Warren call on us.

Wed. [March] 25. Pleasant day—light flying clouds. A shower this evening. Drizzling rain nearly all last night. Relieved from picket in A.M. Maj. Gen. E. V. Sumner died at Syracuse, N. Y. on the 21<sup>st</sup> inst.

Thur. [March] 26. Rain & snow this morning Quite pleasant in P.M. We learn that the 9th Army Corps has gone west. Orders received to day prohibiting any more furloughs after Apr. 1<sup>st</sup>

Fri. Mar. 27. Warm & pleasant. I finish reading the Hist. of U.S. “Baptist Joe” calls on us this evening & relates his religious experience & gives his views of the “Negro enlistment” programme.<sup>12</sup> Joe thinks that the “colored population” *will fight*.

Sat. [March] 28. Very rainy day—clear this evening. To day’s Chronicle contains an account of the marriage of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, to Her Royal Highness, Alexandra Caroline Maria, Princess of Denmark.

Sun. [March] 29. Cool & windy, but pleasant. Henry & I get a pass for two days & visit the camp of the 12th. Ill. Cavalry near Belle-Plain.

Mon. [March] 30. This morning we go down to Belle-Plain landing where Daff, Chet Warren, Ike Painter &c. are on duty We have a rich feast of fresh oysters for dinner & other agreeable incidents throughout the day. The Co D boys are relieved at night & Lieut. Marsh invites us to ride up to camp on horseback. Some racing—my little grey

Historical Society’s file of the *News* covers parts of 1860 and 1862 and the period from May 9 to July 4, 1863; only a few issues are available in other libraries.

<sup>12</sup> Lincoln authorized the organization of four Negro regiments after his Emancipation Proclamation. Recruiting began on April 8, 1863. *Dictionary of American History*, 4:84.

pony comes out ahead. Peter Quin. Clear & pleasant. Rains a little this evening

Tues. [March] 31. Leave the camp of the 12th. early this morning & reach our own camp about noon in rather a *humid* condition. Rain & snow. Clears off in P.M. Roads very muddy between Falmouth & Belle-Plain

Wed. Apr. 1. About 4 A.M. we are aroused & ordered to "pack up" & be ready to march at a moments notice. Rumors are various. Our pickets that were relieved this morning heard cannonading up river. Clear & pleasant. George Stewart calls this evening and we take a game of euchre

Furloughs granted again.

Thur. [April] 2. On picket. Warm & pleasant Our picket line has been strengthened of late & is now composed of daily detail from each Regt. in the Division.

Fri. [April] 3 Warm, fair day. In P.M. our Division is reviewed by Gen. [John] Gibbon, who is now in command of 2<sup>d</sup> Div., after which Gov. Ramsey presents us a banner "in behalf of the citizens of St. Paul." It is a beautiful silk flag & bears the names of ten battles.<sup>13</sup> The Governor's speech daubes us all over with glory. Col. [George N.] Morgan returns; he is seriously ill with the "*Rum Palsey*."

Sat. [April] 4. Cool, high wind — tolerably clear. Snowing briskly this evening. Officers on a "big drunk" last night. This morning they send for the chaplain to preach King'[s] funeral sermon & give Lt. [C. Edward] Davis "spiritual advice"

Sun. [April] 5. Stormed all last night & until late this morning. 3 or 4 inches of snow. Thaws considerably — quite moderate weather this evening.

The storm has past, ethereal blue  
Presents itself again to view  
And kindly glance of myriad stars  
Darts hope unto the son of Mars  
And tells him that beyond the storm

<sup>13</sup> The banner was purchased from a Philadelphia concern at a cost of eighty-five dollars. Records of the arrangements for its purchase and of its presentation are included in the Ramsey Diary for March 18 and 23 and April 3, 1863. In his entry for the latter date, Ramsey relates that "The brigade being drawn up I dismounted & with Sully & Gibbon walked up to our Rgt. & presented 'the flag,'" which Colvill accepted. The Ramsey Diary for 1863 is owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.



He'll find the peerless, peaceful form  
Of Liberty and Law.

Mon. Apr. 6. Pleasant in A.M., cloudy in P.M. General inspection at 2 P.M. Geo. Goulding & I play two games of chess this evening.

Tues. [April] 7. On picket. Quite pleasant—some clouds.

Wed. [April] 8. Relieved from picket about 10 A.M. A large number of troops are reviewed by Pres. Lincoln Our boys say that "Uncle Abe" looks thin & care-worn. Cloudy day—clear this evening I receive "Hitckock's [*sic*] Elementary Geology" and "Websters Army & Navy Pocket Dictionary." Capt. Muller returns.

Thur. [April] 9th. Fine, warm day. I read the report of the Congressional committee on the "Conduct of the war"<sup>14</sup>

Fri. [April] 10. Quite warm & fair General muster at 10 A.M. Reading Geology & playing Chess.

Sat. [April] 11. Fine spring weather—too warm for comfort. Get news from Secesh sources that our iron-clads attacked fort Sumpter last Tues. & were repulsed.<sup>15</sup> I take a dose of Geology with chess for seasoning.

Sun. Apr. 12. On picket opposite Montgomery's island. The Misses Montgomery come down to the river bank & I "present arms." They acknowledge the salute by waving their handkerchiefs. Lowery with light showers. Raining this evening.

Mon. [April] 13. Quite cloudy. General inspection at 4 P.M. The sick are being sent off to general hospitals. This would seem to indicate an early movement of this army. We ought to defeat the Rebels in the next battle. This morning just before we are relieved a Lieut. of 15th Mass. throws a note across the river to the girls & they in return throw back the "Southern Illustrated News"

Tues. [April] 14. Warm, pleasant day—cloudy this evening. We are ordered to be ready to march tomorrow morning with *eight day's* rations & sixty rounds of ammunition. Report says our cavalry are already across the river above here. The "repulse" of our iron-clads at Charleston, S. C. is confirmed. I hope we may be successful in the coming struggle; we cant afford to be repulsed again.

<sup>14</sup> Three volumes of reports of this committee's inquiry into the activities of the Union forces both in the East and the West were published in the spring of 1863. Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*, 236.

<sup>15</sup> For a brief account of this Union defeat, see the *Dictionary of American History*, 5:203.

We box up our extra clothing & send it to the R.R. depot.

Wed. Apr. 15. It commenced raining last night about 12 o'clock & has stormed violently ever since. At noon the storm has not abated. This storm is very similar to the one which stopped Burnside's movement on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Jan. last.<sup>16</sup>

*[To be concluded]*

<sup>16</sup> Volume 2 of the diary ends at this point, and Taylor continues his entry for April 15 in volume 3. A list of friends and relatives serving with the Union forces, some personal accounts, and notes on clothing and supplies issued to the diarist appearing at the end of volume 2 have been omitted from the printed version.



Copyright of **Minnesota History** is the property of the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, or email articles, however, for individual use.

To request permission for educational or commercial use, [contact us](#).