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Motts Corners, Town of Caroline, Tompkins County, NY
109th Regiment, Company A, New York State Volunteers
CIVIL WAR DIARY
August 11, 1862 to July 24, 1865

Volume 4 - October 18, 1863 - April 24, 1864

[leather bound journal, approximately 3.75" x 6"]

transcribed by Ann Townsend
(JBR's great-granddaughter)
Petersham, Massachusetts 2013

*James B Reed's
Diary*

4th Vol

*Commenced at
Masons Island D. C.*

Oct 18th 1863

Mason's Island D C

Sunday Oct 18th/63

Well another volume of my Diary is full + I begin a new one this beautiful Sabbath morning. It is as fine a day as I ever saw. We had service at 10 ½ AM + an excellent sermon from the words, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, thou must be born again" after service we went back + got dinner + about 2 PM we rec'd orders to get ready to march as soon as possible. It was about 3 ½ PM when we got ready to start + we fell in + left the island ~~about~~ Our force was about 500 men. We took the road over Arlington heights toward Falls church. We halted for a rest after we got over the heights + there we were ordered to load our pieces + a front + rear guard was sent out + flankers beside to guard against a surprise, as the Col had news that Moseby [sic *Mosby's Rangers*] was around with some of his cavalry. We marched on halting for rest once in a while, until we got to Fall's church Va. + then we encamped near that place in the same field with the 2^d Reg't D.C. troops. Pickets were thrown out + the rest of us prepared to rest. Geo Reed + myself covered up with blankets + half of a shelter tent + we slept first rate.

Near Fall's church Va Monday Oct 19th

When I woke this morning it looked rainy + some of the boys were hard at work to get their tents up, but Geo + I lay still + when the rain came we drew the canvass over us + when the shower was over we were perfectly dry. We built a fire + made some coffee in our tin cups + ate our breakfast, + I reckon hard tack + pork tasted good. Two Co's left in the forenoon to go + guard a RR + about noon we were ordered to fall in also. We moved about a mile to the Loudon + Hampden RR where we are to do picket duty + guard the road. Co F is with us. We got our tents up + supper by night. I dont feel well today. I have a cold + a bad pain in my side, but I guess it will soon be better. We are encamped on the farm once owned by Major Nutt who poisoned a lot of the Garaboldi [sic] cavalry + got his buildings all burned + his land confiscated to pay for it. The farm is now managed by the government + worked by contrabands.

Tuesday Oct 20th

I feel better this morning. We got some fresh beef last night + we had a good breakfast. Our Co does the guard duty today. I was on picket on the RR. The day passed off quietly. We had to cook our own meals + rations are getting scarce. I wrote a letter home + read one from there. We

hear no news at all. It has been a beautiful day. The Col passed along the picket line today to see that all was right.

Wednesday Oct 21st

We were relieved at 8 ½ AM this morning. Everything passed off well through the night + no rebs showed themselves. When we got to camp we found out that we were going to move again. We moved our camp about half a mile + put up our tents again. We got some rations today + soft bread. I dont know hardly what the news is but we hear that Lee is beyond the Rapidan again + is retreating toward Richmond having failed to take Gen Meades supplies. I dont see as there is to be any thing decisive this fall, every thing moves very slowly. I wrote an answer to my letter from home.

Thursday Oct 22^d

Last night after we got to sleep we were called out + ordered to take our blankets + arms to go somewhere for it was reported that Moseby [sic] was cornered between here + Vienna, a place about four miles from here. We marched to Head Quarters + then the Col took us + stationed the men as pickets. We lay on the ground until morning but no Moseby appeared + so we came back to camp. I feel rather tired this morning but no worse than usual + I guess if I could lay still a few days I would be all right. I have heard no news today. I wrote a letter + the rest of the time lay around.

Friday Oct 23^d

Quite cold. The men went out again last night but I did not go with them. I wrote some today . No news of importance. Toward night it began to rain. Well I shall have to stay alone tonight as all the boys are going off.

Saturday Oct 24th

A rainy cheerless day. I rec'd a letter from home last night + answered it today. Well this is my 22^d birthday. How time flies. Yesterday as it were I was a little boy + now a man. I wish I could be home today. How I would enjoy a visit home today. I hope before another birthday comes the war will be ended + peace restored to our land again. As it kept on raining our Cap't got a place

for some of us that were not very well to stay all night + we had a very comfortable place. The rest of the two Cos stayed in a barn.

Sunday Oct 25th

It has cleared off but is very cold. The Chaplain came around with some books + papers for the men to read. I wrote a letter to Carrie Reed. The day passed off quietly. At night Geo + I took fifteen men + went up to the Cols headquarters on picket.

Monday Oct 26th

It was very cold through the night. We got to camp in good time + ate breakfast. I cleaned my gun some. I rec'd a letter from home just at night. It is still cold tonight.

Tuesday Oct 27th

Pleasant but it was very cold last night + we nearly froze in our tents. When I woke my feet were sticking out of the tent + they were very cold. We moved our camp to an orchard nearby + fixed our tent up some so it will be more comfortable. I wrote a letter home.

Wednesday Oct 28th

We slept first rate last night. I am feeling well again now as I could ask. Charley Norwood + myself went off today to find a stove + we found one that will answer our purpose very well I think. It is a very pleasant day + we can stretch out a little like the cattle do in the winter when there comes a warm day. I tell you these cold nights make us think of our warm rooms + feather beds at home but we are soldiering + we must stand it. The news seems to be very good today. The rebs have been whipped in Tennessee [sic] + there is a prospect of a general move from all points. God give success to our arms + bring this cruel to a speedy end. Cos C + [I?] moved here today + the hospital also.

Thursday Oct 29th

Last night after dark Geo came to me + said a lot of our men were going home on furlough to vote at election + that I was one of the number. So it seems there is a possibility of seeing home again. I hope it wont all prove a sham. We got ready to start for Mason's Island at about 12 N +

at 2 PM we got to the island. Rather a quick march for men to carry all their equipment, knapsacks +c. We found the boys all as well as usual. I wish Hiram was old enough to vote so he could go too. We hear today that some of the European Powers have recognized the southern confederacy. We cannot get ready to start today + we do not know when we shall get ready.

Friday Oct 30th

Slept in an "A" tent again last night. We expect to start at 6 PM from Washington today if nothing happens + I hope there will not for I am rather to see the folks at home again after being away almost fifteen months. It is a dark cloudy day just as it always is on Mason's Island when I am here. We left the Island at 4 PM + went to the Baltimore Depot in Washington. We found out that we could not go on the Express + at about 8 PM we were loaded on a freight train + started. We did not get to Baltimore until midnight + were then told that we could not leave until morning.

Saturday Oct 31st

I stayed in the market last night + slept about two hours. Found a warm breakfast + at 7 AM we got aboard of a soldier train + started for the north. About noon the train was delayed by a break in the road, about three hours + we just got started when the Engine broke down + were delayed a while until an Engine could be brought from York. We got to Harrisburg about 8 PM + after that I did not try to see anything.

Sunday Nov 1st

Daylight found us this morning at Williams port. It is very cold + I am tired for I slept but very little through the night. We got to Elmira at 10 A.M. + were soon on the way to Owego + arrived there at noon. A committee of nearly all the people were waiting to escort us to the hall where we found a splendid dinner waiting for us + we did it ample justice. We were ~~waiting~~ waited upon by the fair Ladies of Owego + there we met the first body of friends that I have seen since we left the State. We found out that there was no trains leaving for Tompkins + we could hire no team so we were obliged to stay all night although we were very anxious to get home + see some of the people there.

Monday Nov 2^d

Well I slept in a bed last night for the first time since I left the state. We left Owego on the 5 o'clock train in the morning + were soon at Caroline Depot + then we started for the old hill. When we got to Uncle Herman Reed's we took them completely by surprise, but we met a warm welcome + I started on for home. I met Father going to Mott's Corners + he did not know me until I got very near to him. Words fail to express my joy at meeting those I love. I went on home + took them all by surprise + was soon locked in the warm embrace of Mother + Sisters. I dont know what to write to express my joy, but I guess it must have been something like paradise. I enjoyed the day with the dear ones from whom I have so long been seperated [sic], + talked of the events of the past year.

Tuesday Nov 3^d

Went to Election + cast my first vote against traitors. All of the blue coats got a free dinner. Went home early + went to a husking in the evening to R Stevens' + had a very good time. W^m Lewis got home today with the men from Tioga.

Wednesday Nov 4th

Visited with Mother past [?] of the time + went to Mott's Corners to get a pair of boots started, + made a couple calls, one to Aunt Wolcott's + the other to Uncle James Roe's. Went to prayer meeting in the evening to the school house + I can truly say I enjoyed it. Several of my young friends that were not religious when I left home took part in the meeting + my sister among the rest.

Thursday Nov 5th

We hear that the State has gone 40 000 Union majority. Thank God for that. I helped Father a little today but I found out that I could not work much. Went to Uncle Herman Reed's visiting in the evening. There was quite a party there + ~~fix~~ six soldiers among the lot. We had a good time. Got home about 2 AM of Friday, tired + ready to rest.

Friday Nov 6th

Spent the day at home + in the evening went to my Uncle Jacob's visiting + enjoyed it very much, but should have enjoyed it more if Hiram had been there.

Saturday Nov 7th

Went visiting to Mr Hungerfords in the afternoon, + had a good time + a very dark drive home. Found some friends at home to see me + spent the evening very pleasantly.

Sunday Nov 8th

Once more at home on the morning of the holy Sabbath. O how thankful I am that my life has been spared until now + that I am permitted to enjoy such a privilege. It is a cold stormy day, but I have a good fire + dear loving hearts around me. I went to Mr James Youngs to make a call, but spent the evening at home. O if the clarion notes of war could only be hushed + peace again bless the land how glad I would be but this cruel war still goes on, breaking thousands of hearts in its remorseless tread.

Monday Nov 9th

~~Amo~~ A very stormy day. Our family all went to Ithaca + had a family picture taken, + a very good one it is too I think. We did not get home until 9 P.M. + Mother was nearly tired out. I got some things that I need for winter. Saw lots of soldiers. We hear that the 137th has been in battle again + lost severely.

Tuesday Nov 10th

Still cold + stormy. Passed the day very pleasantly. Called at Mr Lewis'es + in the afternoon went to bring Miss Laura Hungerford to our house visiting. Geo Reed W^m Reed + Leonard Reed were here in the evening + we had a good visit.

Wednesday Nov 11th

We hear today that there has been a battle between Meade + Lee, resulting in the repulse of the rebs, with heavy loss. I hope it is true. We hear also that Edwin Turk was killed at the battle of Lookout Mountain. I went to take Miss Laura home this morning + made a call at Mr Leonard's

this afternoon. Well the time is near at hand when I must go back to the tented field again. It is hard to leave friends but I am ready to go. Spent the evening at home + pleasantly of course, for home is a dear place to me.

Thursday Nov 12th

Warm + pleasant. Had some friends to eat dinner with me. Went to Mott's Corners after my boots + called at Aunt Wolcotts + Uncle James Roe's. I took supper at Uncle H C Reed's. Our folks packed a box of good things for us to take with us. I spent the evening at home, + I suppose it is the last evening I shall be at home in a long time for tomorrow we start back again. O that war might cease + families be permitted to be united again. How much sorrow + anxiety it has caused. Only those that have been bereft of dear friends can tell. I know it is hard to leave all near+ dear for other scenes but duty, country, + even our love for home + those we leave behind bids us go + we will go + cheerfully too.

Friday Nov 13th

Again our home is filled with sorrow + sadness for I must leave those I love + go to meet danger in every form. I must leave the warm love of Father Mother Sisters + Brother, for the harsh realities of war + the comforts of home for the hardships of a soldiers life. Far too soon the hour of parting came + I had to take leave of Mother my little Sister + Grandfather. Father two of my Sisters + my Brother were going to the Depot with me. Twas then that a Mother's love ~~was~~ shone forth, as ~~sh~~ with tears + prayers + a last long kiss she blessed me + bade me go forth + do my duty as a man + one who feared God. We then went to the Depot. I saw many friends + bid them good bye, and then I bid Father Sisters + Brother adieu. Twas hard to see my dear Father weep as I pressed his hand the last time + hard to leave Sisters + Brother but the last adieu was spoken, the good bye kiss given + I jumped on the train + was soon going away from the scenes of my youth. O God I pray Thee to spare our lives to meet again an unbroken family if it is Thy holy will + O prepare us to be an unbroken family in that upper + better world. We got to Owego about noon + soon started for Elmira. I saw Mary Winchell in Owego. We got to Elmira about 2 P.M. + had to wait until 5 PM before we could start for Baltimore. We got to Williamsport about 11 PM. I got a cup of coffee there + it did me a great deal of good. The cars were very much crowded + I had not slept any.

Saturday Nov 14th

We got to Harrisburg about 3 AM + had to lay there until daylight. I slept some in the cars but not much. Got to Baltimore about noon + hired a hack to take Geo myself + our box to the Washington Depot. Got some dinner + then had to wait until 4 PM for a train to Washington + it was with great difficulty that we got a chance to ride for the cars were full + I rode on the platform + a great many were left behind. We got to Washington at 6 PM + hired a man to take our box to Georgetown + we went in the street car. We crossed the river in the Ferry boat + got very wet as it rained very hard. We soon found where Hiram Reed's tent was + all piled into it. The boys were glad to see us. Hi is looking quite well again. We ate some supper + then got ready to sleep. We had lots of questions to answer as the boys were anxious to hear from home.

Sunday Nov 15th

It was raining yet this morning but soon cleared off very warm + pleasant. I wrote a letter home + then got ready to start for Falls Church. We got there about dark + found the boys all right, found a bed + soon were lost in dream land.

Monday Nov 16th

~~W~~ Very pleasant. The boys from the island came up today + Geo + myself put up a tent. Hi came up too with the others. The news is good. The rebel papers ~~are~~ seem to be very despondent + almost ready to give up the game. I wrote some + cleaned my gun.

Tuesday Nov 17th

Wrote home today. Toward noon a man came into camp + said he knew where there had been three or four rebs + thought that we could cut them off + so we started + went about fifteen miles + it was a regular wild goose chase for nary reb did we see. I was tired enough when we got to camp + then had the comforting thought that I was to be up until two o'clock on duty. The face part of the evening passed off pleasantly. Hi + ~~my~~ myself went around to see that the pickets were well posted +c.

Wednesday Nov 18th

A beautiful day. Felt no bad effects of my tramp yesterday at all. Wrote a letter or two, + did nothing of importance the rest of the time. Toward night the Ass't Inspector General came here + gave orders for us to be ready for inspection in fifteen minutes. I guess he thought we were a hard looking lot. Got a letter from home.

Thursday Nov 19th

Wrote a letter home. Geo has gone to the Island today + I expect he will go to the camp of the 15th Cavalry to see the boys there, + he did not come back tonight. No news of importance today.

Friday Nov 20th

A splendid day. Our "A" tents came last night after dark + we have been putting them up today. We have two together + eight men in it. This morning at about 3 o'clock our guards heard musketry firing toward Vienna + we have since heard that there was a fight there but we dont know. All the forenoon we heard distant artillery firing toward Gen Meade's army + when Geo got back tonight he said that Meade was giving the rebs fits bully for him.

Saturday Nov 21st

It was raining this morning + I guess it will be a rainy day. All day long the rain pattered down on our tents + here + there a few drops found their way down upon us. We passed the day very comfortably although it did rain so hard all day.

Sunday Nov 22^d

It has cleared off beautifully + the morning is splendid, air cool + bracing. I went on guard at a picket post away from all the rest with five men + we had a very pleasant time, but no adventure.

Monday Nov 23^d

A fine day. We were relieved at 8 o'clock + went to camp, got breakfast + then prepared to do nothing. I rec'd a letter from home + answered it. Our pay rolls came tonight + we signed them after dark. We hear today that Gen Meade + his whole army is across the Rapidan + is after Lee's army. Success to him.

Tuesday Nov 24th

Another rainy day, dark + unpleasant but we can manage to kill time some way or other. No pay yet today.

Wednesday Nov 25th

Rather cold + cloudy. We rec'd our pay today. I went out of camp to take a look around the Church + had quite a good time. Wrote some + a letter home. This is Sister Julias birth day I believe. I would like to be home a little while but I ought to be contented now + I will try to be.

Thursday Nov 26th

Thanksgiving today and a very fine day too. Hiram + myself went out in the country for a stroll + we had a bully time + lots of fun. Stopped at a grocery + ate all the mince pie we could + went to camp about dark.

Friday Nov 27th

I was on duty today at Falls Church. Had some sport examining passes for I had to see passes from every one, Ladies + all. It was rather cold + unpleasant. I got my dinner at the hotel. The news is first rate. We have official reports that Gen Grant had taken 60 pieces of artillery + from 6000 to 10000 prisoners. Gen Burnside had begun to act on the defensive + Gen Meade had crossed the Rapidan with his whole army. We heard a report toward night that 10000 of Lee's army had been disbanded + were on this side of Centreville as Guerillos [sic]. The 2^d D. C. Regt were preparing for fight + I think our men are too but I dont feel any great fear.

Saturday Nov 28th

Rainy this morning. Well we are safe yet + no rebs have showed themselves + I guess the rumors of yesterday are false as far as that is concerned. We got to camp about nine o'clock A.M. I found a letter waiting for me from home, + I was glad to get it. I wrote a letter home + that was about all I did. I am getting very lazy indeed + I ought to mend my ways, or my stockings, I suppose. The good news of yesterday is all confirmed in todays paper.

Sunday Nov 29th

When I woke this morning the wind was blowing very hard + it was cold enough to freeze a fellow. I got ready to go to church + then we were ordered to have inspection + so I had to get ready for that. I would like to know what the folks at home are doing now. I shall be glad when a Sabbath comes that is not desecrated by the dread scenes of war, but I fear it will be a long time before we shall see that time, but we must look forward with hopes for brighter days to come. The Regimental band came up here last night + we have had lots of music since they came here.

Monday Nov 30th

It is very cold this morning. I went on guard in Corp Grahams place today over to the Church. The day passed off quietly. At night I got permission to have a fire in the church + let the men sleep there. The night was very cold. A Earsley sat up at the church until a little after midnight + then I got up + so began

Tuesday Dec 1st

I rec'd three letters last night + one of them from home, after I got up I read my letters by firelight + passed the time as well as I could until morning. We were relieved about 8 ½ AM. Went to camp, got some breakfast + then wrote a letter home + then I was so lazy that I went to sleep. The news is good + it was thought that a fight between Meade + Lee was going on.

Wednesday Dec 2^d

Still very cold. Darned my socks + fixed my overcoat. Rec'd a letter from home + answered it. We hear a report that Gen Meade has taken a large body of prisoners. I think it very doubtful.

Thursday Dec 3^d

Warmer today + quite pleasant. Cleaned my gun + wrote some. The reports of yesterday are not confirmed but we learn by the papers that Gen Hooker has taken 5000 prisoners. Also that Gen Meade has retreated to this side of the Rapidan again + that Gen Longstreet is moving toward Virginia.

Friday Dec 4th

As fine a day as one could wish for. I went off about three miles after an old barouche that had been left in the woods by its rebel owner. Got to camp about noon. Toward night went to the village after some postage stamps. Just after dark the Orderly Serg't said I must go + report to Capt Mount of Co "F" which I did when he told me to take three men + go beyond Munson's Hill to Mr. Munson's house + report to him for Guard duty. I did not know the way but rec'd instructions from the Cap't + started. After a walk of about three miles we found the house + reported. Mr. Munson said we were to guard the house from an attack of Guerillas as there had been two of them there Tuesday night. I posted a guard + then ~~took up our quarters in~~ took up our abode in a small brick building for the night.

Saturday Dec 5th

The night passed off quietly + we left for camp at 5 A.M. + got there at daylight. I feel rather tired this morning. Cleaned up my accoutrements for inspection + wrote some + recieved four letters, one of them from Uncle John Reed. The news from the west is very encouraging. Longstreet has been repulsed by Gen Burnside with great loss. It seems as though the Army of the Potomac ought to do something while our troops are meeting with success every where else.

Sunday Dec 6th

Pleasant but rather cold we had inspection this morning I did some writing +c. Wrote a letter home.

Monday Dec 7th

Went on guard on the R.R. The day passed off quietly. Our C^o was ordered to go toward Vienna + guard a wagon train. They went a little ways + rec'd orders to go back. I rec'd a letter from home + also one from New York with a pen that I had sent for.

Tuesday Dec 8th

Pleasant but rather cold. We got to camp about 9 A.M. I wrote a letter home + marked some of my clothes. Rec'd a letter from W^m Bogardus. My new pen goes first rate. Cousin Hiram is carrying our mail from here to the Island.

Wednesday Dec 9th

Today I mended my pants + wrote some. We hear that there is some talk of raising soldiers wages 50 per cent. The news is encouraging. Went on guard in camp tonight. The time passed off quietly until near midnight + then quite sharp firing was heard at two different times + some shouts as of a charge. I would like to know what was up. Nothing disturbed us however. I rec'd a letter from home + one from Cousin Milly Wolcott.

Thursday Dec 10th

Wrote home. We hear that the rebs made a dash on one of our cavalry pickets + took two men + seven horses. No one killed as I heard of, one Lieut was mortally frightened + had his nose smashed (poor Lieuty.) The President issues a proclamation offering free pardon + restoration of rights + property except[t] slaves, to all in arms against the United States from the rank of Col in the army + Lieut in the Navy, except such as have heretofore held office in the United States Government or in her army or navy. His message also is in today's papers. I hope the rebs will accept his terms. They can do no better.

Friday Dec 11th

Cold cloudy + stormy, a very disagreeable gloomy day. The new proclamation is already taking effect. Brig Gen E W Gantt, ~~re~~ has been exempted from the finalty [sic] of treason by returning to his allegiance, upon pardon from the President. I did little else than read + write some. Gen Longstreet has again been defeated with loss + is retreating.

Saturday Dec 12th

We were ordered to go on pickit [sic] this morning among a lot of 30 men, two Sergts two Corpls and a Lieut in command. We were to relieve Co "F." We had to go about two miles from camp toward Vienna. We found quite comfortable quarters. Twelve men + a Corpl were put on picket and the rest kept at the headquarters of the guard. It rained all day and was gloomy + lonesome enough. At night six men were sent out on picket + at an early hour I went to bed.

Sunday Dec 13th

When I woke this morning it was raining + the shanty leaked + the boys were tearing around to keep out of the water. I had to go on guard in the rain + found a very good picket house + very soon it stopped raining + cleared off + was a beautiful day. The day passed off quietly. Toward night I saw a cavalcade coming which proved to be Gen Corcoran + Lady + Gen Meagher + thier [sic] staffs + body guards. I am sorry to say the staff officers were rather tipsy.

Monday Dec 14th

It rained some last night but was clear in the morning + was a pleasant day. Nothing of importance. Toward night it grew colder. I went on post three hours in the evening.

Tuesday Dec 15th

About 2. A. M. the pickets toward Vienna fired + in a short time C^o F was here to see what was up. The men on duty saw some one that did not answer the challenge + he was fired at but not hit + he got away. One picket shot an old horse however + that was all the blood spilled. Quiet was soon restored + all passed off quietly until morning. It has been a beautiful day, we were relieved + went to camp. I rec'd a letter from home last night and answered it today. We hear that orders have been issued that noncommissioned officers must not sleep at all while they are on duty or allow the men to remove thier [sic] accoutriments.

Wednesday Dec 16th

A fine day. Nothing of importance happened. I wrote some letters.

Thursday Dec 17th

A dark rainy unpleasant day. I was on duty at Falls Church. In the afternoon about 300 cavalry from dismounted camp came along on thier way to Fairfax. There was a good many stragglers + they were very drunk + some drew their sabers + struck one citizen + I was ordered to take three men + quell the riot, which we did without accident. I had to live up to the new order + so sat up all night. I rec'd a letter from home.

Friday Dec 18th

Got to camp at 9 A M tired + sleepy enough + after I got some breakfast I took a nap. Co F was ordered to Masons Island today + our Co had to relieve their men on the RR toward Vienna. I wrote home. It is very unpleasant yet today + is very muddy. I hear we will have rather bad weather now.

Saturday Dec 19th

Cold as ever. Nothing of importance happened.

Sunday Dec 20th

Cold but pleasant. No inspection today. I wrote some letters + spent the rest of the day reading + had to go on camp guard at night. O! how long will the holy Sabbath be desecrated by this cruel war. How long shall the quiet of God's holy day be broken by the roar of Battle + the groans of the wounded + dying. How long shall the hosts of sorrowing friends be racked with anguish + fear for the safety of those who have left their all for the fortunes of war, in hopes that they might redeem our land from the traitor's power.

Monday Dec 21st

Everything passed off quietly through the night. Geo + myself got a pass for two days to visit Camp Stoneman, M^d. We started about 8 ½ A.M. + got to Mason's Island about 10 A.M. + got our pass approved by Col Tracy. Were ferried across the river + then took a street car to the foot of 7th St. We got there about noon + then had to wait until 2.P.M. for a boat to take us to the point of land near Camp Stoneman. We had to walk near a mile + when we got to Camp the boys were all out on drill. We went to Serg't Lane's tent + found his wife there + visited with her until the boys came back from drill. We found the boys of our acquaintance all well. W^m Leonard is looking + feeling fine. Serg't Lane's Father, who came with the Serg'ts wife to see him had gone over to our camp to see us. We had a good visit + I took up my quarters for the night with W^m Leonard.

Tuesday Dec 22^d

Got up early for a soldier. The Cavalry have more to do than we do + have to get up earlier. We stayed until after noon + Mr Lane got back before we left so we had a chance to see him. At 2PM we started for the landing + found a boat just ready to leave for 7th St Washington. We got safely to Mason's Island about dark + then got the countersign + started for Fall's Church. We got to camp about 8 P.M. + after partaking of a supper of bread coffee + cold pork we retired, after reading a letter from home.

Wednesday Dec 23^d

A pleasant day but quite cold. On Monday night the guerillos [sic] captured four of the 14th N Y Cavalry + then shot + hung them. I went on guard toward Vienna. Had a good place + good men with me. Wrote a letter home + recieved a letter from A Hamilton + one from Julia Hill. Nothing of importance happened through the day. We hear that Gen Corcoran fell from his horse today + was killed.

Thursday Dec 24th

A beautiful day. The night passed without any alarm except three men showed themselves for an instant near one of the other posts. We hear that three more of the 14th Cavalry were taken + shot. No news of importance today. Well tomorrow is Christmas. I would like to go home tonight but I reckon that is impossible.

Friday Dec 25th

Well Christmas has come again. Merry Christmas to all the world is my earnest wish. If the winter winds vent their fury in vain against the palace of the wealthy may those rolling in wealth + splendor not forget the poor + needy today. May those in health rejoice + be glad + those in sickness + affliction find comfort + peace. May those seperated [sic] from friends be again permitted to greet those they love. May this day be indeed one of "peace on earth." But there are those far from homes like myself who will hear no warm greeting, no Merry Christmas my Son, Brother, Husband, or Father. There are many family boards at which will be vacant seats. Many earnest prayers arise from the hearts of Parents Brothers Sisters Wives + Children that the loved ones far away on the tented field may be protected from danger. O how different is everything,

now from a few short years ago. Well do I remember how eagerly I with my Brother + Sisters used to count the days before Christmas. And our anxiety to be first awake to wish all the rest a Merry Christmas + examine our treasures. In those happy happy days I was awakened by the joyous shouts of Sisters + Brother, then I could listen to the loved voices of my Parents + receive from their hands the highly prized present. But a change has come. The fierce storm of war burst over our land + tore [sic] me from that quiet loved home + now on Christmas morning I am awakened by the rattling drum + the shrill fife + the Orderly calling, Turn out for roll call, Co "A." I hope that before another Christmas dawns upon America she may be blessed with Peace again + the broken families be reunited, but we can only look to an all wise God + pray that He may restore our land to peace + the wanderers to their homes again. The day passed off quietly. Five of us went + had dinner at a Mr Read's + a very good one too. The day was pleasant but rather cold.

Saturday Dec 26th

Today I cleaned my gun + went on guard in camp at night. No news of importance today. I rec'd two letters + wrote one in the evening to Willie Bougardas. I have received but one letter from home this week.

Sunday Dec 27th

Toward morning it began to rain + I guess we shall have a rainy time. Everything went off right through the night. I wrote some + read some through the day. At night it rained harder than ever.

Monday Dec 28th

Rainy all day. This morning when I woke I felt very unwell. I guess I have taken a severe cold. I hope I shall be better soon though. I received a letter from home.

Tuesday Dec 29th

I passed a pretty hard night + I feel rather bad this morning, but not as bad as I did last night. Evening. I feel much better but I have a severe cold. I guess it will be all right "in the spring" though. Hiram Reed went to the Express office in Washington today + found a box for us there +

got it as far as Mason's Island. I suppose we will get it tomorrow. I wrote a letter home today. The weather is more pleasant today.

Wednesday Dec 30th/63

Warm + pleasant as spring. Our box + one for Corpl Smith came up on the bread wagon today + we soon had them in the tent. Then followed a scene that was truly laughable. It was sport to see the eager looks and hear the exclamations of joy from the eager boys. I guess if our folks could have seen that group around those boxes they would have thought that they were remembered gratefully by us + that their presents were not thrown away. In our box we had cake of many kinds, mince pie, cheese, popped corn, clothing + butter, and I can assure those dear friends at home that all was very acceptable + that we thank them heartily for their kindness to us.

Thursday Dec 31st

When I woke this morning it was raining and it was a very rainy day. Nothing of importance happened today.

Friday, Jan 1st 1864.

Well here is New Year again. Another year's labors done + those of the new year about to begin. Two New years I have passed away from home, and yet I can see that we have made but very little progress in the work that took me away from home. I hope that we shall see a different state of things before another year begins, and my earnest prayer is that the Union may be preserved + our land restored to peace again before ,1865, begins. I was on guard at Falls Church today + we suffered considerable for it was very cold, but we managed to live.

Saturday Jan 2^d

We had a hard night and it is cold as ever. We got to camp about 9.A.M. and after I got some breakfast I went to sleep and woke up just as the call for supper was given. I recieved a letter from home. Sarah writes me that there is a protracted meeting being held at the Central Church and many have been converted and many have been forward for prayers. I hope the good work will go on.

Sunday Jan 3^d

Pleasant but cold. Our Capt said if we would go to church we would have no inspection + so we went + heard a very good sermon. I wrote a letter home.

Monday Jan 4th

Went on duty on the RR today. About 10 A M it began to snow + snowed all day. I was at the Depot and had a good place. We got wood off of a train that stopped there. I recieved a letter from home.

Tuesday Jan 5th

We passed the night very comfortably + were relieved about 9 A.M. Wrote a letter home and sent money to have the Waverly Magazine sent to my Sisters. The weather is rather cold.

Wednesday Jan 6th

Recieved a letter from home + answered it. My folks write that Leonard Reed, James Lewis + John Leonard have enlisted + Len Reed + J Lewis expect to come here. I am sorry that they have enlisted for I think they are too young to come here + bear all the hardships of our life.

Thursday Jan 7th

Pleasant but rather cold. I was on guard at the village. The day passed off quietly. At night it began to snow. We had to carry all the wood we used from camp. We had no place to stay but in the old church + there were no doors or windows in it.

Friday Jan 8th

It snowed all night + was very cold. I should think we might have a better place to stay on picket than there is here. We got to camp about nine A.M. The day passed without anything of interest. There is some talk of raising a million of men + liberating the Union prisoners now in the hands of the rebs. I hope it will be done.

Saturday Jan 9th

Clear but very cold for the climate. We hear a report this morning that we are to go to Alexandria in a day or two.

Sunday Jan 10th

Very pleasant. I was on duty on the R.R. The day passed off quietly. I did nothing but keep a fire in the picket house.

Monday Jan 11th

Got to camp about 10 A.M. The weather is warmer + pleasant. We recieved orders to be ready to go to Alexandria tomorrow at 10 A.M. I recieved a letter from home + answered it. I am sorry that we are going to leave for I hate to move in the winter + I like this place very well too.

Tuesday Jan 12th

This morning we took down our tents + packed everything + got ready to load up on the cars by 10 A.M. The cars came about 1 P.M. + about 3 P.M. we started for Alexandria. We got there about 5 P.M. + then unloaded our camp equipage about a mile out of town + then rode back near the Soldier's Rest where we got supper + prepared to stay all night. No news of importance today.

Wednesday Jan 13th

I slept some last night but there was so much noise that it was almost impossible. We stayed all day at the soldiers rest + details were made to put up some tents to put the rations +c into. Our Reg't relieves the 4th Delaware [sic] + began to do the duty today. Our duty is to guard the recruits here + take them to the different Reg'ts in the field.

Thursday Jan 14th

I recieved a letter from home last night + answered it today. I was detailed for guard duty + began my duties at noon. The duty is very hard here. It takes 20 men, one commissioned officer, a Serg't + Corpl to each room. H Smith was with me as acting serg't. We had a miserable

drunken man for a Lieut with us. We had in our charge about 200 men. The day wore away slowly. I laid down to sleep the first part of the night.

Friday Jan 15

It rained some last night. A squad of men from the front came in at midnight + our Lieut was so drunk that he knew no better than to put them under guard + stayed on duty until noon. This forenoon a squad of recruits 150 strong came to our room. The recruits are coming in very fast. Afternoon the men of our Reg't not on duty were marched out to our camp ground. We got our tents up + ~~then~~ now for a snooze for I am most awful tired + sleepy.

Saturday Jan 16th

Very pleasant today, but it is very muddy. I did but very little today for I feel very lazy but I know that is natural + I cant help it. It seems good to get into camp again. I am sick of our duty here + wish I was back to Falls church but we cant have our choice as long as we are soldiers. I recieved a letter from Cousin Carrie tonight. Rebel papers acknowledge that Charleston is steadily being reduced to ruins by Gen Gilmore's bombardment. Well the labors of another week are ended + I am still alive still blessed by the great blessing of health + although I am far from home + its comforts I am contented with the knowledge that I am performing a duty that I owe to those I love most dear as well as to my Country + my God. I am willing to perform this duty as long as necessary, but I shall be very thankful when this horrible strife is ended, + when the glorious sunlight of peace shall bring joy + gladness to our struggling, bleeding country. God only knows when that time will come, but my earnest prayer to Him is that it may be very soon.

Sunday Jan 17th

A dark gloomy day. Geo + some of the other boys came to camp this morning they having been relieved. I wrote a letter home. The boys got a going tonight + we had a bully time ~~xxx~~ ~~xxx~~ singing.

Monday Jan 18th

It rained all day today + the water ran all over our tent floor + the mud is deep enough. I wrote nearly all day. No news of importance. I recieved a letter from home.

Tuesday Jan 19th

Clear + rather colder + the wind blows very hard. Dug a trench around the tent + got all covered with mud + as a matter of course had to clean it off. I then wrote a letter home.

Wednesday Jan 20th

Very pleasant. I was on guard at the Soldier's Rest. A lot of men were sent off today to their Reg'ts. We had some trouble with some men that got some of that good thing called whiskey.

Thursday Jan 21st

I was relieved at noon today + came to camp. I found four letters waiting for me + one of them from home. I wrote a letter home + then lay around until bed time, for I felt very lazy.

Friday Jan 22^d

A beautiful day. All the men not perfectly fit for duty are being sent to the Invalid Corps + Cousin Hiram's name is down for one but I hope he will not have to go. Toward night I was detailed for duty, went to the soldier's Rest at the landing. Lieut Nelson of Co B, 10 men from different Co's went there + we had orders to guard 51 men of the 4th Regular Artillery + 7 men of a New Hampshire battery until morning + then take them to Cullpepper [sic]. The night passed off quietly + at 5 o'clock A.M. of

Saturday Jan 23^d

we called all the men up + at 6 A.M. we started for the Depot. We left Alexandria at 7 A.M. We got to Brandy Station at 2 P.M. + then the officers with the squad said the 7th Regulars was near there + we marched of [sic] about 2 miles through the mud + then found out that we were wrong + marched back again. We expected to go to Cullpepper at 5 P.M. but the train left us + we had to wait until 9 P.M. + then we got aboard of the train + at about 12 at night we got to Cullpepper + went into an old horse Depot to stay. Some men on duty there did our duty for us + I lay down to sleep.

Sunday Jan 24th

This morning we got up + marched off about two miles + this time we found the right place + disposed of the men for the 4th Regulars + then went back to the station. The Lieut then got transportation for myself + eight men + told me to take the first train for Alexandria while he took two men + the men for the New Hampshire battery + went to dispose of them. We got to Alexandria about dark. I have taken a very hard cold + am very hoarse. I saw on my journey six rebel deserters going to Gen Patricks Head Quarters. From Alexandria to Manasses [sic] the country is very rough but from there to Cullpepper it is a splendid country but utterly devastated + it shows plainly that war + all its horrors has swept over it. The Army of the Potomac has very good quarters for the winter + all seem to be in good spirits. Today has seemed very little like sunday [sic] to me.

Monday Jan 25th

Pleasant yet. I feel rather dull today. The news is good. Gen Beauregard says he cannot hold Charleston much longer. Whole Reg'ts of rebels are trying to desert + the rebel cause seems hopeless. Geo Reed was detailed to go to Tennessee with recruits + started at noon. We hear this afternoon however that he is not going to Tennessee, but to Fortress Monroe [*Virginia*]. I recieved a letter from home + answered it. Took a walk on the bank of the Potomac + practiced some with a revolver.

Tuesday Jan 26th

A beautiful day as I ever saw. I wrote some. I am not feeling very well today, for I have a severe cold, but I guess it will be better soon. George has not left Alexandria yet, but expects to go tomorrow morning.

Wednesday Jan 27th

The weather is still delightful, it is as warm + pleasant as spring. O that this day were an emblem + a true one of our nation. The sky of peace clear + serene while the glad sunshine of joy + gladness filled every heart + like the bright river rolling near us, bearing the precious freight of Liberty to the oppressed of other lands, + the sounds of peaceful industry rising from every valley + hill side over the whole length + breadth of our land. Then indeed would our land be blessed.

Then it would be a land of Liberty, a refuge for the down-trodden of the earth. And my heart is this day lifted to Thee Giver of all good gifts in humble prayer that this day may soon come to our land. O may the firey [sic] ordeal we are passing through make us purer + better as a nation. May the nobler, purer qualities of ~~our~~ the sons of America be brought forth, may ~~they~~ we feel our dependence on Thee + not rely on the arm of flesh to redeem our land from the curse of slavery + rebellion. As I sit in my tent my mind wanders back to the rugged old hills where as a boy I sported in youthful joy, to my dear home, nestling among the trees, beneath the roof of which all of my earthly treasures are hoarded up. There I see my Father, whose looks are beginning to show the frost of age, but who is ever the same true friend, kind counselor + dear parent, my Mother too over whose brow the lines of toil + sorrow are drawn, but in heart unchanged, still loving, patient + kind trying to lead those God has given her in the road to a better world + united with my Father in a fervent prayer that I their first born may be spared to cheer their path in old age, that I may return to them when my duty as a soldier ~~am~~ is finished. There too are my Sisters just budding into womanhood with the stamp of virtue + purity written on their brows, whose hearts are warm with love for me the wanderer, and my Brother with all the carelessness + frankness of a school boy, but whose heart is true + needs only the hand of love + affection to lead him in the way he should go, and ~~xxx~~ then my baby Sister, who often asks when Brother Jimmie will come home, even now I see her flashing eyes + shining curls as when she used to welcome me back from work, + last I see Grandfather seated in his chair in the warm corner + relating stories of his younger days. May ~~his~~ the few remaining years of his life be peaceful + may he be prepared to begin that eternal life with joy + praise to our Creator. But I had almost dreamed that I were home + surrounded by those dear loving friends, but I look around + I see I am still on the tented field, the bright waters of the Potomac still roll along in my sight + between me + my home + ever + anon the blast of some bugle or the fifes shrill notes are brought to my ear on the gentle breeze + I remember too well that I am a soldier, far from the home I love, but thank God engaged in as holy cause as ever man fought for, + striving to sustain the best earthly government that ever existed. God grant that our efforts may not be in vain or that the lives already sacrificed, be utterly thrown away. - - - - -

The news is very encouraging today. Rebel deserters are coming into our lines every day + yesterday heavy firing was heard opposite Gen Kil Patricks Head Quarters + it was thought that

the rebels were fighting among themselves. I believe the time is near at hand when Peace shall again bless the land + this horrid war cease.

Thursday Jan 28th

A beautiful day. I wrote a letter home. An order was issued to strike all the tents at 2 P.M. We could not take ours down without a great deal of trouble so we opened it + took everything out + gave it a good cleaning. I never saw a warm weather in Jan before today.

Friday Jan 29th

Very pleasant. About noon I was detailed to go to the front again, Capt M^cAllaster commanding the squad. We went to the Ordnance buildings + waited until the recruits came, when they were furnished with arms +c + then we escorted them to the "Old Rest" + got rations + from there to the "New Rest" + after we got there I was ordered to take four men + search for two deserters. I had quite a time around town but could not find them + went back again. Had the sport of breaking up a fight among the recruits in the evening.

Saturday Jan 30th

This morning the rain drizzles down + we will have a time I guess. We started from Alexandria at 7.A.M. +loaded our men on the top of a train of freight cars + got to Brandy Station about 2 P.M. There was no train going further so a guard was left with the men that were going no farther + we started for Culpeper [sic] on foot. We got there about 4 ½ P.M. + reported to ~~our~~ Head Quarters of 1st Division + got an Orderly to guide us to the camp of the 1st Maryland Reg't, which was about two miles distant. We got there after dark + were quartered with the Reg't. Charley Norwood + myself had a whole tent to ourselves, + were furnished with hot coffee + a good bunk.

Sunday Jan 31st

Still dark + cloudy + rains some. We had breakfast + then the recruits were called out + their arms +c recieted [sic] for + we went back to Culpeper + Charley Norwood + myself got permission to go to visit the 76th Reg't NYV. We had a very pleasant time. Charley has a brother

in Co E. who can tell some hard stories about war. Well today has not seemed much like Sunday [sic] to me but I hope before long I can be home + enjoy the privileges of the Sabbath.

Monday Feb 1st

We left the camp of the 76th this morning + got to Culpeper just in time for the train. We got to camp safely about 3 P.M. The mud is deep enough again. The news is encouraging. I found a letter from home waiting for me + another came at night, which I answered. Geo got back from Fortress Monroe today, + he is rather under the weather. He has the quinsy again.

Tuesday Feb 2^d

The weather is still dull, but warm. The news is good. A writer who lately came from Richmond seems confident that the rebel authorities will soon make propositions of peace to the United States if their leaders can be pardoned. The President has called for 500,000, more men to be drafted the 5th of March if not enlisted by that time. Bully for that.

Wednesday Feb 3^d

Geo is no better yet. We had some rain last night + thunder too. The wind blew very hard + several tents blew down. Ours was partly torn up when I got up this morning + Charley Norwood + myself went to stake it down again + Charley cut his knee pretty badly + is quite lame.

Thursday Feb 4th

Quite cold but pleasant. Geo is very little better. He is having a hard time.

Friday Feb 5th

Pleasant. I received a letter from home + answered it. Also received one from Cousin Hattie Reed. Geo is better tonight + I guess he will be well soon.

Saturday Feb 6th

Went up town this morning a few minutes + got some paper, envelopes +c. Geo is much better + will be able to do duty very soon. Cousin Hiram is not well + Uncle James Roe is quite sick + in the Hospital. We hear that a part of the Army of the Potomac has crossed the Rappahannock. A train of

cars ran through the “draw” in long bridge + went into the river, killing five + wounding several more.

Sunday Feb 7th

Was detailed for guard at Soldier’s Rest. We had guard mounting + then marched to the Rest. The day passed off quietly. We hear that our troops have captured five hundred rebels, since yesterday morning + that there has been some sharp skirmishing. I hope our troops will meet with success. It is a beautiful sabbath day as we generally see in winter, but it seems very little like the sabbath here. All is noise + bustle + I see no difference in this from other days, but I believe the time will soon come when I can be with those I love, surrounded by the old familiar scenes of Childhood, but it may not be, for “change” is writer over the whole face of Creation + we + the scenes of our Childhood must change as well as everything else in nature. But we would hope + even pray that our kind Creator will spare our lives until our duty as a soldier is done + permit us to return to the home we have left + our family be reunited again.

Monday Feb 8th

Nothing but the usual duties of guard + no news of importance.

Tuesday Feb 9th

We were relieved about 10 AM It is a pleasant day. I found out when I got to camp that I was detailed for the Corpl to drill in bayonet exercise. Go went to the front today. I found a letter waiting for me from home + I answered it.

Wednesday Feb 10th

A. C. Earsley came from home today where he had been on furlough. Says he had a good time. I’ll bet he did. I drilled today for the first [sic] + got along very well. I do not feel very well today. I have a very bad cold + sore throat.

Thursday Feb 11th

I wrote a letter home today + recieved one. I feel pretty mean today, but I guess I will be all right in time. The drill went off very well again. Geo got back tonight. We hear some talk of leaving here + that Col Tracy is trying to go to Texas with the Reg't.

Friday Feb 12th

I feel better today. No news of importance. Drilled as usual.

Saturday Feb 13th

Nothing new + it is extremely dull times here in camp. The work on the Barracks goes on slowly. The weather is pleasant. We have orders to prepare our tents for inspection tomorrow morning. H. Smith is sick today with sore throat.

Sunday Feb 14th

Once more I am in camp on sunday [sic]. The first time in a month. That inspection did not come off. I wrote a letter home today. I had the good luck to get one of Rev H W Beecher's sermons + it was about as good as going to church. The subject we veneration + the text Hallowed be Thy name, + it was ably handled as Mr Beecher handles every subject.

Monday Feb 15th

Cold + toward night it began to snow + snowed very hard. I went down to the city this forenoon + made a few purchases. There is no news of importance, but a movement is expected soon.

Tuesday Feb 16th

The earth is covered with a pure white mantle this morning + the snow flakes are coming silently down, to add to the light covering already reposing on the bosom of old mother earth, + will undoubelty [sic] add to the mud as soon as it melts. I recieved a letter from home + answered it. It cleared off toward night but was very cold + the wind blew very hard.

Wednesday Feb 17th

Very cold + the wind blows terribly. There was no drill today. I recieved a letter from home tonight. All well at home. I have to report the sick now in addition to drilling but that is nothing. We have hard work to keep worm today. The river is freezing over. No news of importance.

Thursday Feb 18th

Clear + pleasant this morning + not near as cold as it was yesterday. Wrote a letter home.

Friday Feb 19th

Pleasant + not very cold. We were agreeably surprised today by the arrival of Cousin Leonard Reed + James Lewis recruits for our C^o. They seem to be in fine spirits + left all well at home. We have five other recruits for the ~~Reg't~~ C^o + a good many for the Reg't 130 I believe.

Saturday Feb 20th

We hear that there is a prospect of a general war in Europe + there has already been fighting. The recruits seem to like the looks of things very well. Capt says I am to have the fun of drilling them. One of our men is very sick in hospital + will hardly get well.

Sunday Feb 21st

Hebron Maybe [sic *Maybe*] died this morning at 5 o'clock. Well another family left to mourn for the loss of a husband + father. A victim to the horrors of war. I wrote a letter home + took a stroll along the river with Cousins Hiram + Leonard.

Monday Feb 22^d

Warm + Cloudy. The new recruits all went back to Mason's Island to drill. The news is good + the rebel desertions are on the increase. The late expedition into Florida has proved successful. It is much warmer tonight + is raining some. The pay rolls came tonight + we have signed them + are to get pay tomorrow.

Tuesday Feb 23^d

A beautiful day. We recieved pay today + I recieved a letter from home + answered it + sent \$16.00 home to pay for a watch. I recieved a couple of very nice written Valentines also.

Wednesday Feb 24th

Still pleasant + warm but the wind blew very hard all day. I recieved four letters today + one of them from home. The news is good + the war in Europe is going on + will probably become quite a general war. I did nothing except cut some wood + write a letter.

Thursday Feb 25th

Still beautiful weather. I reported the sick as usual. Our Co has a very small sick list at present, only three sick in camp. The Serg'ts are trying to raise the money to defray the expense of sending Hebron Maybee's body home. Gen Grant's army is reported as moving + the Army of the Potomac is ordered to move.

Friday Feb 26th

Warm + pleasant. The drill seems to have played out and I guess I shall go on duty again. There is no news of importance today as I can hear. I wrote some letters + the day passed without any event of importance.

Saturday Feb 27th

I was detailed this morning to go to the front with Lieut [*Gilbert D.*] Craft + 13 men + a Corpl from our Co. We left camp at 10 A.M. + went to the "Rest" + took a squad of 55 men to the Ordnance building + got their arms + from there to the Old Rest + got rations for three days + then back to the New Rest again + placed our guard over them for the night as we could not leave until Sunday morning.

Sunday Feb 28th

Left Alexandria this morning at 7 A.M. + arrived at Brandy Station at 2 P.M. all right. Lieut left 36 recruits there in my charge + nine guards. We camped down + made coffee + got our supper +

then I went to the Sanitary Comission [sic] + got permission to stay there with all my men through the night + just at night we moved into the Quarters provided us.

Monday Feb 29th

We had a good place to stay last night + found the men all right this morning. We moved from the "Sanitary" + got our breakfast. It looks like rain this morning + we just got ready to move under a large grain shed when we saw the Lieut coming + very soon we were marching toward the 2^d Corps. We had men for the 28th Mass, the 26th Mich the 12th N.J. + the 53^d Pa. + we got rid of the Mass + Mich men near the Corps Head Quarters, about three miles from Brandy Station + then the Lieut sent me with the N. J. men to the 2^d Brigade 3^d Div 2^d Corps which was at Stony Mountain about five miles father. I had only two recruits + one guard. We passed the picket line about a mile + a half from the Mountain + at 2. P. M. we got to the Brigade + got the reciepts [sic] for our men + then went up on Stony Mountain to take a look over into Rebeldom. We had a splendid view from the top of the Mountain. We could see the Rapidan at Morton's Ford + the rebel pickets on the south side of the river + their camps beyond. It was only a mile + a half from where we were to the rebel pickets. We got our dinner at the 12th N. J. Reg't + then started back for Brandy Station + got there at 5. P.M. tired + sleepy. We delivered our papers to Lieut Craft + then sought repose on one of the excellent bunks at the Sanitary Comission [sic].

Tuesday March 1st

Well another month has begun + Spring has come but only in name for it has grown cold since last night + this morning every thing is covered with ice + sleet. I feel bully again this morning. We hear that Gen Kilpatrick has crossed the Rapidan, passed through the Rebel picket lines + is going on with 20 000 cavalry toward Richmond, but his plans are unknown as yet. We left Brandy Station at 9 A.M. + got to Alexandria at 2.P.M. + to camp about 3 P.M. Found none of the boys in ~~camp~~ our tent except Geo Reed + H Smith, the others are all away on duty. Wrote some in the evening.

Wednesday March 2^d

It stormed considerable last night but looks pleasant today. I got a pass + went up town + got my boots mended + just after I got to camp I was detailed to go to the front again + got ready + left

camp at 2 P.M. We went to the Ordnance building + waited a while + then went up to the Soldiers Rest + got a squad of 70 men + took them to the Ordnance building + got them armed + then got their rations at the Old Rest. + made preparations [sic] to stay all night. Placed our guard +c.

Thursday March 3^d

The night passed off quietly + we found our men all right in the morning. We marched up to the Depot + left Alexandria at 7 A.M. + got to Brandy Station at 2 P.M. + then Lieut Wade told me to take two men for the 1st Heavy Art NY Vols, + one for the 15th NY Battery + one guard + take them to thier [sic] Reg'ts. I also took a letter to Gen Hunt Chief of Artillery in the Army of the Potomac respecting the two men for the 1st Heavy Art as there is no such Reg't. I took the letter to him + recieved an order transferring them to the 1st NY light Art which was at Culpeper. I then sent the two men back to Brandy Station with the guard + went on to the 15th Battery with the man + got the reciept for him + went back to "Brandy" + put up at the Sanitary Comission for the night.

Friday March 4th

Had a grand place to sleep last night + a good breakfast this morning + went to Culpeper at 1 P.M. + got the reciepts for my men + got back to Brandy Station at dusk + put up at the Sanitary again.

Saturday March 5th

Rather rainy today. We got back in camp at 3 P.M. all right. I found five letters waiting for me + two of them from home, + they were welcome as I had not heard from home in over a week. I wrote a letter home + finished another letter. Cousin Leonard Reed came down from Mason's Island tonight to see us. He seems to like soldiering pretty well. We hear that Gen Kil Patrick [sic] has got to Richmond but cannot get in + has joined Gen Butlers forces from the Peninsula. I hope he will do something that will count. The army in the west is reported as in motion. The Army of the Potomac is back in its old position again, but will move again before long I think.

Sunday March 6th

A dark rainy day. I spent the day writing letters + reading. How I long to be at home + enjoy a quiet sabbath as I used to, but that time I fear is far in the future.

Monday March 7th

Rather pleasant today. The news is not as encouraging, as Gen Kil Patrick has met with failure. It seems as though something was lacking, but when we cannot tell. I recieved a letter from home, + answered it. We got a box of eatables from home today + had a good time over its contents. It is cheering to recieve such substantial proofs of the friendship of those at home + I hope we shall be able to repay them in a measure for their kindness at some future time.

Tuesday March 8th

Rainy + unpleasant. Was detailed to go to Soldier's Rest + went there on guard.

Wednesday March 9th

Pleasant. This morning We [sic] took a squad of 147 recruits down to Gen Brigg's Office + Serg't Aiken [sic - Akins?] + myself took 10 men + started for Forts Corcoran + Ethan Allen. We left Alexandria at noon + got to Fort Corcoran about 4.P.M. + left 92 men there. We had one sick man + had to leave him before we got to Fort Ethan Allen + send an Ambulance after him. Got rid of our men at dusk + started for Mason's Island + got there at 7 ½ P.M. + stayed in Co F's Barrack [sic]. We have marched 20 miles today + I am very tired.

Thursday March 10th

Left the Island about 9 A.M. + went to George Town + took the Street car to the foot of 7th S^t + took the Government boat ~~xxx~~ to Alexandria. It is a rainy disagreeable day + I feel rather unwell but I guess it is nothing serious.

Friday March 11th

I feel better today but rather lame. It is very rainy + unpleasant + the mud is terrible. I was detailed at 2.P.M. for the front. Serg't Wilder Commanding the guard which consisted of 9 men

beside myself. We went to the Rest + took 36 Cavalry men to the Armory + got their tents + then to the Old Rest + stayed all night. Got a letter from home.

Saturday March 12th

Left Alexandria at 7.A.M. + got to Warrenton Junction at 11.A.M. + at 2 P.M. left for Warrenton City. We stopped at Turkey Run + left 11 men + then went on to the City + disposed of the rest of the men + got back to Warrenton Junction before dark. Had to wait until 9 P.M. for a train as there was a smash up that delayed it some three hours. We lay down in the car + went to sleep + at 11 ½ P.M. woke up in Alexandria + went to camp + to bed.

Sunday March 13th

Again the light of another sabbath has come + finds me well + enjoying the blessings of life. It is a beautiful day The morning clear + pleasant + the air "living sweetness" A military band has been out on the river discussing sweet music but the martial airs seem rather out of place. A lot of Gen Kil Patrick's [sic] command came into Alexandria from Yorktown today. I wrote a letter home.

Monday March 14th

Nothing to do + nothing to write about. Recieved a letter from home + answered it. The weather was pleasant but rather cold!

Tuesday March 15th

I was detailed for guard at the Rest + went on Guard mounting. Got to the Rest at 10 A.M. + took the 1st Relief. The day passed off quietly. We had only about 200 men under our care + a few were sent away.

Wednesday, March 16th

Got up at 4 A.M. + commenced the labors of the day. Everything passed off quietly until toward noon when about 600 men came in + we had plenty of work. Toward night another squad of 300 [?] came in + a lot were sent away. We had to send to camp for 20 more guards + then had plenty of work to do. I had a bully lot of men on my relief + they were around every time. [sic]

Thursday March 17th

Warm + pleasant this morning. We sent about 400 men away this morning + another lot of 200 came in. We were relieved at 10 A.M. + went to camp. When I got to camp I heard that two of our men were dead. Mr. David Briggs the oldest man in the C^o + James Lewis. Mr. Briggs was a very fine old man + generally loved by the C^o. He leaves a wife + a son to mourn his loss. He offered the few remaining years of his life to his country + died like a brave soldier + a true Christian. James Lewis left home only a short time since, full of life + boyish gayety + now his friends must mourn his loss. The remorseless hand of death heeds not the grey haired veteran or passes over those just in the bloom of youth but with a pitiless hand lays them low alike. O I could utter a terrible curse on those who are the cause of so much misery but there is an All Wise Ruler over all + His judgement [sic] will be just. How dearly should Americans prize the sacred emblem of the Free when it floats over the graves of our noblest + best men. God grant that the time may soon come when Peace + Unity may go hand in hand over our land. I sent my old letters home by W^m Lewis as he was going home with his brother's body. I heard that some letters were sent to the Rest last night for me + got a pass + went after them + found one from home from Father + Mother + Herm. I wrote a letter home.

Friday March 18th

A beautiful day. I guess we shall have to move into our barracks today. All the men were vaccinated this morning. The day passed without moving.

Saturday March 19th

Very pleasant. We moved into our barracks today. Geo started for Florida this morning with recruits. At night an order came to fall in + march down to the city to repel [sic] any attack that might be made as it is reported that the Rebel Gen Stuart is some-where between here + Gen Meade's army with a heavy force of Cavalry. We marched to the canal bridge + left Capt Gordon with 20 men to tear the bridge up if necessary + then moved on to the turnpike running into the north part of the city + sent Lieut Robbins with 50 men to support a battery a little ways up the "pike." The rest of the Battalion was deployed as skirmishers from the canal to a file of wood near the RR running to Washington by Capt Hopkins, one of Gen Briggs' Staff. We had been in

that position but a short time when the 5th Regt Pa Reserves came up with Capt Ford Adj Gen'l + orders were given to rally the line of skirmishers on our left which was done + then one C^o under Capt Dunn was sent to hold a crossing place in the canal + the remaining two Cos under command of Capt M^cAllaster was moved to a sheltered position near the "Pike" + stacked arms, sent for our blankets + lay down for the night.

Sunday March 20th

Slept rather cold on the ground last night. Were ordered to camp at daylight. "Another raid" without rebs. It is the morning of the holy sabbath + as beautiful as the day is holy. The air seems laden with sweetness + the sunshine sends a thrill of gladness through the heart + ~~in~~ involuntarily our hearts send up a silent thanksgiving to the Author of all this scene of beauty. The Founder of the towering mountain + the fertile plain.

Monday March 21st

Clear, but rather cold. Wrote a letter home in the morning + then was detailed for fatigue duty + lost a chance to go to Tenn by it. A detail was made for the front + I got a man to take my place + went with the detail for the front. Just before we started I had the good luck to cut my hand on a piece of glass quite badly. Left camp at 1 ½ P.M. went to the Rest + got 108 men, + took them to the Armory + got their arms + from there to the "Old Rest [sic] for rations + lodging for the night.

Tuesday March 22^d

We lost one man last night. Started for the front at 7.A.M. + had a cold ride on the top of a freight train. Got to Brandy at 1 ½ P.M. + started off with our men who were all for the 2^d Corps + got rid of all of them. Went to the Sanitary Commission at Brandy to stay over night. About 4.P.M. it began to snow + snowed very hard.

Wednesday March 23^d

The snow was about six inches deep this morning. We got transportation for the first train but could not go as it was against orders for squads of over six to go on that train. The Officers went + left their orders with me to get transportation on for the next train. Got Transportation + started

at 11 ½ A.M. + got to Alexandria at 6 P.M. found four letters waiting for ~~me~~ me + two of them from home. I wrote a letter home. All the new recruits for our C^o are here now. C^o "B" was detailed to do all the duty at the Rest so all we have to do is taking recruits to the front.

Thursday March 24th

A beautiful day + the snow is going off very fast. My hand is pretty sore today + I guess I have taken cold in it. Wrote a letter to Uncle Herman Reed today.

Friday March 25th

Cloudy + rained very hard toward night. I went to the Surgeon + got my hand dressed. It was very painful through the night. The day passed off quietly as usual. I wrote some letters.

Saturday March 26th

The snow has nearly all disappeared. It is still cloudy + unpleasant. My hand is better + I guess it will soon be well.

Sunday March 27th

It is a beautiful day. The earth seems to rejoice that Spring has come + truly this is the "sunny south" today. Hiram, Leonard + myself went down town on a stroll, went to the Catholic Church, down to the wharves + then to camp. Enjoyed the walk very much. When we got to camp we found W^m Lewis there. He brought me a letter from home + told us there was a box down at Pier No 5 for us so Hiram + myself went after it + found lots of good things in it from home + of course we had a bully supper. Father sent me a new watch which he had bought for me. I think it is an excellent one. I wrote a letter home.

Monday March 28th

A splendid day. Went down town to Express a box of clothing home. I think we shall hear of stirring times soon. A large part of the Heavy Artillery around Washington is ordered to the front with their siege trains + troops are going to Gen Meade's army from Harper's Ferry. I was detailed for fatigue duty in the afternoon + worked pretty hard + tonight I am tired + I dont feel very well, went to bed early.

Tuesday March 29th

The weather is still beautiful. I feel more than half sick today but I guess I shall be well soon. No news of importance.

Wednesday March 30th

How the weather has changed. It is cold + stormy + as cheerless as can be. How I would like to be at home these cold days + even then I should think of the boys way down here in the field. No I ask not to go back to the peaceful avocations of life until this war is ended + our Nation's honor vindicated + her laws sustained. I feel better today. Was detailed at night to go somewhere tomorrow at 7.A.M.

Thursday March 31st

We left camp at 7.A.M. A Serg't of C^o "I" in command + eight men for guard. Leonard Reed went with us. We went to headquarters + then to the New Rest + got a squad of 62 men for the 2^d P.A. [sic] Took boat at Pier No "5" + landed at the foot of sixth street Washington D C. + marched out through George Town + up the river to Chain Bridge + across the river to Fort Ethan Allen. Got rid of our men + got back to Georgetown at 3 ½ P.M. where we got some dinner + took the street cars for the Pier at the foot of 7th St. Had to wait until 6 P.M. for the boat, but while waiting had the chance of seeing Gen Grant go aboard of a steamer laying at the Pier. I will say nothing of him as he is well known all over the United States. Got to camp at 7P.M. a little tired but in good trim. The day has been quite pleasant but rather cool for comfort.

Friday April 1st

Another month has commenced, another gone into Eternity. The morning was as bright and beautiful as heart could wish, but toward noon clouds arose + in the afternoon it rained steadily but is quite warm + the rain seems quite spring like. I guess the Icy King has lost his scepter + crown + left his throne for northern regions. I cleaned my gun today + read some.

Saturday April 2^d

Very stormy + unpleasant all day. I never saw such stormy weather as we have lately.

Sunday April 3^d

Cold + unpleasant still. My hand is quite bad + I dont hardly know what to do for it but I hope it will be better soon. I wrote some, read some + went to meeting in the next Barrack. The meeting was quite interesting. There seem to be some talk of our Reg't leaving here soon but we dont know where we are going although it is thought that we will go to Annapolis City to join Gen Burnside's command.

Monday April 4th

Still cold + unpleasant, but the mud is drying up some. My hand is a little better I guess but it gains very slowly if at all. Toward night it began to rain + rained very hard. I recieved a letter from home + answered it.

Tuesday April 5th

Rain, rain, rain, all day it had been raining in perfect torrents. I do wish it would clear of + the sun shine again. My hand is better today + I guess it will soon be well. Time passes rather dull these long rainy days. I have been reading + writing some to pass away time.

Wednesday April 6th

Today the sun is shining again + it is pleasant + warm. No news of importance today. Recieved a letter from Cousin Carrie.

Thursday April 7th

Very pleasant. Spent the day reading + wrote a letter home. We signed the pay rolls + expect pay tomorrow.

Friday April 8th

A splendid day. Wrote to Cousin Carrie. ~~Friday April 8th Warm + pleasant.~~ Recieved a letter from home. We recieved pay today. I sent \$15.00 home + answered my letter from home.

Saturday April 9th

Very unpleasant + rained all day. No news of importance.

Sunday April 11th

Pleasant again. We had service in the new cook house today + a good sermon from Matthew 6th Chap + 6th verse. The day passed away pleasantly. I wrote some letters + read some + took a stroll along the river.

Monday April 11th

A pleasant day. Recieved a letter from home + answered it.

Tuesday April 12th

A beautiful day. Got a pass + went down town + sat for some pictures. Toward night heard that one of our men Henry Gohman [sic] had been killed at Warrenton Junction by the cars. Got to camp at 2 P.M. Got another pass at night + went with the Orderly Serg't to see what could be [done] with Henry Gohmans remains. We found the corpse at the Depot + took it to the Embalmers. Found it badly cut + torn. Left the body to be embalmed as we are going to send it home. He was a good soldier + like very well by our C^o.

Wednesday April 13th

A splendid day. Went down town to settle with the Embalmer for his services. Telegraphed to his friends in Auburn NY + paid the Express charges + made all necessary arrangements. In the afternoon went + got a coffin at the Quarter Masters'. Got to camp at 3 P.M. tired as I could ask to be. We have raised nearly all the money needed to defray the expenses.

Thursday April 14th

Pleasant. No news of importance today. Recieved a letter from home + one from Uncle Hermon Reed. Wrote a letter home.

Friday April 15th

Was detailed this morning to go away on duty. Serg't Graham commanding squad. We went to the "Rest" + got 33 men for the 12th P.A. Cav + took them to Head Quarters + recieved orders to take them to Cumberland Md. Head Quarters the department of Western V.A. Took the 11.A.M. boat for Washington + when we got there the Serg't sent me after transportation which I got without trouble. We left Washington at 3 P.M. + got to Washington Junction at 4 ½ P.M. + had to wait until 9 ½ P.M. for a train going west when we got aboard + left for Cumberland. I soon went to sleep + did not hear or see anything until I awoke at 4 A.M.

Saturday April 16th

It was raining very hard. We got to Cumberland about 9 A.M. + soon disposed of our men + at 9½ A.M. we were on our way back to Washington + had some chance to see a part of the country. Cumberland is a very nice little city I should judge from what I saw of it. The country from Cumberland to Martinsburg is rather rough + cut to pieces by small streams. Martinsburg shows that there has been war around it. A great part of the R.R. + public buildings were burned ~~xx~~ in /63. From Martinsburg to Harpers Ferry is a splendid country + it is well cultivated. It is my choice of all the south I have ever seen. Of Harpers Ferry I shall write but little. The beauty of the place is marred by the ruins of the Government buildings. The natural scenery is splendid + the fortifications on M.d. heights to me seem impregnable. Between Harper's Ferry + Frederick Junction is a very fine country. There are several fine villages between Frederick Junction + Washington Junction. Monrovia, Merrittsville, + Ellicott's Mills are the largest ones. We got to Washington at 11 P.M. + went to a Soldiers lodging house + stayed all night +

Sunday April 17th

we were on our way to camp. Got breakfast + took the 8 A.M. boat for Alexandria + got in camp at 9. A.M. It was rainy in the morning but cleared off warm + pleasant. I wrote to Uncle Hermon Reed. Spent the day writing + reading. It has been a beautiful day + since I got into camp has seemed more like sunday than any day I have seen in a long time.

Monday April 18th

A beautiful day! I went down town a little while. Recieved a letter from home + answered it. All well at home yet. Was a little surprised by seeing Lieut S. B. Landon come into camp, was glad of course to see some one that I knew. There is no news of importance I believe. The army is expected to move soon I believe.

Tuesday April 19th 1864

Nothing new today. Weather pleasant. Our men than came from the front today said that the pontoons were moving toward the Rapidan + I guess there will be hot work soon.

Wednesday April 20th

Was detailed this morning to go to Camp Distribution + left camp at 10 ½ A. M. Left Alexandria at 12N + after we started found out that we had to go to Fort Ethan Allen. We got there at 5 ½ P.M. + soon started back. Rode a part of the way in a hack + made up our minds to stay on Mason's Island + at 7 P.M. we found ourselves there. I went to C^o "F's" barrack to stay. I am rather tired tonight as we have marched 16 miles since noon.

Thursday April 21st

Left Mason's Island at 7 A.M. + got to the Pier at the foot of 6th Street Washington just too late for the 8 A.M. boat + had to wait until 10 A.M. Got to camp at 11A.M. The news from the west is good. Gen Banks was driven back on the Red River but in turn defeated the rebs + took 2000 prisoners. I recieved a letter from home tonight + answered it. All well at home. The weather is beautiful as heart could wish.

Friday April 22^d

What a glorious day this is. I never saw more beautiful weather. Was detailed at noon to report to Gen Briggs Head Quarters with eight guards. When I got there found that I had to go to Camp Distribution, Forts Corcoran + Ethan Allen. Went to the "Rest" + took out 28 men + started + after a march of 20 miles in six hours found myself on Mason's Island to stay all night. George Reed got back from Florida today looking + feeling fine.

Saturday April 23^d

A beautiful day. We left Mason's Island at 7 A.M. + got to camp at 9 A.M. We heard that the camp for Maryland recruits was to be broken up + the Cos of the 109th to leave. Heard that there was to be General Inspection tomorrow + cleaned my gun + prepared for it.

Sunday April 24th

Very warm. The Review + inspection went off well. Col Tracy was present. It is expected that our Reg't will join the 5th Corps soon for active service in the Army of the Potomac. We certainly cannot complain for we have seen rather easy times since we came out + I am willing to bear my part. Willing to trust my life in the hands of Him who has protected me so far in life. O how much I need His assisting grace to make me better. Well the day has passed away + it has seemed very little like the holy sabbath. Troops + wagon trains have been passing all day + even now as I write I can hear the strains of martial music wafted along on the evening air. O when will the dread song of war be changed to one of joy, when our bleeding suffering country shall repose in the arms of Peace + joy + gladness fill the hearts of the weary war worn soldiers + send sunshine into the homes that war has desolated but Peace has brought its loved ones back again. Methinks as I sit here I can almost see my home see my Brother + Sisters See that Mother who prayed for her son when he was about to leave the old home roof for the tented field. Aye + that prayer is recorded + will ever be as the bright sunshine to cheer me on life's dark way, throw its pure influence around me when temptation comes. And again I hear a kind Father's voice, but tis only for a moment for I look around me + see the same scene that has greeted my sight for long months. Well another volume of this poor life of mine, or what I can write of it is nearly filled + I shall have to begin a new one The past six months have been very pleasant ones to me, although I have seen hard work + some hard times, but it is all in our three years + we will make the best of it. The men are in good spirits tonight or act as though they were. Perhaps their ardor will be ~~cool~~ cooled before long. But I will bid my friends good night + so ends

The

4th Vol

Of my Diary as a soldier.

James B Reed

James B Reed

End Of

Vol 4th

James B Reed's Diary

Camp Briggs

Near Alexandria, Va.

April 24th/64