

## Civil War Memoirs of William G. Pirtle

### **Biographical Note**

William George Pirtle was born on August 5, 1832 in St. Francois County, Missouri, the son of John A. and Mary B. Pirtle. The family later moved to Water Valley, Graves County, Kentucky. William, a farmer, married Sarah (Sally) Ann Webb. They had 4 children. He enlisted in the 7<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Infantry Regiment, C.S.A., on September 12, 1861 and was promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant on September 19, 1862. He received a field promotion to captain and put in command of Company A on March 25, 1864. He was paroled on May 16, 1865 and returned to Water Valley, Ky where he resumed farming. In 1907 he wrote the memoirs describing his service. He died in Water Valley on September 23, 1911 at the age of 77.

## Preface

In the following pages I have given to the best of my present recollection, my personal experience, some observations, some items of history of the cause of the Great war between the states, known as the war of the sixtys, begining in 1861 and ending 1865.

A large portion of the four years is very vivid to my mind to day, seems as if it was only yestarday. but there are times, that have sliped my memory intirely, all is blank and dark.

I have endeavored to state facts as I saw them, and let the reader come to his own conclusions.

I have made but few criticisims of any ones actions, have not vilified or abused any one, not even the federals for their distruction of property, for I know that war is horable, and in all probability, the confederates would have been just as destructive under simalar circumstances.

I have applied the term yankee to the federals, as we Jonnes knew them in fighting time, and not through any mallace or hatred. All old veterans of either side have due respect for every man that is intitled to be called a veteran.

W. G Pirtle  
Watervalley Ky

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On the move again first to Macon. Then to the Country. Back to macon. Thence to Starkville. On conscrip service until March 1864.

#### Chapter 42

In Starkville on conscrip service. Easy time even for bumproofs. Col. Bill Forest and Captain have a rangle over a pistol. Indian ball game. Retreat to Columbus.

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#### Chapter 44

Glad to meet home folks. Talked almost the balance of night. On to Paducah next day. Fight at Paducah. Lose Captain and 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. Back to Mayfield next day. Disbanded for ten days. General Forest [Forrest] takes Tennessee brigade and goes to Fort Pillow on River.

#### Chapter 45

All reunited and riding over the country.

#### Chapter 46

In camp at Tupelo Miss. Relieved of direct command of company. And Battle of Brice's Cross Roads

#### Chapter 47

Returned to Tupelo, and encamped for two weeks.

#### Chapter 48

General Smith equipping an army in Memphis, to make another raid south. Off on scout

and picket duty in front of Smith.

Chapter 49

Heading off the yanks at Pontotoc. Anticipating fight. Yanks move east, we follow. Battle at old Harisburg.

Chapter 50

Second day around Tupelo, and old Harisburg. My horse dies.

Chapter 51

July 16<sup>th</sup>. Burying the dead. Sending wounded to hospital. Moving to where corn was more plentiful. Going after another horse.

Chapter 52

General Forest [Forrest]'s Middle Tennessee raid in September.

Chapter 53

On south side Tennessee river. Moving down to Fort Hindman. Capturing steamboat loaded with army supplies. Going home.

Chapter 54

At and about home for a week. Returned to command in Henderson county. and on to Tuscumbia Ala.

Chapter 55

Crossing Tennessee river in front of Hoods army, and fighting the yanks every day all the way to, and all night at Columbia. One yank slipped close to me and passed a bullet between my arm and body.

Chapter 56

From Columbia moved on to Springhill. charged the yanks down a hill next day on Franklin. Had the fight 30<sup>th</sup> November 1864.

Chapter 57

Some idea of battle of Franklin. then on to blockhouse No. 2 near Nashville. Capturing train.

Chapter 58

Moving engine to the road. Moving on Murfreesboro. Falling in creek. Found kinfolks. General Buford repulsed with loss. Then to Lebanon. Down to Hermitage where we remained till the Battle of Nashville.

Chapter 59

Battle of Nashville two days. Hood retreating. We get between Hood and federals, and

there remained fighting the yanks every two or three miles, to Columbia.

#### Chapter 60

Horse shoeing and then moving on toward Tennessee river. Fighting the yanks daily. Some stirring incidents. Cross river after night. Then into the mud.

#### Chapter 61

Moved on to Corinth Miss. Thence down the rail road south to where corn was more plentiful, and so continued til March.

#### Chapter 62

Consolidation of brigade, regments and companys. Twenty line officers relieved and ordered to report to General Forest [Forrest] at Westpoint.

#### Chapter 63

At Westpoint waiting for General Forest [Forrest] to return. Finally our patience wore out. discussed the history of the balance of the war. Mounted to ride home to Ky.

#### Chapter 64

On the road for Ky. Had to stop in Tennessee. The last hundred miles by myself. Had high water to cross. Reached home at midnight. Found wife looking for me.

#### Chapter 65

At home with wife and babies. Enjoying my freedom. After General Lee had surrendered went to Paducah and surrendered to Provost. Then to making crop of corn. Got another parole in June.



*Note: Portions of the first eleven chapters have been destroyed, so the following parts of those chapters are from remnants of the manuscript.*

#### Chapter 1.

#### **Spring of 1860, party nomination for president. Election of Abraham Lincoln.**

.....

And here is where bullheadedness began. If the parties opposed to the Lincoln platform would have agreed on one man, they could have elected him easily, as the three parties polled more than three fourths of a million more votes than Lincoln did. But every man would go for his man, or rather his own way.

So when the returns of the election in November was heard from, it turned out that Lincoln was elected by a safe plurality. Excitement became intense, and increased every day in the south as the idea of the loss of their property in slaves did not set well.

#### Chapter 2

#### **Desolution of the union. Confederate states organized.**

In December the excitement was more intense than ever. South Carolina passed a resolution withdrawing from the union December 20 1860. Mississippi January 9 1861. Alabama January 11. Florida January 17 1861. Georgia January 20. Louisiana January 26. Texas February 1 1861.

These states met in convention at Montgomery [Montgomery] Alabama, about the 1<sup>st</sup> of February and in fifteen days had formed a general government and called it the Confederate States of America, and inaugurated Jefferson Davis of Mississippi President. Some time in the spring North Carolina, Tennessee, Missouri, Virginia and parts of Kentucky passed acts of secession and were admitted to the Confederate States of America.

Anticipating trouble with the United States war minister began at once to prepare.....

The surrender of fort Sumpter [Sumter] was demanded but Major Anderson who was in command defied the order, but evacuated fort Moultrie [Moultrie] spiking the guns, and proceeded to make all the defence he could from fort Sumpter.

#### Chapter 3

#### **First guns of the war.**

Major Anderson having refused to surrender the forts, General Beauregard proceeded to mount and man some guns on the shore in range of fort Sumpter and on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April fired the first gun of the war. And continued two days when a white flag was seen to wave over the fort, the fort having caught on fire.

#### Chapter 4

#### **Kentucky legislature of 1860-61**

The state legislature of 1860-61 declared neutrality in Kentucky and at the same time passed a bill providing for a state guard.....

## Chapter 5

### **Organised company state guards**

Some time in the spring of 1861 quite a number of us in and about Feliciana in Graves county Ky., organized a company under the laws of the state, and proceeded to drilling which we kept up all summer. We had elected Rev. J. G. Pirtle captain, J. A. Collins 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, cannot now name the balance of the officers.....

## Chapter 6

### **Company off for war**

One evening, a little in september an engine passed down the rail road from Paducah, whistleing danger signals continually and running at a rapid speed. I was at home three miles distance. I could not be still, ... mounted a horse and to the station (in watervaley) I rode. I knew something was wrong some where.

Quite a number of persons had gathered before I did, all highly excited. Some one had threw off a message saying that the yanks were landing in the city. We all went home that evening with sad hearts. The next Saturday was drill day for the company quite a crowd of people collected in town, but little drilling though lots of talk as to what to do. We learned that the C.S.A. army was moving from Union City to Columbus.

The final decision was that the company start to Columbus the next Tuesday. Tuesday morning came and with it a multiplicity of people all feeling great interest in the company and desireous of seeing them off. As no one seemed to know much about moving an army we were late getting into line on the road. But by eleven Oclock all were ready to move.....

Moved out and on for three or four miles, halted for dinner and then on again, was a great amasement to the people along the road, especially in Clinton. Reached Obion bridge about sundown, went into camp on the north side of the creek.

Here I had my first experience in guard duty. About dark I was conducted up the creek some two or three hundred yards and instructed to keep a sharp lookout and report if anything took place that I did not understand.

This was a very lonesome place and if it had not been for the hoot owls I do not know that I could have stayed awake.

After a long time, it seemed most a day, a relief came, went back to camp and slept the balance of the night. The boys having hooped and yelled all day were exausted so they slept sound all night.

Next morning after a wonderful chauco of nois and hurraw, we got into line and on the move for Columbus, five miles off, and reached [there] in due time. Our Captain reported to General Pillow. The General assign him to a camping ground down on the river near the depot and gave him an order on quartermaster for camp equipage, also on comisary for food.

## Chapter 7

### **Inlisting for one year Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> 1861. Organized company, other companys**

This morning (Sept. 12, 1861) General Pillow sent a recruiting officer down to

our camp, lined us up and swore about sixty of us in to the C.S.A. service, for one year if not sooner discharged.

And while in line, the officer proceeded to organise us into a company by holding an election for officers which resulted in electing, Rev. J. G. Pirtle Captain. J.A. Collins 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. A. D. Collins 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. Thomas Burnett 3<sup>rd</sup> Lieutenant. George Wilson Orderly Sergeant. As to who the balance of non-commissioned officers I do not remember except Moody [?] 1<sup>st</sup> Corporal and myself.....sergeant.....

In a few days other companys began coming in so that in about a week, we had eight companys present, ours from Feliciana next one from Clinton, then two more from Graves County, one from Fulton County, and one from Marshal County.

Those companys were all camped near each other but in no regular order. But few of them knew any thing about how to drill except ours, it had been drilling all summer, and was pretty well up on that line, and many were the jers we hurled at the awquard squad, but they soon became our equals.

## Chapter 8

### **Sent out to Camp Burnett [in Hickman County, near Clinton]. Organized regiment.**

After laying in camp for perhaps two weeks General Pillow sent us out scouting....miles near Clinton, under the command of Captain Wickliff, [Charles Anderson Wickliffe](who was a West Point Graduate and had brought the third company to camp) for the purpose of recruiting and organiseing a regiment and such as were good.

Had a fine field to drill in, had not been cultivated that summer. Company drill every day and sometimes regimental drill, got in many recruits. Captain Wickliff [Wickliffe] taught us many things, that we had not learned previous. Continued recruiting and driling, until about the last of October.

## Chapter 9

### **Regiment organised**

Toward the last of October General ... sent us an order that he .... reorganized. .... I would say there were men to fill most every office from sergeant up to Colonel. It was the understanding that every officer that offered himself as a candadate for a higher office than that he held, must resign the one he then held.

Our captain offered as a candadate for Major, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant offered for Captain, Orderly Sergeant offered for 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant and I concluded I wanted to be Orderly sergeant and so offered.

Election day came and recruiting officer with it, and voting began by voting for Colonel first then one at a time. The regimental officers elected were as follows Charles Wickliff [Wickliffe] Captain 3<sup>rd</sup> Company, Colonel ... Lannon [William D. Lannon] Captain 2<sup>nd</sup> Company Lt Col ....

Now after this was all over our company had to elect captain, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant and Orderly sergeant, which resulted in electing the same men back to their former places, which left me out as I did not offer for my old place again. I served as a private soldier for about a year, except a little while that I filled the place of sergeant Major. Col. Wickliff [Wickliffe] appointed Tom Burnett our 3<sup>rd</sup> Lt. Agatant.

And now to drilling lively for some days, perhaps a week and by this time learned that we were 7th Ky. regiment.

## Chapter 10

### **Battle of Belmont [Belmont, MO].**

On the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> of November about sunup .... to hear firing in the direction of Columbus, .... it became heavier .... knew that a fight was on .... but how or where we could not determine.

Col Wickliff [Wickliffe] ordered all camp equipage loaded on wagons, and started them off south west. Called the men in line on the parade ground. Sent courier after courier to General Polk asking what to do, but all the word he could get was to stand fast and keep a good watch for the enemy.

All was wonderful to us, the roar of musketry, and belching of big guns, O how wonderful, perhaps not a man in the whole regiment had ever heard any thing of the kind before.

We stood in line all day, listening to the firing as long as it lasted until one or two O'clock in the afternoon.

Between ... and dark the Colonel ... orders to move his regiment ... Columbus that night. So off we went in light marching order as we had sent every thing off not reserving any thing, not even a blanket, had no dinner or any thing for supper. Arrived on top of the hill near midnight, found some brush and logs that answered to build fires, did the best we could the balance of the night, and by morning was concluding that a soldier's fare was hard, nothing to eat since the morning before and no prospect that we could see for any thing soon. We now learned the fight was on the other side of the river. General Grant had come down the river from Cairo [Cairo] Illinois, with six or eight thousand men, to attack one lone Arkansas regiment .... But the .... General Polk, Pillow, and Cheatam [Benjamin Franklin Cheatham, of Tennessee] soon crossed a heavy force over the river in time to save Col Tappan and his regiment from capture and inflict a heavy loss on General Grant, with but little loss to themselves.

## Chapter 11

### **In camp again at Columbus.**

Nov 8<sup>th</sup>. This .... our wagon train came in, we now had something to do, pitch our tents and prepare dinner, we had not moved often enough to be expert in pitching tents, but we soon had them up all right, while some went to cooking and had dinner ready in a little while, and can assure you, we were experts in hiding it, as not one of us had eat a bite for about thirty hours. Before the war closed we did not complain at going two nights and the day between with nothing to eat. Stayed here a few days when we were sent down in the bottom near the foot of the hill where it was wet and sloshy as it had been raining a good deal recently. I think it was just after noon of the second day of our camp on the hill the gun called the lady Polk exploded. .... General Polk was sitting on his horse near the gun when fired, and was hurt to the extent that he had to be carried to his quarters on a litter. [*The "Lady Polk" was an eight-ton rifled gun capable of firing 128-pound projectiles for long distances.*] Several of the Gunners were killed. It was said the

rim of balls were a fraction too large and had to be filed down to load them while the gun was cold, but frequent shots expanded it so that the balls could be loaded without filing down, and was left loaded with an unfired shot at the end of the fight and in two days time cooled off and contracted so that the shot was as solid with as if a part of the gun itself. I saw the gun soon [after it was] fired..... The gun was split quartering across the breech exposing to view the butt of the ball.

Remained in camp under the hill for some weeks, very wet and disagreeable place. One morning while here some hours before day a heavy lumbering sound was heard in the distance, and to avoid a surprise, the whole army was called up and into line, and here we stood until up in the morning, got cold and hungry, General Pillow came around and thanked us very kindly for being so prompt in getting into line and waiting so patiently, and we might then break ranks, prepare and eat breakfast which order we were not slow to obey.

## Chapter 12

### **On police duty. Got adrift on river. Contraband molasses.**

About the first of December Col Wickliff [Wickliffe] was appointed Provost or chief of police. he took his regiment for police duties and moved us up on foot of hill just under the fort, a very good place. In a day or two was instructed that we could build pole cabins and that we could find plenty of cotton wood just the proper size two miles up the river, and there were some flat boats that we could use to bring them down to the landing.

Went to work with a vim. There was an eddy that reached to the cotton wood, so that it was easy getting our boat up the river, but hard pulling it down to the landing.

One evening after getting our flat well loaded, some twenty of us after quite a quantity of talk and philosophy decided to turn the boat loose in the eddy and float down to the landing.

Our flat followed our philosophy to the head of the eddy and turned out into the river all right. But in place of turning down the river with eddy, it seem to gain in speed and kept square across until it reached the middle of the river, then turned down and headed directly for a gun boat that was anchored near a mile below. By this time we knew our philosophy was vain and vexation of spirit.

We kept heading for the gun boat and hit [it] we took it center (we had turned cross ways) and hung there until gun boat men pushed us off then down the river we floated, (now about sun down) splitting the river in the middle. By the time it was getting dark we [were] almost out of sight of [the] landing. We were becoming wonderfully dejected as we had no way of landing the flat. About this time saw a steamboat back off from the landing heading down the river, hope revived and joking began lively. But when within about a mile of us [it] turned off as near the shore as it dared to and passed on by. Now we lost all hope of getting back to our camp soon.

But when the steam boat had passed a half mile below us, [and we] discovered that it was turning round, hope began to revive and by the time the boat had turned and heading directly for us, we were jubilant.

Steam boat came along side and tied us on, and now back to town they towed us, landing just at the right place.

This little incident (if you call it little) served for jokes and conversation for quite a while. Remained on police duty until about the first of February, perhaps one third of regiment was detailed every morning, for guard and other duties for the next twenty four hours.

One night Company A was called into line about eight O'clock marched down to the river boarded a steamboat pulled out down stream, took the chuit back of wolf island, landed six or eight miles from town, marched up the bank and here we found a large quantity of molases perhaps five hundred barrels, proceeded to load all on board of boat and got back to camp after day light. The officer in charge gave us a barrel that we appreciated.

While here in this camp we done well, dry ground good warm cabins and had the fat of the land to live on.

### Chapter 13

#### **Relieved of police duty. Evacuation of Columbus. In camp at Humbolt Tennessee. In camp at Corinth Miss. Train wrect in the dark. Back to Bethel again.**

About the first of February we were relieved of police duty, and then to drilling again which we kept up until near the last of the month, when we were ordered to cook rations, and prepare to go to fort Donalson [Donelson] on Cumberland river. General Grant was approaching the fort with a large army. We made all preperations that we could expecting to start next morning, thus we continued from day to day for several days. All the word we got was to keep ready to move at a moments notice. During this delay some of the boys thretened to run away and go without orders.

While waiting in suspence, one night was awakened by a heavy lumbering nois and when day light came, could see that every thing in fort was being run down the bluff near the river and all loaded on steamboats.

We were troubled, could not understand the movement, but by noon learned that fort donalson [Donelson] had surrendered, and evacuation of Columbus had began.

Every thing was in great commotion, soldiers moving in every direction. This hubbub continued several days.

March 1<sup>st</sup> 1862 about noon General Cheatam [Benjamin Franklin Cheatham] got his division in column on the road, and at this time could see smoke in every direction, every thing was being burned that we could not carry with us. General Cheatam [Cheatham] was last in moving out, the other portion of the army had left by rail and river previous to our gettin into column. Moved out to Camp Burnett that evenin, biveoaced for the night.

Next morning moved on through Clinton, thence to Moscow and on to Cace [Cayce] Station, where we stoped for the night, making twelve miles. no marching orders next morning, lay in camp all day until dark, when a train of flat cars backed up from Union City which our regiment boarded and pulled south. March 4<sup>th</sup> arived here at Humbolt about day light this morning, having been about eleven hours coming less than fifty miles. How will that compare with the slow train in Arkansaw.

Our wagon train came in this morning with camp equipage, and by noon had all tents up, and was fixed for doing fine, but by night it was raining, the ground being flat

and soon covered with water, it continued to rain almost incessantly while we stayed in this camp. We could not do any thing but sit in our [tents] and listen to the boom of cannon at Island No 10, some thirty miles off. No deficit in rations while here.

On Sunday morning mounted a train at Humbolt, (after staying there near a week) and pulled out down the M & O rail road [Mobile and Ohio Railroad]. Bright sun shiny morning the first we had since leaving Columbus.

At every house within sight of the road ladies would show themselves waving handkerchiefs, we would answer by yelling to that extent that by the time we arrived at Bethel [Tennessee] near the middle of the evening, we were hoarse to more than speak to each other.

Having brought our camp equipage with us had tents up and ground cleaned off before night. We done well in this camp, being a little sloping water would soon run off.

When we had been at Bethel about a week, were called up near midnight, ordered to strike tents and load all camp equipage on wagons, march down to the rail road and board a train that was there waiting for us, this done in less than an hour and in a short time was pulling south again.

This was the fourth move from Columbus Ky. and every time south, when we got to the train the car assigned to our company was wonderfully crowded, so I walked back two or three cars found one open with nothing but comasaries, in I got, found plenty of floor space to make a pallet and was soon asleep again.

Hardly knew when the train started but then we were lumbering along when [we] ran into a train that was a head of us, it having stoped from some cause. The engine of our train was behind pushing.

The colision turned quite a number of our cars off the track, one loaded with Headquarter horses, fourteen in all and two men, killed seven of the horses crippled the others so that none were of any service one of the men got a foot mashed so that he used crutches for a time, the other man got a hand mashed up so he had to carry it in a sling for a week or two.

The cars turned off [the track] were either empties or loaded with comisaries, no men on them. I was asleep when the colision took place, and my first thought was, this is the roughest road out, but I soon discovered the train was standing still. I got up went to the door, and heard Col. Lannon [LtCol. William Lannon] caling the men to get off, there is an other train close behind and will run into us. I gathered my gun and blanket jumped down off the car and walked toward where the men were keeping up a terable hubbub of nois. I did not know what was the trouble it was dark as midnight with light rain falling, there seemed to be little standing room. Seeing a bank that looked to be six or eight feet high, thought of climbing it, stept near to it and was reaching out my hand to catch the bank in order to climb, but the bank seemed to reced, when kersouse went some man by my side into water. I stratened up with dificulty and O how glad I was, that it was the other fellow got the ducking. day light came. we could see what the damage was. went to work to clear the track. by middle of evening had every thing in shape so that [we] could move on down to Corinth [Mississippi].

Our wagon train drove up about the time that we arrived and in a little time had cooking going on as we had not had any thing to eat since supper the evening before.

Soon had our tents up and in good shape, clear pleasant sunshiny weather all the time we stayed here. While here I was appointed what we called beef sergeant. my business was to get company rations from comisary and divide [it] among the messes, which releived me of guard and fateage duties.

There was one draw back while here, that was company F had body lice among them, and they being next to us created some uneasyness among the boys, and the word was keep away from company F they had body lice.

But all such dreads soon vanished, as there was but few if any in the whole army but that had more or less experience with grey backs.

One incident perhaps worth relating. Our Captain had a negro boy to wait on him called Wash and [it] was Wash's custom to go in his little tent after breakfast was over lay down and go to sleep. One morning the boys wanted to cut a tree that stood near, and when it fell, fell the opposite way from what was expected, and down it came on Wash's tent, but being forked one fork fell each side of Wash so as to not strike or hurt him, but was worst scard negro when the tree was lifted off and the tent raised so he could get out.

Remained at Corinth camp near a week, when we were ordered back to Bethel [Bethel, TN, about 25 miles north of Corinth], boarded a train and made the trip without any misshap. Had a good camp ground and all pleasant, remained here a few days.

On Thursday before the first Sunday in April General Cheatam [Cheatham] came around to inspect us, was called in line and the General inspected every man individually, his clothing and particularly his gun and cartrage box. if there was any deficiency, was instructed to make repairs and be sure to have fourty rounds of cartrages in our boxes. Next morning was ordered to draw and cook three days rations and be ready to move by noon.

#### Chapter 14

##### **Off for Shilo battle field.**

Fryday evening the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1862, was called into line with knap sacks, full of clothing strapped to our backs or rather shoulders, haver sack with three days rations hung to our waist with fourty rounds of cartridges and a bayonet scarboard attached with bayonet in it, two blankets rolled the long way thrown over one shoulder and brought together under the other arm and tyed, musket at right shoulder shift arms, canteen hung on one shoulder by a strap, and in addition to this some have a pair of shoes or boots dangling around them. If you are good at imagination you can draw an idea how a full fledged and well equiped soldier looked on the march. About the middle of the evening the command forward march was given, and off we moved, took Purday [Purdy, TN, a few miles east of Bethel] road., and stoped for the night on. top of a hill west of town.

Wagons came up with a few tents and. flyes, proceeded to pitch them, and eat supper, and then. to talking about what was coming. We were satisfied that a fight was on hand soon, but where or when. we did not know. Soldiers are not expected. to know any thing except as instructed. by orders from headquarters.

All our talk was speculation of course. About the time we were fixing for sleep could see almost constant lightning in the west and, in little while here came a rush of wind and, in a few minutes a down pour of rain, and as we had not driven the stakes well



down, so down came our tents and great was the wetting we got. But after rain was over resett our tent and would have done well, but we were wet, blankets and. all and fire all out. Pretty rough time but then we slept some.

April the 5th. Called up and into column some hours before day, started down the hill, many of the boys sliped into the ditches on either side of the road.

Finally got down the hill crossed a valley then on through town some distance, halted and, stood there until sun up. And now by a little after sun up the clouds had all passed away, the sun shining bright and. pleasant.

After a time we moved out on the Pitsburg [Pittsburg Landing, TN] road had not gone more than a mile, when Col. Wickliff [Wickliffe] ordered what we might call a side guard detailed, it fell to my turn, and when collected at the head of the regiment Col Wickliff [Wickliffe] instructed the Captain to deploy his men so as to cover the regiment and march two hundred yards on the left, and, keep even with the regiment.

This was a hard days march, the road was on a ridge mostly, and of course we had many hollows to cross, hills to climb brush and. logs to get through and over the best we could, occasionally the road would turn to the left then we could. get a cut off and rest a little but when the road turned to the right would have to double quick for quite a distance. But we made it through all right, without the loss of a man.

About sun down reached the ground assigned us to bivouac for the night, a nice level place with good water near by. Many of the boys were limping around wonderfully with sore feet.

## Chapter 15

### **Shilo battle. First day.**

After eating Supper and discussing the situation, all thought fight soon, but being tired made our pallets and soon all became still and quiet.

April 6th 1862 sunday morning. Between daylight and sunup we were called into line by companys, then ordered. into solid column. Col Wickliff [Wickliffe] then read us a order from General Johnson. [Albert Sidney Johnston] assuring us of fight that day.

Picket firing had began some hours preveous and by this time was becomeing pretty constant. Before starting for the front were ordered to strip our selves of every thing that could. be spared for the day this lightened us wonderfully.

Then off to the front, where by this time firing was getting to be wonderful as we thought. Moved in direction of the firing a mile or more at ordinary quick step, and by this time our front line had attacked the yanks in earnest and such a roar of muskets and field guns I never heard before or since.

The firing line was perhaps a mile and a half long, may have been two miles, and we double quicking from one end to the other getting nearer the front all the time.

This heavy constant firing lasted some three hours or more when it eased off to some extent, and now double quicking came in earnest on our part. By this time the yanks had been driven back a mile and some places along the line perhaps two miles.

Our regiment was placed in the third line and when the first line attacked the yanks we were about a mile in the rear, this is what made it hard on us in getting to the front, if we could have moved directly forward would have gained the front long before we did.

Towards the last we were moving north along a ridge towards a hill where there was a yankee battery could see the hill with guns blazing away at us, but about the time we got in range we turned square to the right down a long slope, shells exploding unpleasantly near, and just as the head of the column was crossing a branch one shell exploded just over their heads, one piece of it hit Captain Pirtle on the foot so he could go no farther. Dr Clardy [T. F. Clardy, Surgeon] stoped to dress the wound, then left a man to take care of him, and was soon up with the regiment again..

We moved on up the hill on the east side of the branch through a black jack thicket, and when we were fairly on top of this hill, we formed our first line of battle by forward into line on the right, a very difficult movement owing to the density of the woods, we then moved forward a hundred yards, perhaps two hundred, to top of next hill, looking down near the branch some two or three hundred yards from us could see a column of yanks moving to our right in. a run.

We about faced marched back out of their sight then left faced and double quicked paralel with the column of yanks for near a mile, where we ran on General Cheatam [Cheatham] with a battery of six or eight guns, he soon got them lined up and began shooting at the yankee battery across an old field.

The yankee battery was some half mile or more from us. And here we had an artilery dual that lasted quite a while perhaps an hour. During this dual the yanks shot one of our guns down and killed one horse.

The regiment was ordered to lay down behind some logs and trees that was just out side of the field the guns were shooting across, and here we had time for reflection although the yankee shells were exploding all around and over us, but no body got hurt.

It was now near noon and to think about what we had seen and heard during the morning, O what horrors and destruction, hundreds of dead men and many wounded mangled in every conceivable way that you could think of, some had lost a leg others an arm some shot through the head still living some shot through the body. O horable. At one place saw six or eight men dead almost in a pile, some were laying across some others, one man had lost his head and was laying on his gun, (cannon) these last were yankees. Then camps all deserted quartermaster and comisary stores strewn in every direction many dead horses and some crippled so that they were floundering around at a terable rate.

After thinking it all over concluded that war is horable, and this conclusion I have never had occasion to abate in the least.

Funny things will some times be said among death and destruction. During the artilery dual one of the horses was shot so that a portion of his entrails were dangling almost to the ground as he ran off. Some one remarked. O what a pity to ruin so fine a horse.

After a time which seemed long to me, General Cheatam [Cheatham] concluded he was doing no good, or wanted to do better, mounted his horse rode out in front of the regiment, called attention, all were on their feet in an instant, then said I want that yankee battery follow me.

We moved forward through the trees and over the logs the best we could, and when we got in the field moved in a run, General Cheatam [Cheatham] in a gallop and we

keeping up with him, and when we struck a run we raised the most deafning yell that I have ever heard and on we went.

Had not gone more than fifty yards when met bullits by the thousands, that knocked many of our boys down, I was on the left of the company and tried to keep a few steps in advance, could see the whole company at one sight. Saw many of the boys fall some of them killed.

When we had gone perhaps two hundred yard or more Captain Sherrel [L. G. Sherrill] of Co. F who was on my left fell just in front and so near me that I had to jump over him; he was shot in the right leg and limped the ballance of his life.

After passing the Captain I kept strate forward following General Cheatham [Cheatham], he still in a gallop, waving his cap and heading directly for the battery. I [was] not more than twenty yards behind him when I met a bullet that passed through my right shoulder knocking me down.

This ended my part in the battle.

How long I lay where knocked down I cannot say but when I began to look for company General and regiment, not a man could I see any where, except some dead and wounded. I got up started to the rear and in a few moments here came bullets (it seemed to me) by the hundreds all passing very close to me, this started me in a run, saw a tree to my right made for it, but by the time I got to the tree some five or six men had taken shelter behind it, so there was no room for me, then turned more to the left thought of gaining the woods but when near saw a log, jumped over and down I droped behind it, and now I felt safe. Would say here that a hundred men all shooting at one lone man will most assuredly start a hustle out of him if there is any get up in him.

Lay behind that log until the fireing near by ceased and by this time I was getting sick from the loss of blood, my sholder was paining severely, the wounded had all been taken care of. By some means the infirmery corps had missed me, the dead were laying where they fell.

I got lonesome, got up and started for the rear again, the fireing near by had ceased entirely. In going back passed where our battery was during the dual, and here came General Cheatham [Cheatham] on the horse he rode in the charge and he said I see you got wounded, I got wounded, too and moved on at a brisk trot. I moved on to the rear soon met Dr Ben Adams of the Louisiana regiment who I knew some years previous. We recognized each other, he examined my wound, first concluded that the bullet was still in my shoulder but found where it had come out at edge of shoulder blade. Started to the rear again, the best I could judge. As to how I got back to where we started from that morning I know but little about but then I got there all the same. I remember meeting Bob Browder he was shot in one hand, also remember stoping at or seeing a field hospital, but do not remember recognizing any one, but O the mangled. and dieing. I think in all probability that if I had not met Bob I would have lay in the woods that night by myself without anything to eat, which would have gone a long ways toward winding up my carear so far as this world is conserved, but then thanks to a kind providence I revived and am still alive and able to get up and git, though that has been more than forty five years gone by.

I got back to where we had bivoucked the night before where we started from that

morning, quite a number of the boys had got there before I did, but the first thing I did was to hunt up my have sack found it and eat what I could though but little, I was to sick to eat much, but the little I eat soon revived me greatly.

And now to talking about the days carnage death and destruction. We were all elated over the results of the days work, although we had lost good men. And as the boys kept coming in all had something new to tell.

Perhaps when the sun was an hour high here came a long column of yankee prisoners, the very men that had done us so much hurt. This raised our elated spirits so that we almost forgot that we were suffering with pain from our wounds.

There was about three thousand of those prisoners, and would say that it appeared to us that the whole yankee army had surrendered, and we could not hear a gun anywhere. You may be assured we were elated to highest pitch.

One an other of the boys kept comin in until after dark all bringing something new to tell.

But after a time our tired nature had to have rest, and such of us that could made pallets lay down to sleep and rest and all soon became quiet except the moans of the wounded, and in the distance could hear some heavy guns at intervals.

## Chapter 16

### **Monday second day at Shilo.**

Monday April 7th. Had a big rain last night, our ground being flat was covered three to six inches with water, built seats with knap sacks and blankets, and as not more than half the boys had returned, had two or more knap sacks apiece.

Col Wickliff [Wickliffe] returned to the camp some time in the night, and as soon as good light collected all the boys that was able to go to the front and off he went, leaving the wounded to take care of themselves the best they could. The rain had ceased and the water on the ground had sank.

Here we lay all day with no attention from the doctor or he had not returned to camp. This was a cold cloudy day we were becoming dejected to some extent, only a few of us was able to wait on ourselves, so the more severely hurt men got but little if any attension through the day. Neither could hear any thing from the front, as there was none returning.

Late in the evening Col Lannon [LtCol. William Lannom] came in with a few men and instructions that a retreat had. been ordered. O what sad news, we had supposed that every thing was going our way as it had yestarday.

John Hughes our Companys faithful teamster was present and began to prepare his wagon to take as many as posable floored his wagon bed five or six blankets deep then spread his sheet over the bows, and now about ten of us got in and off we drove for Corinth Mississippi.

We had not gone far when it began to rain and continued nearly till night, but John had a good wagon sheet that kept us dry, and. sheltered us from the cold wind.

Arrived at Corinth late Tuesday evening, found our tents all there and set up in good shape, they having been sent there from Bethel station by the wagon train.

But few, except the wounded that had been brought on wagons had yet got there.

Col Wickliff [Wickliffe] was brought in next day unconscious died in about ten days, all our company officers wounded from orderly sergeant up though George Wilson orderly was not so severely hurt but that he remained with the company and took command.

#### Chapter 17

**At Corinth Mississippi. Leave of absence. At Nash Pirtle's in Fait [Fayette] County Tennessee. Went out to Dr. Stavall from Humbolt. I and wife started the same morning, she for home in Graves County Ky. I for the army at Corinth Miss.**

Wednesday April 9th. Here we are in camp near where we had been some ten days previous, but O how differently then sunshiny pleasant weather all up in high spirits, now cold and rainy with so many crippled and maimed in various ways no two alike. We had lost thirty five killed, and wounded out of eighty six that had answered roll call Sunday morning, five or six killed the rest wounded, and two or three missing.

As to the other companys of the regiment I never learned what their losses was, but suppose it was about the same proportion. By this evening very nearly all had got to camp some still out that could not be accounted for.

Late this evening General Cheatam [Cheatham] came to our Camp, and mixed among the boys muchly. Gave the Adjutant instructions to give all the wounded lieve of absence that had friends that they could go and stay with.

I had a cousin living near Dancyville in fait [Fayette] county Tennessee who was then in our camps and learning the orders of General Cheatam [Cheatham], came to me and brother Wess and said that we must go home with him, which we accepted thankfully. And as there was many that wanted to go to Jackson Humbolt and Brownesville General Cheatam [Cheatham] ordered a train to make that run.

[The remainder of this chapter is missing.]

*[As well as part of Chapter 17, all of chapters 18, 19 and 20 are missing. Chapter highlights, from the Index, are reproduced here to help fill in the sequence of events.]*

#### Chapter 17

*At Corinth Mississippi. Leave of absence. At Nash Pirtle's in Fait [Fayette] County Tennessee. Went out to Dr. Stavall from Humbolt. I and wife started the same morning, she for home in Graves County Ky. I for the army at Corinth Miss.*

#### Chapter 18

*Sickning sight at depot. No better at camp. Halleck moving on Corinth. Evacuation of Corinth. March to Tupelo.*

#### Chapter 19

*In camp at Tupelo. Moved to Vicksburg.*

#### Chapter 20

*In camp at Vicksburg July 1862. Some thrilling incidents. Lt. J. A. Collins returned well. Lt. A. D. Collins resigns. Bob Sellars and Mills Bennett discharged on account of disability.*

## Chapter 21

### **Off for Batten Roghe [Baton Rouge] La. Regiment in fight. I at hospital at Magnolia. Regiment went to Porthudson [Port Hudson, LA], helped to build fort. Then back to Jackson Where I found them Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>**

About the first of August got an order to draw and cook three days rations and be ready to move next morning. Next morning loaded our tents and heavy equipage on wagons. we mounted a train of flat cars Co A next to the engine that burned wood, had to fight fire the whole trip, looked as if we would burn our clothes off our backs.

At one time the engine run out of water, formed a bucket brigade, bailed from a pond that was fifty feet below the track until the tank was full.

Reached Jackson about night, and stayed there until next morning, then pulled south on the M[?] C [Memphis and Charleston?] rail road reaching Tangipahoa [Louisiana] 104 miles in the evening bivouaced for the night. Called up early next morning and started west leaving quite a number of sick.

Found a little river about noon where we halted to eat dinner and moved on again and soon Dr Clardy came to me and said; Lt Collins has a chill, and is very sick, and has to stop, and from your looks you wilnot be able to make this trip, and you stop with him. *[There were two Lieutenants named Collins, J. A. and A. D.]*

A farm house being near got permishion to stop with them. Good people treated us fine have forgotton their names.

By the next morning Lt had improved, I had gone the other way, we concluded to return to sick camp on rail road if we could get conveyance. began talking with those people. soon had a hack or buggy with driver ready to start and off we went reaching tangipahoa in due time.

After one or two days Dr Humphreys sent me to the hospital at Magnolia Miss. not an acquaintance there very lonesome, but soon began to make some friends.

Had to keep my cot for a week or more, got down very low, but after a time I began to improve so that by september I was able to return to the regiment which was then at Jackson.

Found the regiment five or six miles north east of town near Pearl river, ~~but a high-dry camp fine place.~~

Now learned the regiment went on to Battenrogue made the fight there *[Battle at Baton Rouge, August 5, 1862.]* got repulsed then went up the river to port hudson and assisted in building the fort and planting those big guns, working behind bushes gun boats passing every day.

## Chapter 22

**In camp at Jackson Miss. Moved to Davis Mills north of Holliesprings [Holly Springs], arrived there evening our enlistment expired.**

I found in camp brother Wess and several of the boys that I feared were dead, they had returned to regiment during my absence.

This was a fine camp ground high dry and a little sloping so that when it rained all surplus water ran off, it was near the river went swimming every day and in addition a large field near by well set in wild onions.

The morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> September commissary issued three days rations, with orders to cook and be ready to move by noon. So at noon struck tents loaded everything on wagons and started for Jackson and arrived there in due time then loaded all our camp equipage on box cars, then boarded the same and pulled out north, arriving eight or ten miles north of Hollie springs [Holly Springs] the next evening the 12<sup>th</sup> day of september 1862, the day that many of the boys had longed for to come, our one year was gone by, the time for which we had enlisted.

Chapter 23

**Camp Davis Mills near Tenn. line. Boys got lost hunting water. Company dejected. Company reorganised. Chasing yankee cavalry.**

Sep 12<sup>th</sup> As soon as the train stopped were instructed to pitch tents and where we could find water.

Some went to work putting up tents, others picked up buckets and started for water, but lost their way or at least they did not return with water.

Some of those men I have never met since, now more than forty five years.

By night got tents pitched drew fresh rations cook and eat supper, then called into line for roll call, some fifteen failed to answer. We that did answer went to bed all dejected to that extent there was no joking, nothing heard from any one until roll call next morning five or six more absent, company more dejected.

Here we done nothing but cook eat and loll around for about a week or ten days, when Lt J. A Collins reported to us that he had received his discharge and was going to leave us, then bid us adieu. George Wilson Ordely sergeant left about the same time.

Here we were about forty men with out an officer of any kind and nearly as many absent with out leave. You may imagine our low dejected spirits, for I cannot tell it.

But soon after this Col Crosland [Crossland] came to the company made us a little speech, enlightening muchly on what we had done, and what we could do if we will just hold our heads up and go ahead. *[Edward Crossland had been Lieutenant Colonel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Kentucky Infantry when that regiment was disbanded at the end of its year enlistment in late April, 1862. He became Colonel of the 7th Kentucky Infantry in May, 1862, after the death of Colonel Charles Wickliffe at Shiloh.]*

And then suggested we organise by electing new officers and proceeded to holding an election which resulted as follows.

Jim Linch captain *[E. J. Lynch, killed at Paducah, March 25, 1864]*

Jim McFall 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant [*J. A. McFall, killed at Paducah March 25, 1864*]

W. G. Pirtle 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant

B. P. Willingham 3<sup>rd</sup> Lieutenant

Wilson Edwards Orderly sergeant

Went on and elected a full corps of non commissioned officers but cannot now name them.

I think the second morning after the election, we were called up some hours before day, and was told that the yankees were coming down upon us from Bolaver [Bolivar] Tennessee, got into column and started to meet them, moved on lively until daylight, then our regiment was sent by a side road to the left for the purpose of getting behind the yanks. They discovered us and began to fall back, we then had a race of perhaps ten miles, but of course mounted cavalry when on a good strate road can easily keep out of the way of foot cavalry on a rough crooked road.

When completely exhausted gave up the chase, and started back to camp, quite a number of us was noon next day getting there.

We now had something to talk about aside from going home, and of course our spirits revived and we became hopeful and not so low down in spirits.

About the first of October got an order one evening to draw and cook three days rations and to be in line by day light next morning ready to march.

#### Chapter 24

#### **Off for Corinth and fight.**

[*Battle of Corinth, October 3-4, 1862*]

As it began to get light we moved off in the direction of Corinth, about forty miles distant; all seemed to move steady with no mishap until we were within about five miles of Chewalla, which was five miles west of Corinth.

When boom we heard guns in our front, and soon the word came down the column to close up double quick, raised a yell and away we trotted in the direction of the cannonadeing, had gone but a short distance when the road was almost paved with cards.

Some men are very brazen in their wickedness, but it seemed that not a man in our whole column was willing to be found dead or crippled on the battle field with a deck of cards in his pocket.

The yanks retired we followed but when about half way to Corinth, they halted formed line of battle and seemed determin not to give back any farther.

We our brigade formed line and advanced and when near enough pored a heavy fire into them which was kept up for some time. Only one man was hit with a bullet in my company. Jim Cox standing near me was struck with a considerably spent ball on his belt that jolted heavily, and looking down saw some red sploches, says to me Lt I'm killed look at the blood; I looked, no blood but red spots on his new calico shirt told him so which satisfied him and to loading and shooting with a vim that proved his earnessness



and determination to hurt somebody.

Thirty fifth Alabama regiment that was to the left, our regiment on the right of line, yaller hammers as we called them raised a yell and at the yanks they went with such force that started yank in run to get away leaving one long black gun that thirty fifth took possession of also some prisoners. The whole line then fled.

We moved forward some distance a mile and a half perhaps or more and lay on our arms until next morning.

General Price [*Major General Sterling Price*] had gone to our left and turned the yanks right and attacked from the north east, we were west. he drove the yanks into their forts, then all lay quiet all night except an occasional gun and shell explosion.

Next morning early General Lovel [*Major General Mansfield Lovell*] began to move his division a little south and closer to the forts, the yanks began to shell us lively. And about this time General Price began to move on them from the other side of town, and as we halted and not firing a gun, the yanks turned their attention to General Price, and did not fire an other gun at us until we began to retreat they then hustled us with quite a number of shots.

General Price move forward about the same time we did and attacked them in earnest drove the yanks from their outer works and followed them to their inside works and mixed with them to a considerable extent, but had to finally retire, leaving many dead and wounded, also quite a number of prisoners.

A few incidents of the morning will relate before beginning the retreat that will perhaps help to give a better understanding of the fight that morning.

The fifteenth Mississippi regiment was on the right of front line of General Lovel's [Lovell's] division, ours the seventh Ky regiment was on the right of reserve line, and was down in a branch flat where many hickory trees were standing full of nuts, the grape and caister taring through their top, down would come the nuts on our heads which was very annoying.

About this time the fifteenth Miss became panic stricken and here they came pelmel as if they were going to run through our lines the Col doing his best to stop them, but had but little affect, on they came, the Col galloped down to Col Crosland [Crossland], and said stop my men if you have to bayonet them, Col Crosland [Crossland] ordered bayonets fixed, which we did and stoped them with out hurting any body.

After Col Harrel [*Probably Lt. Col. Michael Farrell*] got them into line again and about to move forward to take his place in line, Col Crosland [Crossland] rode up [to] Col Harral, and said I wil take my regiment and fill your place in the line, to which Col Harral readily assented saying, I doubt my men staying there.

Col Crosland [Crossland] moved his regiment forward in line, and by the time we reached the top of the hill the yanks had turned their attention to General Price, not a gun did they fire at us while there. When Col Crosland [Crossland] had reached his place lined up ordered stack arms and in place rest. Now we lolled talked and listen to the uproar on the other side of town which was at times deafning.

### **Retreat from Corinth to Holliesprings [Holly Springs].**

At the time of our retreat and ever since I have thought that some one deserved censure.

The shape that we and they were in, certainly gave us largely the advantage. We could have gave them heavy fire almost in their rear and charged them at the same time that Price charged them from the north east then if Lovel [Lovell] had moved up from the South west, Every yank there would have taken the fidgets.

Get soldiers surrounded will scare the best of them. They would have surrendered or fled leaving us possessors of every thing. As I am not much in the way of critesizing will leave that to the reader. I have stated facks as I saw and understood at the time to the best of my recollection now, and my recollection seems clear and vivid.

General Lovel's [Lovell's] devision by the left got on the road a head of General Price, leaving him betwen us and the yanks. Our regiment being on the right of our line of course was in rear of our column.

Moved on for a time, head of our column reaching Hatchey [Hatchie] river there met a column of yankees from Bolaver [Bolivar] who contested our crossing at the place. We turned south up the river and crossed some eight miles higher up the river. This eight miles we double quicked geting dark when we started.

I gave out by the time we had gone half way or little over[,] turned out in the woods lay down and slept until sunup next morning, got up and approached the road very causously, not hearing any body ventured into it and on I moved lively until I came to the river, here I stoped and made a cup of coffee had some old bread, in breaking had to pull the pieces five or six inches apart before the mould strings would seperate, of this I made a hearty breakfast.

While eating a Tennessee Col came up from the rear first man I had seen that morning, sun then two hours high. Told me that the yanks were only a short distance behind and that I better hurry on. I took him at his word, and as I had eat a hearty breakfast, I steped lively, not long until I came up with the devision that had halted for rest.

Not seeing anything of my regiment or company I continued to move on slowly until I found the head of column then sat down to rest and wait the movement of the army.

After a time the army began to move and soon my regiment came along.

Now came by first and only expeerece of being under arrest. Col Crosland [Crossland] ordered me to the rear of the regiment. Moved on for two or three hours, when the column halted again. I walked up to the head of regiment asked the Col to release me stateing that I was exausted to the extent that I could not keep up and that I stoped to rest and went to sleep the sun was up when I awoke I then move on as fast as I could over took the column while at rest. And as I did not see the regiment or company moved on until I found the head of column, then sat down to rest until you came up. The Col said, you may take your place in line but beware not to get ahead again on a retreat.

We moved on in the direction of Hollie [Holly] Springs and reach there without any mishap except it began to rain one of those cold October rains and by noon we were all

wet to the skin.

Our regiment was put into a blacksmith shop, wood was soon furnished were told to build fires and dry ourselves, but O the smoke about as soon be wet and cold as to be smoked in such a stile.

After a time got dry, then needed but little fire, and faired better, got rations the first we had received since leaving Cold Water [near Holly Springs] except some beef the morning we began the fight at Corinth. In about two days we were moved out north near our old camping ground.

## Chapter 26 **Camp Cold Water [near Holly Springs] Again [October-November 1862]**

Our wagon train arrived about the same time we did, soon had tents pitch and done fine here for some time, rations good plentyful lots of sweet potatoes beef and pork, coffee beginning to get short.

When we had been in this camp three or four weeks fairing sumptuously reports began to come in that General Grant was starting out of Memphis with a large army. [Grant's Mississippi Central Railroad campaign] We knew that a fight or foot race was on hand.

General Grant moved on and when near [on or about November 13], his cavalry got ours in a stampeed and here they come, and as we were in line we opened a space for them to pass. Quite a number of them had lost their hats and some of them their carbienis.

When the last of them had passed all became quiet, then sundown or after, could hear Grants men going into camp north of us a mile or more.

Some time during the evening our camp equipage was loaded on wagons and started in the direction of Holliesprings [Holly Springs]. We stood in line listening to the great nois the yanks were making in their camps. I do not know what their object was in keeping so much nois unless to make us skeedadle, if so it had the desired effect.

## Chapter 27 **Retreat to Abbyville.**

At nine or ten Oclock the order rang out right face right turn march, and away we went on the road the wagons had taken, halted at daylight, some five or six miles south of town, formed line of battle went to work building breast works. Then lolled and slept all day until dark.

It is surpriseing how quick a line of soldiers can make pretty fair defences, we used logs rails bresh in fact any thing that would help to stop a bullet or entangle a horse.

Moved out again at dark, and marched all night, halted, repeated yesterdays work. The yanks had not come near enough to disturb much, but now they were getting close, but we would go as far at night as they would come next day. I suppose they were afraid

to attack at night.

Moved on in this stile until we reached Abbaville [*Abbeville, Mississippi*]. By this time Grant had ceased to push us, and we went into camp.

## Chapter 28 **In camp at Abbyville.**

Our regiment was sent out five or six miles east to gard the right flank of the army. While in this camp done fine plenty of good rations; done some labor on breast works.

While here I made one mistake in cooking that I mustell. One morning we my mess Capt Linch [*E. J. Lynch*] Lts McFall [*J. A. McFall*] Willingham [*B. P. Willingham*] Bob Browder and Elie Burnett [*There were 5 Browders and 4 Burnetts in Company A. There were also 1 Browder and 2 Burnetts on the regimental staff.*] procured a nice fat quarter of mutton and as it was my day to cook dinner, so at it I went with a vim more than useual, had a pot large enough to hold all at one time, soon had it boiling nicely, in order to make it cook quick and tender I put a lot of soda in the pot with the meat.

When dinner time came called the other boys, and down we sat around our mess chist, all our mouths watering, thinking what a fine dinner was before us. But low and behold we could not eat the mutton at all. All the excuse I had was I had heard the boys talk of putting soda in their beef to make it tender. You may imagine our faces and discomfiture mine worst of all.

After about a week, began to learn that grant was prepareing to attacked us. So one morning got an order to send all our camp equipage and heavy baggage such as we could not carry, except tents and a few cooking vessels, to the depot for shipment.

We our mess had made us a fine camp chist that would hold five bushels or more, and into this we pack all our best clothes. I put a coat in that I payed fifty dollars for when in Jackson september previous and had worn but little. Labled the Chist so that we thought it was safe, loaded on a wagon and off it went, never heard of it since. Learned in some days that a large pile of camp equipage was burned at the depot.

Next morning loaded what we had left on wagons and started those south. We then lined up and here we stood all day and until nine Oclock that night.

As soon as it began to get dark built big camp fires and kept them going left them burning fine.

This was a hard night on me, had been officer of the gard the day and night previous and in line all day, had not slept any for forty hours previous to starting.

## Chapter 29 **Again we retreat this time to Granader [Granada].**

Left the Abbaville [*Abbeville*] camp at nine Oclock at night by the same road that the wagons went off that morning. Began to rain in torents directly we started, branches flooded in a little while. We had gone perhaps two miles when I began to fall behind

nearly exausted a wagon being behind came up with me, I manged to get hold of it, and to it clung for some distance, made many efforts to get on the wagon but failed in every attempt.

While clinging to the wagon waded many branches some waist deep. Finally my strength was gone I lost my hold on the wagon and farther I could not go, but managed to get out side of road and back up against a tree that protected me from the rain to some extent.

How long I remained in this position I know not. But when I awaked was cold and stiff, could not move a foot and had but very little use of my hands or arms, could not reach the ground with either hand.

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention. By the strangest motions I could make with my head to one side, I managed to roll over, and when my feet and legs were relased of my weight they soon began to straten out and after a time I got so that I could stand on my feet, turned around a few times, and concluded that I could go, gathered up my belongings and started.

I donot know how when or where I over took the regiment. My next recolection is that we were called into line at day light one morning, but as our regiment was put in rear and company A still farther in rear and instructed to let no straglers fall behind, didnt start until nine Oclock, then hard work all day, keeping straglers up, and puling through the mud, and at the same time kept a close watch for the yanks, as there was nobody behind us but yanks.

Reached our camp at dark and was getting fires started, when report said yanks were close upon us.

Col Croslan [Crossland] called his regiment in to line and away we went in double quick, not far, perhaps three fourth of a mile, where we found yanks in line mounted, we formed line and advanced they fired one volley at us.

We returned fire and charged, yanks fled we followed for some distance. But gave up the chase and returned to camp.

Finding two or three dead yanks and some wounded, where they had made their stand, we had one perhaps two slightly wounded in regiment none in Co. A.

### Chapter 30

#### **In Camp Granader [Granada], and on to Edwards depot**

Arrived late in the evening and camped near town that night, next morning our regiment was sent some five miles east for right flank duties. But as grant had turn back to Hollie springs [Holly Springs], we only stayed two or three day we returned near town and camped in the fork of two rivers east of town.

Had a good camp ground got well fixed plenty of rations, the weather a little cold but plenty of wood close by, come one snow three or four inches deep, the first we had seen since leaving Kentucky the spring before, enjoyed it fine put us in mind of home.

A little before Christmas Bryant Boon our sutler went to Mobile to replenish his stock of goods. And about ten days after his return broke out with small pox. which stird

up the whole regiment and brigade wonderfully. All were ordered to be vaccinated, and many had very sore arms.

Bryant was moved out of camp in a deep hollow three hundred yards from Co. A. Died and by his misses was buried there by himself.

Dr Clardy went to see him twice and some times oftener every day. Had some good nurses with him that stayed to the last.

Christmas morning I was summons to report to the court marshal at nine O'clock, went to town found the place designated but the court had adjourned in order to go to grand review of the army by the president [Jefferson Davis] and generals [including Joseph E. Johnston].

Learned where the review would be, put out by myself a mile and a half walk, reached there at the time the lines were forming. Saw an eminence in rear of the right of the lines, that I thought a good place where I could see all. I got on top of that hill, and could see the whole army at one sight.

Here I saw more people than I ever saw before or since at one sight, besides soldiers all the civilians for miles had collected there both men and women. It took the reviewing officers an hour or more to ride around the lines. I think there were six lines each a mile long, placed fifty to seventy five yards behind each other.

If a scout looking for spies had come across me on that hill viewing the army so intently, he would most assuredly have taken me in charge, and to headquarters would have gone, but nobody troubled.

About the first of January 1863 those rivers began to rise rapidly and the bridge across Beatuponbogue [sic] being shakely got afraid it would wash away and leave us cut off from supplies. To avoid trouble all the soldiers on the east side of the river were moved over west of town, took all day to move.

Next morning as there was plenty of nice pine poles from four to six inches in diameter at hand our men concluded to build a pen four or five rounds high to set our tent on. So to work we went starting chimney from the ground.

By night had all up in good trim, and fixed with plenty of wood that would burn fine. The wood blazed fine while the dry bark lasted then went out and left us with no fire, it was our first experience with green pine poles for fire wood.

Stayed in this camp a week or ten days; then boarded a train pulled out for Jackson thence to Edwards depot near Bigblack [Big Black] river bridge.

This was not a pleasant camp flat ground and rained a vast amount, had plenty of wood at hand, and tents kept us dry.

## Chapter 31

### **Off from Edwards depot to Port Hudson in Louisiana.**

Stayed at the Edwards depot about two weeks, then boarded a train and down the M. C. [*Mississippi Central*] railroad to Osyka, then on foot about sixty miles through rain mud and water. Found one little river about five feet deep and one hundred and fifty feet wide. In order to cross, cut a large tree on each bank and loped their tops in the middle of

river

This made us a very good bridge for the men, men all crossed safe, carrying I think eight wagon loads of ordinance that we had in charge.

Then swam the teams pulling the wagons after them. Made a line long enough to tie to each mule and reach the other bank, six or eight men would pull team and wagon across safe.

In this way all got over safe not loosing any thing except one box of cartridges about one hundred rounds that one man let fall in the water.

As it was getting dark when all was over, went into bivouac for the night. Soon all became quiet, but along towards day water from the river began to spread over the bottom, then such a yelling you perhaps never heard, some got on logs and there they clung. It was so dark that no one knew where or how to get out of the water.

Day light came then we could see how and where to go, had to wade half mile or more, the water ankle to more than knee deep, got to dry land, built fires dried eat breakfast and on we went as if nothing had troubled us.

Reached Porthudson [Port Hudson] with no other mishap, went into camp on a flat where it was muddy and sloshy, and as wagon train fail to come up which made it very unpleasant camp.

#### Chapter 32

**In Camp at Porthudson [Port Hudson] La. On pickit a week five miles out. No wagon train yet. On skirmish line two miles in front. Heavy bombardment. Boat burned [USS Mississippi].**

Col Crosland [Crossland] found and moved us to a higher dry place, but just as we reached it Captain Lynch [Lynch] got an order to take his company to a pickit post some five miles south east of fort, and about this time it began to rain in torrents, started on our trip and had just got out side the fort, when yanks thought it a good time to shell, and at it they went with a vim above the ordinary, many of the shells falling in and near the regiment.

A few of our boys had been left to take care of camp equipage, the boys declared they never would volunter to go or stay again. Company moved on, had a pilot. Just as it was getting dark found water flowing across the road, here our pilot informed us that a creek was just ahead and as the water was so high, was sure the bridge was worked away, and if so we could not cross.

But our captain believed in obeying orders, decided to go across if posable, so into the water [he] plunged the balance of us followed, waded half mile or more to the creek, and sure the bridge was gone, could see nothing of it any where.

It was so dark could not see any thing except by lightning flashes, it still raining. After parleing a while started back as we could not stay here all night in the water more

than knee deep, how much higher it would get we knew not. On our way back, found the water some five or six inches higher than when we started into it.

While returning I became exhausted and fell behind perhaps one hundred yards, at one time was about to give up, held to a tree for a time water hip deep. By this time the boys had reached dry land one hundred and fifty yard away, hooped and yelled I answered and made an other start for shore where I found all had got out of the water safe.

After a time began to talk about what we should do the balance of the night. Having noticed some cotton pens in a field near the road, as we went on, all agreed that was the place to go. Found the pens got in covered ourselves by working down in the cotton, slept fine and by morning was dry.

Had not eat any supper and of course had no breakfast, and as the water had gone down out of our way we moved on to our post. About ten O'clock two of the boys that we had left in camp, came with days rations cooked, down we sat around the pans, and not one of us got up until the last bite had disappeared from the face of those pans.

Kept this post about a week, repeating ration process every day.

When we returned to regiment found it in a magnolia grove on high dry land, out of range of shells, here we done reasonably well considering scarcity of rations, had plenty of wet sugar and rice and some ham bones as there was being lots of hogs butchered, bones taken out to save the meat, also got some corn meal. Had to build shelters over our bunks with magnolia leaves, as our wagons had not yet shown up.

~~Now for about two weeks my recollection is faint.~~

My next vivid recollection is I was detailed late one evening to go out on a skirmish line some two miles in front of our entrenchment with about forty men, Captain Jetton [*C.W. Jetton, Company H*] in command I second.

Started just at dark reached our post in due time, formed our line the best we could in the dark. The talk all evening was that General Banks was moving up from Battenrouge [Baton Rouge] with a large army. So were expecting fight next day sure.

I would say here that I dreaded my position wonderfully, here two miles in front of all supports with only forty men and big army moving up to us, sleep was not thought of.

The captain and myself had place ourselves near center of line and was conversing about the situation and the stillness of the fleet in the river below the forts, and the untenable position we were placed. When near midnight saw a faint light near the river and in less time than you could walk five steps, the whole elements were as light as day and noise deafening.

Talk about fire works but I have never seen any thing that would anything like compare with the light and noise of this cannonading. This melee lasted perhaps two hours and during this time concluded that I was in much safer place than the company, and from this time on I would be ready to go or stay where my superiors said with no dread on my mind, though failed in a few instances that I will mention as I come to them.

The object of the Federals [*Admiral Farragut and seven of his ships*] were to pass some of their gunboats by our forts.

Our people had anticipated the object and prepared for them, and when the fleet started up the river poured such a heavy flood of hot shot and shell into them that it was



almost a complete failure, they however got one boat by [*Two, actually; the Hartford, Farragut's flag ship, and its escort, Albatross*], but by the time she was out of range of our guns was so badly crippled that she could go no farther for a week.

One boat [*The Mississippi*] ran aground just opposite one of our batteries took fire floated off after a time and down the river with the current she floated, shells exploding, the fleet moved off at a safe distance. This burning boat floated some ten miles when the fire reached her magazine it exploded, then darkness reigned until daylight.

General Banks failed to arrive and report said he was going back, we got orders to return to camp. I found the boys all in great glee over their night's work, they had been down on the river bank, and had assisted in heating the shots that set the boat on fire.

I do not remember dates but from history this was the night of the fourteenth of march 1863.

### Chapter 33

#### **On the move to General Bragg at Chatanooga [Chattanooga] Tennessee. Turned back at Montgomery [Montgomery] Alabama. Greison's [Greirson's] ride through Mississippi. Down to Enterprise to head of Greison [Greirson]. In camp at Bigblack [Big Black] river bridge.**

About the twentieth of march got an order for the brigade to go to General Bragg at Chatanooga Tennessee started afoot and pulled through the mud to Osyka thence by rail to Jackson and on to Meridian [Meridian], from here expected to go on foot to the Alabama river, but after some delay, took a train for Mobile, crossed the head of the bay on boat, then by rail to Montgomery [Montgomery] Alabama, arriving there early on Sunday morning. Instructed to stay on or near train. Layed around all day.

About night ordered to board the train, and back to Mississippi again we pulled out, run all night, reaching Mobile bay at noon next day, crossed before night, and lay there all night, boarded train and pulled out for Meridian [Meridian] next morning, reaching there about night.

About this time near the first of may, General Greison [*Colonel Benjamin H. Grierson, U.S. Cavalry*] began his ride through the state, [*The raid began on April 17 and ended on May 2 at Baton Rouge.*] starting from Corinth, and up the railroad to wards Tupelo we pulled out and on until we got along side of federals they being on west side of railroad. As we had lots of scouts got reports from yanks every little while, and played the game of hide and go seek while they rode more than a hundred miles, we would go a little, then come a little.

Finally we got back to Meridian [Meridian] about the time that Greison [Greirson] reached the rail road between us and Jackson. There he tore up some eight miles of the track that took some time to repara.

At Meridian [Meridian] we were told to build fires and cook rations, had just got well started when General Loring [*Major General William Wing "Old Blizzards" Loring*] came running from the telagraph office, and ordered the first regiment he came to,

to get their guns and board the leading train.

Ours was the regiment but not our train, and away we went down to Enterprise, eighteen miles south, reached there in sixteen minutes from the time we got good started, disembarked formed column and double quicked to a bridge across a little river just west of town.

Here we found the thirty fifth Alabama regiment. They had baricaded the bridge so that no horse man could ride across.

General Greison [Greirson] had come near sent in a flag of truce demanding surrender of the town, and gave one hour for consideration, while he fed his horses.

When we reached the bridge General Loring Col \_\_\_\_ and Major Hale [Henry. S. Hale] consulted for a short time, decided to entrap the yanks if possible; fell to our lot to go around them. So to clambering over the cotton bales and away we went taking a right hand road. the Major procured a horse rode in trot and we kept up, intersected the yankey road some eight miles from town, just in time to see the last of the yanks riding off a half mile a head of us.

After resting a while took up the line of march toward then near sundown reached there near midnight tired and hungry, most of us in shirt sleeves no blankets, all such had been left at Maridian [Meridian].

Had to stay there that night, we suffered with cold. Got a train next morning and went back to Maridian. Found the train we left the day before with every thing just as we had left it.

General Buford [Brig. General Abraham Buford] had learned the situation and posted a guard to take care of our house hold goods and chattles, which they had done in good stile.

In a day or two the brigade was ordered to big black river bridge. Started by rail had to foot over the road Greison [Greirson] had torn up a few days before, then by rail on to the bridge.

Here we found our wagon train, that had been abscent three months, set up our tents again, had not had a tent since leaving Edwards depot the forepart of February now about the tenth of may. After arriving, learned that General Pemberton [Lt. General John C. Pemberton, C.S.A.] had collected some forty thousand men in and around Vicksburg all preparing for a fight, that we considered sure to come soon.

Kept two or three day rations on hand cooked, with orders to be ready to march at a moments notice. General Grant had succeeded in landing an army on our side of the river at or near Port Gipson [Gibson] some twenty or more mile below vicksburg.

General Bowen [Brig. General John S. Bowen] had been sent down there, but his fource was not able to cope with the federals and was driven back. General Grant took up his line of march for Jackson by way of Raymond, here General Bowen gave them fight again, but failed to check or do the yanks much damage, and to Jackson they went and sacked the city.

Early in the morning on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1863, our regiment with some others were called into line, and started off south east, some times in a road then across fields, General Buford leading, our regiment right in front and at head of column, it seemed to me that we wound about, and marched in various directions all day. About sundown were ordered to rest in place, and soon told to sleep on arms, no fires to be made.

At sunrise next morning [May 15] were called up and started again. To day our regiment in rear left in front. Marched in a round about kineder way rest a little march a little all day until about sundown. We then struck the biglack [Big Black] bridge and Raimond [Raymond] road some miles east of Bakers Creek.

And here the army form line of battle extending from Raimond [Raymond] road north to or near rail road near three miles in length Loring on the right Buford's brigade on right. 7<sup>th</sup> Ky on right of brigade, and all were ordered to sleep on arms.

When we reached our place in the line, many of the boys were out of water, so a number of the boys gathered up the canteens went up the road in serch of water, found a house some half mile off, as they came in sight, saw persons going off the other way. The woman of the house informed them that those men were yankees and that they were camped only a short distance from there. The boys got their canteens filled and returned to our line reporting this information to me.

Here perhaps I made a mistake had I taken those boys to the General, he may have changed his position. But as soldiers are not supposed to know any thing or do any thing except as instructed did not consider it my buisiness to go tramping up to headquarters with information that they already had or should have.

So thinking and being tired, sat down eat some supper hung my haver sack on corner of fence, spredd my blanket and down I lay not knowing anything more until day light next morning, then heard [Sergeant Major] Bob Browder caling the line officers to get up and report at the colonel's headquarters for instruction.

When all had assembled [May 16] the Colonel informed us that a retreat had been ordered, and we were going back to the west side bigblack [Big Black] river and that vicksburg was being evacuated and that all the army was going out up west side of bigblack river, and told us to permit no strgling and keap every man in his place.

After getting the instruction went back to the line and began calling the boys up, and was just stooping down to pick up my blanket [when] to my great surprise and wonder, here came a cannon ball tareing through the tree tops not more than thirty feet above our heads then another and another faster than you could count, all coming directly from where the boys had told me the yanks were the evening before.

Wil now reflect a little.

A General commanding a large army, that will let another General commanding twice his numbers slip up to him and fire on him with artilery is not the General that I took N. B. Forest [Forrest] to be. Forest [Forrest] always kept lots of scouts in front, was well posted as to movements of the enemy so that he knew when and where to strike to create surprise and thereby destroy his enemy though twice his number. Some one or more of our Generals, or perhaps a subaltern like myself was certainly careless of duty, as the sequel will show.

Will now go back to where the cannon balls were taring through the tree tops over our heads.

As a matter of fact no more hurrying to get the boys in line. Skirmishers were sent forward, regiment started in a brisk trot just in rear of line, and it seemed to me that we done but little else all day, we as a regiment did not get in musket range and of course did not fire a gun all day. But formed many lines of battle, and trot from one place to another seemed to be [the] order until late in the evening.

At one time about the middle of the evening my company was sent forward of a battery of six or eight guns to a thicket that was two or three hundred yards in front of our guns. A yankee battery was on the hill opposite ours, so that the shots from both batteries passed directly over our heads, from twenty to forty feet high. Could see the shots passing, looked like little birds flitting by.

One shell exploded just over our heads, and one piece of it staved into the ground between three of [our] boys, that was sitting down facing each other, they sat still exclaiming that thunder never struck twice in the same place. Those boys were B. P. Willingham, Wingo Ky Henry George, Pewee valley Ky Jim Cox who has passed over the river some years since.

How long this dual lasted I donot know but will say that it became very monotonous, and seemed that their shells were unexhaustable, but finally eased off and quit their shooting to our great satisfaction, no [one] hurt on our side.

By this time it was becoming very evident that we were being surround[ed]. The left of the army was falling back and we not giving way but little. The federals had massed their fource against our left and drove them back across bakers creek, from there Bowin [*Brig. General John S. Bowen*] and Stevenson [*Maj. Gen. Carter L. Stevenson*] made their way back to bigblack [Big Black] bridge leaving Loring [*Maj. Gen. William Wing Loring*] to hold the bag, in which he came very near being tied up in it.

General Tighman [*Brig. General Lloyd Tilghman*] was killed about the middle of evening.

When our battery quit shooting in dual spoken of above company rejoined the regiment away we went in trot for a mile or more formed another line of battle in rather an open would [sic] a field just in front with another field to our left, about five hundred yard north of us was the Champion hill with an open field extending near a mile west of the hill.

When we formed this last line, all was quiet in our front, and I being tired almost to exhaustion, as I had left my haver sack hanging on the fence where I hung it the evening before, had not eat a bite all day.

I stept a few paces forward lay down making a pillow of my blanket. Went to sleep of course and next I knew I heard a thump near my head and the report of a gun near by, of course I began to get up, when not more than half way to my feet I mised the regiment it was gone and at the same time saw a blue coat not more than fifty yards off drop down behind some grass or weeds.

Here will put in some reflection again. A man may go to school the term of four years at west point learning war and how to fight battles; but when it comes to facing one army against another in a country where it is half fields balance open woods, he find

that he must depend on his own judgement formed on the spur of the moment and act accordingly, irrespectful of his previous learning. He never has the same thing to contend with twice in the same way, hardly, in a lifetime.

Wil now go back to where the yank dropped in the weeds. I donot suppose I had an eye in back of my head but I missed the regiment and saw the yank fall at the same time.

And now talk about forming quick judgment, while rising to my feet planed my movement, and by the time I was straight enough to put one foot before the other was puting execution to it. My plan was to get away from there and rejoin the regiment if I could find it. I moved a little to the right, as I knew the yank in the grass had an emty gun, I was not afraid of him, but I knew he was an advance skirmisher and how far the line was behind did not know.

Ran perhaps two hundred yards into the field west of the Champions house. Here I saw the brigade at the lower end of the field, half a mile off just passing into the woods, and at the same time here come the yankee line over the top of the hill two or three hundred yards behind me.

I moved out promptly, as soon as the yanks got farely on top of the hill, began shooting at me. You may talk about stimulating medicines, but let a lot of men begin shooting at one lone man has quicker and greater effect than all the Dr phisic that I have ever had any expeerece with. To say that I ran down that slant is no name for it.

Just a little a head saw what appeared to be a branch, bushes growing thickly along its banks, I noticed one place that looked as it was a ford. This I made for. Fifty yard before reaching the branch Dr. Clardy came by me on his horse saying you will have to hustle if you [want to] get away. But his medicine could not posably exhilarate my movements.

Reached the gulley, found a beautiful stream of clear cool water, and a drink I must have yank or no yank. Got a good drink then bathed my face head and hands, and up the bank I moved, fully expecting a volley as soon as I was on top of the bank. But thanks to that yankee Colonel not another bullet was fired at me.

A little before reaching the gulley I saw the Colonel rideing up and down in front of his line, and could hear him giving orders, could not understand what he said, but believe he stoped the shooting at me. I ran this gauntlet without the loss of any blood, though my clothes were cut in several places.

I pushed on though not rappid as when the yanks were shooting at me.

The rear of our column was just passing into the woods when I left the gulley, they soon halted and I found my regiment and company on top of a hill at the head of column, and seemed to me that all the Generals of Lorings devision was congregated there with all their staff officers.

By this time we all knew (privates as well as officers) that all was lost. Bowen and Stevenson both gone and Loring almost surrounded with perhaps ten men to his one.

General Buford [*Brig. General Abraham Buford*] ordered Colonel Scot [*Colonel Thomas M. Scott*] of the 12<sup>th</sup> La. regiment to form line just at the edge of the woods and check that line of yankees which he done with one or two volleys.

### Chapter 35

**How I got away from Bakers Creek. Yanks met me in road. Thought of going around them, got lost in woods. Waded lagoon. Swam the river. Found an old negro mamma. Got to Vicksburg. How I got away from Vicksburg, and back to Jackson.**

Dr Clardy being with other staff officers on top of the hill noticed me come up to the company, knew the race I had and that I was wellnigh exasted, rode around to me and informed me that the devision would leave there in a short time for bigblack [Big Black] bridge in run and you wil not be able to keep up and better be going, and told me how to find the road. I took him at his word and started on. Here was the last I saw the company for more than a week.

The Yanks had Loring more completely surrounded than he thought for, it then sundown. [Sic.]

I found the road as the Dr had told me moved on as fast as I could, not more than a half mile when I noticed a lot of men in the road a head of me. And in a few moments here came a cannon ball tareing through the tree tops.

Here on the spur of the moment I decided to move by the left flank and in less time than it takes to write it, I was away yonder in the woods and kept moving to the left until I was sure of being out of range of their guns and skirmishers if they had any out that way. Then turned west, thought of going around those yanks, and reach the bridge ahead of them.

Went through woods for quite a distance, struck a large farm passed along the north boundry for perhaps two miles, here I saw that I would have to take the woods again. Sat down to rest, all seemed to be quiet not a gun could I hear.

After resting for a time concluded to try and make the bridge, which I knew was about two miles north. Climed over the fence and started through the woods and on I went until I though I must be near the bridge.

By this time was so exasted that rest I must, and sat down leaning against a tree. Give a tired soldier a chance to be still, and sure go to sleep he will. How long I slept had no means of knowing, timber being very dence with big trees could not see the stars to get a course, but on through the woods, at last saw an opening in front, which revived me greatly.

I had not the countersign expected to meet pickets, but knew I could make my self known. As I got a little nearer I could see a fence, and as I had seen no fenceing about the field around the bridge thought fast until I reached the fence, climed upon it, looked the best I could, and lo there was a tree that I recognised as the one that I rested under in forepart of night.

I knew it would be useless for me to start any more until day light which I could see was not far off. Lay down and rested until it was getting light. I can make it now if the yanks donot beat me.

I began to clime the fence, and just got on top when fireing began between me and the bridge. As I had not the confidence of passing through the yankee lines, as I had of passing our own lines the evening before, it wilnot do to go that way, and got down in the

field, and here I considered myself safe for the present.

I now held a general consultation as how or where to move, I cannot stay here no rations and hadnot eaten any thing for thirty six hours no probability of comisary wagons passing this way. After a time the sun perhaps an hour high decided to make for vicksburg, by starting west, cross the river some two miles below the bridge if I could find any way to cross, then course it to town.

All this consultation was by myself as I had not seen any man or set of men since sundown the evening before. I had no idea where the regiment was, but suspected they were prisoners all except perhaps a few that slipped off through woods as I had done.

I started along the fence west, reached the corner of the field. Here was a plum bush full of fruit but green looked the tree over closely, saw one plum just beginning to show a little red, this I got and ate it. The girl that split the pea at her weding super may think this a sumtuous breakfast, but not so considered at the time by my self.

At this time another trouble presented itself. Here was the river bottom with a lagoon reaching to the foot of the little hill, could not see the other side, no means of knowing how wide or deep the water was except to wade across. Saw a drift of logs that seemed to extend out some distance[,] on to it [I] got and out in[to the] pond as far as the logs reached, from here the other shore seemed to receed, the timber not so thick, could see much farther, but no land in sight except that I had left behind me.

After wandering in mind what to do I procured a stick measured the water, found it about knee deep the ground seemed to be sollid with a little soft mud. I decided to go on[,] and off the log into the water I slipped and pulled for the shore, which I found after wading from boot leg to half thigh deep, at a distance of near a half mile.

Here I sat down on a log in a sunny place to dry my pants and socks and to rest. I had no under garment as necessity caused me to leave it where I got over the fence to tackle the lagoon. Just after I had eaten that half ripe plum, have some times thought that croten oil was made out of just such. [*Croton oil, a viscid acrid brownish-yellow oil from the seeds of Croton tiglium having a violent cathartic action.*]

The firing at the bridge had been heavy at times but now had almost ceased. I felt safe from the yanks, and thought I would have dry land to the river.

After resting an hour or more started again, had not gone far when I came to another lagoon the timber more scatering I feard the depth of water, but into it plunged with but little hesitation. This lagoon proved to be wider and deeper than the first, sometimes hip deep.

After resting a little moved on and found the river in about a half mile, and came upon several men that had come down from the bridge, having failed to cross there. They had found a little canoe and was fixing to cross, the canoe was loaded heavy was afraid to get in but striped off my clothes threw them into the canoe and into the river I went soon caught hold of hind end of boat with one hand and helped pull across with the other hand and feet, all getting over safe.

I did not learn who any of those men were, as there was but little or no conversation among us, never saw any of them again, they left in indian file as soon as they landed.

I got my clothes out of the canoe dressed and rested for a time took my course and

on I went through woods and fields in north west direction. Intersected the big black bridge and vicksburg road about half way between the two places, here I came upon a negro cabin and found an old negro mamma, the first human being that I had seen since those men left me at the river, to this old mamma I told my story. I had not eat any thing since frydays supper now middle of Sunday evening she says, child you shal have sumen to eat quick, and in a very little while told me to come in ise got it ready.

I had eaten but little when I began to turn sick, went out in yard threw up all I had eaten including the plum I found that morning. After exhausting myself vomiting stretched out on the ground about as much dead as alive. Got to thinking of home and home folks some four hundred miles off, and I here alone almost starved, I did not know where to find any man that I had ever seen, and sick to that extent that I could not eat, had learned from straglers that yanks had possession of the bridge.

If you are good at imagination perhaps you can form some idea of my lonesome home sick condition.

After a time old mamma came to me with some water, drank a little that seemed to revive me, my old mamma came back to me in a little while and said, youse pooty sick, ken fix youse sumpin youse can eat, and back into the cabin she went, and in ten minutes came to me and said ise got sumpin now youse ken eat. I got up and went in sit down at her rude table and there was a fried egg and some other dainties so they appeared to me. I ate a light meal feared to eat harty and after a time concluded I could move on toward.

I have thought of this old negro woman many times since, and would be glad to meet her if living, she is now perhaps ninty years old.

By this time the sun was nearly down, I moved on slowly until it was getting dark found a grassy place, lay down and slept all night and by morning felt built up to that extent that I moved out lively. I feared the yanks would be along soon, and did come along that road in two hours. They got close enough to throw shells in town that evening.

I arrived in town [Vicksburg] about ten Oclock, and after a time found some of the regiment, they told me where I could get some breakfast, eat a good meal and soon began to feel myself again.

Next was to find General Loring's wagon yard, and after a long tramp found it in a hollow a good safe place with quite a number of the regiment and brigade there all seemed to be easy, but when I told them of the whipping we had at bakers creek and big black bridge and yanks would be throwing shells inside the fort before night from the hills east of the breastworks, kinder threw a damper on them, but they could not realise the situation until the shells began to come in town from the hills, and gun boats that was anchored in the river above and below town.

This unpleasantness began in evening of 18<sup>th</sup> of may and ended July 4<sup>th</sup> by the fort surrendering. And no doubt it became very monotonous to those that remained there the whole time.

I had the good luck as some would call it to get out Saturday night. Saturday morning Col Lyon of the eight Ky regiment [*Colonel Hylan B. Lyons of the Eighth Kentucky Infantry Regiment, Mounted*] came to the wagon yard and told us that he was going out that night with his regiment (it being mounted) and that he would take all with



him that would mount themselves that day, and be ready at dark to ride.

While the Col was giving instructions, I spied a black horse some two hundred yards down the hollow graising quietly. I started at once for my horse, stoped at a wagon found a bridle and on [I went], bridled my horse with no trouble, returning searched a wagon until I found a saddle and blankets, and now you may rest assured that I and my horse stuck close together all day.

About the time it was getting dark Col Lyon rode up with his regment and called for us to mount. Some forty perhaps fifty had procured horses, all mounted and got into line at the rear of the regment. Col Lyon rode up in front of us put Lt Lapice [Charles LaPice, Co. K, 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment] in command and instrcked us that in order to get out safe we must be very quiet and if he heared any nois by any one, that man would have to return under gaurd.

Started down the ravine, soon turned a little to the right, up the hill on the river bank perhaps a hundred and fifty feet above the water. Here we came in full view of the fleet laying at anchor a mile or more down the river, on we went on this high ridge some times heading directly for the boats as if we were going to charge them, but no man yelled, no man fired a gun, not even a whisper did I here [sic] until we were at a safe distance from those boats.

But while passing them O how we did want to shoot into them, had we been prof[p]erly instructed as to which boat and what part to take aim at would have killed and crippled a large number, as the decks looked to be almost covered, but would have proved our destruction, as we had bigblack [Big Black] river to cross, and General Grant would have sent a fource after us that would have rode us down before we crossed.

It took us until nearly day to reach the river then lay down and rested until good light.

Had found two good skiffs, in these the men with all their accourterments including saddles crossed over, we crossed our horses by tying from ten to fifteen together one's head to anothers tale, tide a line to the leader that would reach the other shore, three or four men would pull while others would drive them into the water and make them swim one behind another, in this maner we all got over safe, not loosing any thing, in about two hours time.

After resting and graising our horses some two hours, started for Jackson reach there that evening or next morning found regment and brigade in a deplorable condition.

### Chapter 36

#### **How General Loring [*Major General William Wing "Old Blizzards" Loring*] got away from Bakers Creek. His deplorable condition.**

The word deplorable hardly expresses it, as I saw it at the time.

Loring discovered that he was cut off from bakers creek bridge where I aimed to cross but the yanks had beat me there. I crossed near a mile lower down the creek. The cannon balls that passed just over my head reached to where General Lowring [Loring]

was with Buford's brigade. He then knew his only means of escape was to go south, and was not sure of that, but started causing his men to make as little noise as possible. He procured a pilot a Dr Williams [Dr. Williamson, described by General Loring in his battle report as "a highly respectable gentleman of Edwards Depot."] that knew every field and woods near by, he told the general there was a creek to cross near that he could not get his guns across.

The General started and passed near enough to a yankee line so they could hear them in conversation. At the creek left their guns, men all crossing safely and kept moving south all night. Then turned east struck rail road at Crystal Springs [Crystal Springs] twenty four miles south of Jackson. Kept going east to Pearl River then up the river to Jackson reaching town or rather to where the town had been. [It had been occupied and sacked by the Federals during this campaign.]

The brigade had arrived at Jackson one or two days before I did. They lost every thing in the way of camp equipage, many had thrown away their coats and blankets, their guns stuck to them. The fact is a good soldier will hold to his gun to the last, and we had seen service enough to get rid of all that was not of a good grade. The brigade had made this march of eighty or more miles almost without rations. And when I found them were very nearly destitute of any thing to eat or wear. We were very dejected felt badly whipped and if somebody had fired a gun half mile off and hollowed yanks coming, I think it likely that all would have struck out for taller timber orders or no orders.

### Chapter 37

#### **In camp from Jackson to Bigblack [Big Black] river forty days. Got furlow in the time. boys broke into a roastingear field.**

About this time General J. E. Johnston [Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the CSA's "Department of the West."] arrived with help in the way of troops that was not so badly whipped as we were, also some camp equipage that began to revive us muchly, so that in a week or ten days, we began to feel lively again, and merchants began to bring goods and open stores, pay master came along gave us money quartermaster and commissary began hustling, so that by a little in June were doing fairly well again.

General Johnson [Johnston] continued to increase his army and soon it began to be talked that we were going to attack General Grant in his rear and that General Pemberton [John C. Pemberton, in command at Vicksburg] would come out of his works and attack in front. The idea was we had General Grant bagged and all we had to do was to tie strings and we had plenty of them.

After being recruited to a normal condition were kept moving almost every day, don't think we ever stayed at one place more than two nights, most of the time near enough to Vicksburg to hear the boom of the guns and small arms.

Got reports almost daily of the slaughter Pemberton was making of the yanks. Some were exaggerated no doubt, but the killed and wounded was immense. As the national cemetery contains the graves of 16618 union soldiers that lost their lives during the siege around Vicksburg, and we always count four wounded to one killed, the lost

must have been not less than fifty thousand, besides many that returned to their homes cripples for the balance of their lives. O horable to think about.

About the tenth of June there came an order that one officer and three men would be furlowed from each company and to send their names to headquarters, I drew the long straw, so up went my name, it came back in due time all indorsed.

Lt Campbell of Co I [Probably D. S. Campbell] had furlow also, we concluded to go up the railroad to Goodman station fifty one miles north of Jackson and from there go out to Mr Boaz an unkle of some of my company [There were four Boaz men in Co. A], he lived five or six miles west of town got there about sundown, soon learned that Mr Boaz was gone to Ky where he had brothers no one on the place but negros, made inquiry about neighbors.

The negros told us that a Mr Williams lived a mile west of there and thought would take us in for the night very willingly. And after breakfast was over seemed that they would be glad if [we] would stay during the time of our furlow which we accepted thankfully.

And now for ten days enjoyed ourselves finely had plenty to eat and such as was good, and go fishing whenever desired to a creek that was nearby.

When our time was up, returned to the army, found our brigade in a very big woods near bigblack [Big Black] river, perhaps ten miles above the bridge, all elated with the idea that we were going to tie those strings soon.

This now about the twenty fifth of June. The heavy boom of guns continued night and day some times could hear very distinkly the rattle of musketry. The morning of the third of July moved to a new camp as usual, and seemed that we were in a better place to hear than ever.

Stayed here two days, the first day George Cace [G. L. Cayce] Jodia McFadden [J. N. McFadden] and brother Wess [J. W. Pirtle ?] broke into a roasting ear field brought out a bagfull of corn. Got a wash pot would hold a half bushel or more built fire filled it with water, sat down began to shuck the corn filled the pot and as soon as the first put in was cooked, began to eat then shuck more to keep the pot full, not one of them got up until the last ear had disappeared. They were perhaps two or more hours eating their meal, they appered to be finely refreshed and ready for move again.

July 4<sup>th</sup> Some time this morning every thing got still near vicksburg. could not hear a gun. July 5<sup>th</sup> Every thing still not a gun to be heard no nois alowed in camp, so continued all day and night, so much stillness was becoming very monotonous as we knew not the cause of it.

#### Chapter 38

**After the surrender of Vicksburg. Returned to Jackson where we remained until the night of the 16<sup>th</sup>. Fighting yanks seven days of the time. Hung a negro spy during recess one day.**

July 6<sup>th</sup>. This morning we were called up long before day, and informed that

vicksburg had surrendered on the fourth, which explains why we heard no guns now for forty hours. We now knew there was no string tying on our part, but to skeedaddle which is a diferent process.

In a short time every thing and every body was on the move, and by day light the road was completely blocked up with wagon teams, guns caisons, and other paraphanalial that belong to an army, so that it seemed to us as we were in rear that nothing was moveing at all, but after a long time began to move slowly.

By this time it was getting wonderfull hot, and dust so light and thick that one could scarcely see thirty feet before him. And in this way we marched all day with out water after our canteens were emptied that morning, except what we got from a pond in an open field that perhaps three hundred cattle had plunged into and stired until we hardly knew whether it was mud or water.

It was in the evening when we found this stuff, and perhaps all swallowed more or less of it. This was the most fateauging day that I have any recolection of. Left this pond and marched a few miles farther and camped for the night not far from Clinton. here got water that was pasable.

July 7<sup>th</sup>. Called into column early and started on to Jackson, arrived just at night and camped.

July 8<sup>th</sup>. Called and moved to the penitentiary, there was some of the walls still standing. Here we lolled around all day. I stroled about some, found a garden that still had a few tomatoes geatherd and eat some of them, the first I had ever eaten. Never could bare the tast or smell, but have been fond of them ever since.

Some time during the day lost my pocket book that contained all the money I had, near three hundred dollars. Now how to get rations as all infantry officers had to pay for their rations. I told the comisary captain my fix and he said send and get rations and pay for them next pay day.

While here to day could hear fireing back in the direction of vicksburg, yankees following us and driveing our rear guards mostly cavalry I suppose.

July 9<sup>th</sup>. this morning moved out north east of town and formed our part of the line of battle, which was in a half circle around the town reaching pearl river above and below some four or five miles long. Our brigade was placed on the right and extended to a swamp in the river bottom, twelvth Luseana on right next the swamp, third Ky next, seventh next, then eight to our left, thirty fifth Alabama still to the left, donot know where fifteenth Miss or twenty seventh Ala was placed, perhaps to fill in a vacant place some where in the line. General Buford got his lines formed to his saisfaction.

When the General got his lines formed, sent skirmishers forward, then went across the river to see about his wagon train, and had been gone about an hour, when our skirmishers discovered yankee skirmisher line just starting out from their line, fireing began and our boys began to fall back, yanks advanced a whole regiment in line, and soon saw what they took to be the reserve of the picket, and charged with vim, and knew no better until our skirmishers had got back to our line, then we poared such a fire into them from front right and left, that they saw their mistake and back they went with all the hast at their command.

General Buford hearing the fireing and knowing that his men were in fight, here

he and all his staff that he could collect on the spur of the moment came tearing through a roasting ear field knocking down a row thirty feet wide. But by the time he got there we were bringing in the prisoners and taking care of the wounded so the fun was all over.

In this little fight our loss was perhaps fifty, mostly the eight Ky regiment our left and right of thirty fifth Alabama.

All soon got quiet except skirmish fire, our skirmish line advanced as the yanks went back. Every man kept his place as we did not know when they would come again. Here we lay all day nothing to do until about sundown, when a wagon came down the line with picks and shovels, one pick and two shovels to company A, and to work we went with a vim you may rest assured, as the charge that morning acted as a great stimulous, and by day light next morning had a ditch four feet deep with all dirt thrown out in front, and higher than our heads. Hardly a man had slept any that night.

There was one draw back we had cut the banks perpendicular, we could not get up high enough to see over the bank to shoot in front. And to work to make us a step, which we did by cutting twenty inches wider in front down to the proper depth so that standing on this bench could see all out in front, then proceeded to the other side the same way throwing all the dirt to the front.

Now we were well fixed as we had two rows of seats the whole length of our line all nicely protected from the yankee bullets that was coming a little thick for a man to feel pleasant when walking about out of the ditch.

Now being so well fixt many of us did wish the yanks would make another charge, but no yank made his appearance nearer than to peep around a tree at our thin line of pickets that we kept in front.

The pickets kept a continual firing night and day, and this skirmish fire is what made it so unpleasant for those in the ditch, as many of the bullets would pass just above our heads some would hit the dirt we had banked in our front knock it over on our heads, then others would fall just behind us while others would pass high and sing as if they had shucks tied to their tales, as the boys often remarked.

Thus we played until after dark the 16<sup>th</sup> when we moved out and across the river to the east.

A few more incidents while in the ditches at Jackson. One day the yanks assaltd our works a mile and half to our left loosing and leaving many dead. Next day asked an armistice to bury their dead, which was granted, and notice sent around the lines to cease all firing until signal was given which would be a cannon shot. During this recess the picket lines lay down their guns and met on half way ground and ingaged in friendly conversation swapping yarns Jokes tobacco &c but when they heard the signal got up went back to their tree and gun, and began their same old bang bang again, just as if they thought the restration of the union or the indipendence of the C.S.A. all hung on their hurting somebody.

Early that morning the 12<sup>th</sup> Louisiana caught a negro slipping through the swamp to their right who proved to be a spy in General Shermans employ and was hung that evening during recess, not more than seventy five yards just behind my company. Two perciman trees near each other a pole was put in forks proper hight wagon moved under pole with negro sitting on his box rope tied to pole then wagon moved off leaving him

swinging, his feet not more than two feet from the ground, and left him hanging while detail was digging a grave, as soon as deep enough cut him down, put him in the box let it down covered it up then all got in wagon and drove off townward.

During this siege our rations were cooked at the wagon yard and brought to us by the teamsters. One day headquarters teamster brought rations for Col Croslan [Crossland] [Crossland] and staff santered up and down the ditch while they were eating their meal, then gethered up his vessels and was climbing up out of the ditch to go back to camp when a bullet struck him at the edge of his hair just one side the neck bone came out under his nose knocking two or three of his upper teeth out. Dr Clardy sent him to the hospital. I had no expectation of ever seeing that man again, but he got well, and was driving his wagon in about three weeks apparently sound as ever minus a good bitt out of his upper lip.

Line officers have to take their turn in details same as inlisted men, and if General Johnston had decided to stay one more day, I would have been on skirmish line and left to face the yanks with only one man every ten paces or get away the best I could.

### Chapter 39

#### **Army moving east. Camped along the Southern rail road, at many places for two months or more. Lost my health and went to hospital about the first of October 1863.**

July 17<sup>th</sup> I donot remember how far we marched last night, but passed through Brandon [Mississippi] next day, and here I met an old friend who formaly lived in Kentucky, but now belonged to a Texas regiment, was glad to meet him, neither of us knew the other was in the army, and as the army was on the move we had to seperate never saw each other again until some years after the war was over.

This friend John Bard now living near Watervalley Graves county Ky. Now more than eighty years old.

As anticipated General Sherman did not persue us, may have sent a few scouts across the river, but did not trouble to amount to much.

So through the balance of July August and September we camped at many places along the Southern rail road between Brandon and hickory station which is fifteen or twenty miles west of Maridian [Meridian]. Maridian is ninty five miles east of Jackson.

I had been afflicted all spring and summer to that extent that by the last of August found me very much reduced in flesh and strength. One evening Dr Clardy told me the regiment would move east next day, and that I had better take train that night and go on, take care of yourself the best you can until regiment comes up with you. Of course it took no persuasive arguments to induce me to take him at his word.

Near ten Oclock I boarded a train going east and went as far as Hickory, got a bed and rested well the balance of the night. After I got some breakfast next morning made inquiry of the landlord for some good place that I could stop for a week or more. I had told him my condition, after thinking a little said yes I can cite you to a place I know is good, and I think they wil take you in, a Mr Norman who lives four miles north west.

Then gave me directions how to get there, started moved on slowly for two miles, and here I came to a house near the road, called to get water it was now getting very hot.

An old man came to the door, and told me to come in, I did so. those old people man and his wife had fine water, also a basket of extra fine peaches. After quenching my thirst, and eating all the peaches I wanted, as there was a half bushel of them and nobody to disturb I took quite a time, ate slow, so that I could chat as much as eat.

When I had been here perhaps an hour, I began to talk of going, no no said the old gentleman, you wilnot go until after dinner and not then until after the middle of evening, it will be so much cooler and then you will have plenty of time to reach Mr Norman's before night. I obeyed orders to the letter.

When time came I started and reached Mr Norman's in due time, they took me in and treated me very kindly so long as I stayed with them.

In about a week some of the boys from the regment were passing, I hailed them they told me where the regment was in camp four or five miles from there. Stayed another week, then went back to regment.

During my absence some of the boys had been sent off on conscrip service. My sojorn at Mr Norman's had not improved my health was now reduced in flesh to one hundred and twenty pounds. My weight in good health was one hundred and seventy pounds, but still lay around in camp. You may imagine my almost helpless condition.

The Dr told me one day he would try a small dram of whisky every day for a time and note the effect, soon saw that the effect was contrary to what was desired. My stomach would not digest scarsely any thing. My stomach and bowels was like unto a hollow coil of gass pipe, and it seemed to me that every thing moved by gravitation.

I lay around camp for a time, when the Dr finally concluded to send me to the hospital, now about the first of October 1863. Left camp late one evening by train reached Maridian [Meridian] procured a bed rested until morning.

Got a train for Lauderdale springs [where there was a Confederate hospital] arrived there in due time, had a walk of near a mile which exhausted me greatly, reported to the superintendant he assigned me to a room where there was already two patiece one from third Ky regment Lt John Cace [Cayce] a brother of George Cace [Cayce] of my company and Captain Haris of thirty fifth Ala regment. [*Probably Captain John Harris of Franklin County Alabama, who reportedly died in 1864.* Source: various internet websites.] All of us down with same complaint.

#### Chapter 40

#### ***In hospital at Lauderdale Springs Mississippi. [Formerly a resort, now a Confederate Hospital] Possom and taters.***

In a little while after I went to my room Dr Thombus of louisville Ky came in to examine me, made prescription, and told me that he would have to limit me greatly in diet. I submitted to his treatment with the grace of a dieing man, as I well knew, if I didnot get relief, and that soon that I would go just like hundreds I had seen and known since the first April the year before.

I had not been here more than ten days when I began to improve, but kept my

room and bed for a month very closely. By this time I had built up finely, had gained half my lost weight but by no means myself yet.

About this time I got an order to report to General Pillow [*Brig. Gen. Gideon J. Pillow, Superintendent of the Volunteer and Conscription Bureau in the western area (Tenn., Ala. and Miss.) of the Confederacy, headquartered in Marietta, Ga.*] in Georgia by letter from Macon Miss, for service in the conscription bureau, and learned Captain Cochran of my regiment [*Company E Captain J. T. Cochran of Farmington, Ky. Reportedly killed at Tarpley's Shop, Tn., Sept. 27, 1864. Source: various internet web pages.*] who was there in hospital had same orders as myself. We consulted, concluded to wait a week or ten days before going up to Macon as we were building up very fast.

I must relate one incident while here, one evening a negro came to our room and said he had a fine possum and would like to cook it with sweet taters for us that night and bring it in next morning. We closed a contract with him and early next morning, here he come with possum and taters, a large dishpan full. Down we sat to eating with the vim of hungry soldiers you may rest assured.

One draw back just at this time Dr. Thombus opened the door and stepped in, he seemed to be amazed, not a word did he speak but looked steadfastly at us. Captain Haris [Harris] was the first to flinch he got up and sit down on his bed, then Lt Cace [Cayce] followed suit, I kept my seat and continued to kinder mince along felt sheepish. The Dr stood there for some minutes then turned went out closing the door behind him not speaking a word. Of course as soon as the Dr was gone Haris and Cace returned to the charge.

This pan of potatoes and Opossum lasted us several days, and am persuaded that it helped to build me up greatly, but have feared that it damaged Haris [Harris], as I have since learned that he was put in his box in that same room, Cace [Cayce] returned to his regiment soon after I left, and remained with it to the last.

#### Chapter 41

**On the move again first to Macon [Mississippi]. Then to the Country. Back to macon. Thence to Starkville [Mississippi]. On conscription service until March 1864.**

A little in November Captain Cochran and myself concluded that we were able to obey the orders we had, left the hospital early one morning and arrived at Macon [Mississippi] before noon reported to Col Reynolds [Reynolds ?] who was commander of the post and of all conscription officers in that part of the state. The Col informed us that five or six officers from our regiment had reported there a few days previous and that he had sent them out fifteen miles east, and there to await orders from General Pillow and that we could do likewise if we desired, and there was a Post office and mail carrier that make round trips every day we could make arrangement with him to bring our mail out to us.

So to a stable we went soon found the driver that had drove the other boys out, soon was on the road and found the boys in due time, all well domiciled as if they expected to remain during the balance of the war. The man of the house took us in for the night, and he would take us to a neighbor next morning that had plenty of room. Enjoyed



the hospitality of our friend, forget his name.

Next morning our friend went with us over to Mr Hiblers, he took us in very kindly, and treated us real fine so long as we stayed, which was two week or more. Had plenty of that, that was good to eat.

But at last our orders came and feared our good time had come to an end, but a soldier never knows to day what wil be tomorrow. Our orders were to report to Col Reynolds [Reynolds ?] at Macon [Mississippi]. Next morning after receiving orders one evening, procured conveyance and off for town fifteen miles. found the Col in his office and presented our orders to him. After seeming to study a few minutes raised up and said.

Captain I will send you to Starkville Miss to take command of the post and there is now a company of cavalry there that will do scouting service for you, and instructed his Adjutant to prepare his papers, then turned to me and said, I wil send you with the Captain to assist him, then gave us transportation to Tibbee station sixty miles north.

Starkville [Mississippi] is twelve miles west of Tibbee, where we found ourselves at a hotel about sundown. As to how we got there from Tibbee cannot say but think we walked. [*Tibbee Station in 1895 had 100 residents, and no longer appears as a living town.*]

#### Chapter 42

### **In Starkville on conscrip service. Easy time even for boom proofs. Col. Bill Forest and Captain have a rangle over a pistol. Indian ball game. Retreat to Columbus.**

As we had reached town one Sunday evening, said nothing about our mission until next morning. Soon after breakfast Captain Hall and Lt. Christian of the company of cavalry that was stationed there came to look us up, having seen us passing the evening before, knew we were army officers and suspected our buisness. They introduced themselves to us and we to them. Then to talking buisness, and in a short time came to mutual understanding as to the work to be done.

And next thing for the captain and myself was to find a place to stay as our salereys would not justify stoping at the hotel. Soon found where we could get our meals, and as a northern silversmith had departed for parts unknown, we took possession of his shop, which consisted of two rooms fire place in each good bed in one. Now we were set up for the winter we trusted and perhaps for the balance of the war, but as before stated soldiers never know.

Soon had all necessary arrangements made down to fire wood and one load of that on hand before night. Now have but little to do, only make out orders for the scouts, and the captain wrote the most of them, leaving nothing for me to do but be jailor. Some times the scouts would bring in such as would have to be locked up for the night. The sherif would do the feeding of them, until they could be sent to Columbus about twenty five miles east.

The Captain and I were very fond of playing euchre, soon began playing every night as seldom any one would come in. but one night a Dr Parker came in when we

were playing and after a little conversation asked if we would like a four handed game, our answer was yes, he then called his waiting boy and told him to go over to the drug store and tell Mr. Ames to come over here, Mr Ames came in a few minutes.

We were congenial spirits, and many were the games that we indulged in from that time until the next march.

Starkville was a lively little town of about five hundred people, soon became acquainted with the most of them.

Done exceedingly well even for bumproofs [sic], but little to mar our peace plenty to eat such as was good and at regular hours. I had improved in health since leaving the regiment greatly but by no means was I what could be call robust but soon began to gain in flesh and strength and ere long was normal if not above.

There was a tribe of indians living west of town some ten miles, and one day the old chief with some of his bucks came to town and made arrangements to play a ball game, and procured a field of five or six acres in a branch flat, set up their poles and set a day to play.

The day arrived pretty sunshiny morning but the previous night had been cold to the extent that the ground was frozen an inch deep, began to melt about the time the play began. It took near three hours for the game, and by the time it was a little more than half over the frese was out of the ground and sloppy a heap. And it seemed to me that the bucks took a great delight in running against each other and knocking down right and left to that extent that they were as muddy as hogs that had just got up from a wallow. The Indians took off a good wad with them and seemed well pleased with their trip.

Every thing went on well and fine until about the last of January or perhaps a little in february when it began to be talked that a federal cavalry fource was prepareing to start out of memphis to ride down through the corn belt in Mississippi. this alarmed us and uneasiness existed.

Soon reported Smith [General William Sooy Smith] and Grierson [General Benjamin H Grierson, Cavalry] were on the move, with two or three men to General Forest [Forrest] one, who was betwen us and the yanks, but was falling back in our direction. Our uneasiness soon reached a point that we moved out eastward to get out of the line of retreat and at Columbus we halted for rest and await developments.

Next day santered over town, but could here but little of what Forest [Forrest] was doing, all reports seemed to agree that he was still retreating before the yanks. Just such reports cont[in]ued until the third or fourth day, when heavy fireing was heard either at or near West point. And soon learned that Forest [Forrest] had completely routed the yanks and they were on their way back to memphis in a great hurry minus much they had brought out with them. . *[Smith and Grierson had left Collierville, near Memphis, on Feb. 11. They reached a point just north of Columbus Miss before turning back, reaching Collierville again on Feb. 26.]*

Captain Cochran concluded in a day or two that our way was clear to return to our post and did so, finding company of cavalry had returned. In a few days General Forest [Forrest] army encamped near by, among them was the 12<sup>th</sup> Ky Cavalry mostly made up near where I lived, many near neighbors that I had not seen for two years of more. Was glad to mix and mingle with them and hear from many others.

One evening quite a number of soldiers were in town and there Col Bill Forest [William Forrest, brother of General Nathan Bedford Forrest] and a Captain met in the drugstore across the street from our office. An altercation came up between them they began loud talking that I took notice of, and stepped out on the pavement, about this time saw the captain step out of the door, and turn to the left, the Col following close up with a large pistol in his right hand, using many cuss words, telling the captain I won't shoot you in the back, but if you will face me I will kill you.

The Captain turned around the corner of the house and soon out of my sight, but kept on around the house and came in sight again when they had passed the back end and turned corner coming towards the street. They were still talking roughly to each other, and Forest [Forrest] saying I will kill you if you will face me.

When they were about half way the length of the house, the captain in a twinkling turned and caught Forest pistol with both hands, Forest took hold with the other hand. Would say that this is the only rangle I ever saw over a pistol as to who should get possession of it.

Just as the rangle began some one hollowed hide out little ones dad's comin drunk.

Quite an exodus around corners and behind trees took place in less time than it takes me to tell it, I took a tree but would risk one eye to watch them. Every body knew that if one got control of the pistol the other would die.

It was a time of great suspense. they continued to restle over the possession of the pistol until they were well nigh exhausted, both large stout men. I cannot say how long it was, but finally fired the pistol into the ground the mussel no more than six inches from the ground. As quick as thought quite a number rushed to them overpowered took the pistol and separated them. General Forest [Forrest] ordered them guarded[?] to their quarters.

When soldiers moved away we had quiet and peace as before. General Sherman was reported to have pushed General Polk [*Lt. General Leonidas Polk, Commanding the Army of Mississippi*] out of his winter quarters at Canton and vicinity, where it had been all winter having returned to Jackson and Canton soon after I went to hospital in October previous.

Sherman continued to push Polk across the state into Alabama, but soon began a retrograde movement, of course he had learned of Smith and Greison's failure. When it was known that Sherman had reached vicksburg all became very quiet as there was not a camp of federals in the state except along the river. We now had nothing to do but our regular routine conscrip duties.

#### Chapter 43

**Learned that my regiment was being mounted at Columbus. Started to meet them. Met regiment at Tibbee. Stayed with them that night. Made arrangements with Col. Crosland [Crossland] to go to Ky. with them. Tenderfoot horse got me one day behind on start. Over took them at Corinth. Ride across Tennessee. Reaching Dukedom [on Ky-Tenn line] at dark the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. Reached**

**home about 9 o'clock. Found my folks all together.**

Thus matters went on until a little in march, when I began hear[ing] that the Ky regments of General Bufords brigade were likely to be mounted and transferd to General Forest [Forrest] Cavalry Corps. Reports got thick and I thought more reliable, on until one Saturday evening, then learned that my regiment was at Columbus [Mississippi] and was there getting horses and would start homeward in a few days.

This news gave me the fidgets, soon made arrangements for a horse to go to Columbus Sunday morning. Morning came got my horse and off for town, had crossed the rail road near Tibbee station and in a short distance met the regiment mounted on their way to Tibbee, where they would await the arrival of the other regments, then all would be off for Kentucky.

Of course all were in great glee jubelant over the prospect of seeing home and homefolks again, now more than two years since the most of us had seen any of our people. I had not seen any of my babys four in number oldest ten years and down, one a year and a half old that I had never seen, only short two months of being two years since I had seen my wife.

Stayed with boys all evening and that night, next morning Col Croslan [Crossland] came around where I was and asked about what I was doing and if my abcence would cripple the conscrip work at starkville. I told him that my work there amounts to almost nothing, explaining every thing to him. He then told me they were going home to recruit and want you to go, and I will stand between you and your direct supereors.

I was glad of the chance to go home, but told the Col that I must return the horse I had to the owner. All right return the horse and be back this evening as we will start in the morning, and I will have you a horse. All right I will be here this evening if I have to walk from town, and in short time I was on the road reached town by ten Oclock, and in a little while had delivered my horse, had my board bill paid, and every thing ready to start back with a man to bring the horse back that I procured to ride to camp. Ate dinner mounted and reached camp in due time.

Next morning the Col came to me and said there is a number of horses down at a certain place now go and get your choice, of course I lost no time, selected the one I thought the best traveler got a saddle bridle and some blankets. Mounted rode back to where my company was camped.

The third and eight regments had arrived the evening before, so all was ready to ride for Kentucky and by nine Oclock all were in column on the road with two hundred and fifty miles before us.

Had not gone more than three miles when my horse began to limp badly from sore feet, for the want of shoes, rode up to the Col told him the condition of my horse which he could see. He asked me about blacksmith shop. I told him there is a shop at starkville the only one I know of. He said you will have to have him shod and perhaps that is the best chance, to go out there it will put you a day behind, but you can overtake us at Corinth as we are likely to stop two or three days.

Got to starkville and [had] horse shod then concluded to stay over until morning.

Mounted next morning for a ride by myself of more than an hundred miles. And overtook the regiment at Corinth the fourth day, all busy making preparations for the ride across the state of Tennessee, and on to Paducah in Kentucky. A large portion of the way was very destitute and of course we had to carry rations and forage with us.

The second morning after my arrival at Corinth we mounted and rode for Paducah.

Now why was it that we surprised the whole town and army so completely I cannot account for only in one way and that is, the general considered himself safe, and did not use the diligence in keeping out scouts that he should have done. *[Pirtle must be talking here of their arrival at Paducah and surprising the Federal forces there.]*

The ride across Tennessee was lonesome, saw but few people and most of them destitute. This was my first experience in country where there had been so much army tramping. Had heard of the devastation but had not realised it to its full extent.

We rode slowly for a few days but when we got perhaps a little passed Jackson [Tennessee] moved out promptly. Passed through Dresden [Tennessee] the middle of evening reaching Dukedom on the Ky line at dark.

As most of my company lived a little to left of the road we were on and wanted to go by home that night many of them began to insist that I take them by Feliciana. I rode up to Col Crosland [Crossland] told him the desire of the boys, he sent me to Col Thomson of the third regiment [Col. Albert P. Thompson, a native of Paducah] who was commanding brigade. He granted the permission, but told me that I must collect them early next morning and meet him in Mayfield at nine O'clock.

I stopped until my company came up, told the boys that they could all go home that night that would promise to meet me in Feliciana at sunrise next morning. So when we reached Dukedom many of the boys broke ranks and away they went in the direction of home, in squads of one to four, to surprise their people.

I met some friends in town and they insisted that I go with them and get supper before starting for home I did so. And was detained an hour with only one of the boys that had not gone on without a moments delay.

Our horses had been fed and rested, we then rode in a gallop until we reached Uncle Jo Hughes thought we must stop and tell him the movement of General Forest [Forrest] which pleased him greatly.

Here we separated Joda McFadden going to town I turned to the right and was home in ten minutes.

Brother Wess had got there before I did.

As my wife and children were living with my father, so I found all together including one babe now a year and a half old that I had never seen.

#### Chapter 44

**Glad to meet home folks. Talked almost the balance of night. On to Paducah next day. Fight at Paducah [March 25, 1864]. Lose Captain and 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. Back to Mayfield next day. Disbanded for ten days. General Forest [Forrest] takes Tennessee brigade and goes to Fort Pillow on River.**

And now for an all night talk, asking and answering questions to that extent that there was but little sleep by any of us.

I had instructed the boys to meet at town by sunup, but about the time the sun was an hour high, I rode up in town. Met many that I had not seen for more than two years, had lots to talk about of course. Tried to get the boys mounted, but found that not more than half of them had come in, waited an hour or more, by this time all but one had arrived. as the one still behind lived five or six miles off, left word for him to follow on and overtake us.

Moved on as fast as I thought our horses would stand up to the hard ride. Reached mayfield near noon, halted formed line, found Bud Boas [Boaz] had overtaken us and none of the others had fallen out. Soon learned that General Forest [Forrest] was three hours ahead of me. After resting a little mounted and instructed the boys, must try and overtake the regiment, then started in a gallop.

Soon saw some of the horses giving out and falling behind, but quite a number was keeping up. When in about four miles of town [Paducah], heard the boom of guns and some rattle of musketry. By this time nearly all of my boys had fallen behind.

My horse was getting tired but the heavy firing in front seemed to put new life in him, and in thirty perhaps forty minutes met my brigade retiring from the charge against the fort that was so destructive to my company regiment and brigade. The object of attacking Paducah was to procure clothing horses and medical supplies.

Col Thomson [Col. Albert P. Thompson, a native of Paducah] who was commanding the Ky brigade and placed on the left and instructed to drive the yanks in[to] their fort and hold them there until the town could be stripped by the Tennessee brigade of every thing in the way of men's clothing horses and medical supplies.

Col Thomson [Thompson] did as instructed drove the yanks behind their works with out the loss of a man. But by this time his egotism got the better of his judgment, concluded he would [take] the fort and ordered a charge. In this charge he was killed by a cannon shot and many of his men were killed and wounded among them were Captain Lynch [E. J. Lynch] and Lieutenant McFall [J. A. McFall] of my company killed and Tom [W.T.] Jackson badly wounded and left.

*[From Shelby Foote's The Civil War: "Inside [the fort], the blue commander declined to capitulate despite continued threats and demonstrations, including one all-out attack that was launched by a Kentucky regiment whose colonel, a native of Paducah, disobeyed restraining orders, apparently in an excess of pride and joy at being home again, and led a charge in which he and some two dozen of his men were killed or wounded. These were the only Confederate casualties..."]*

Meeting brigade learned where regiment was. The first man of my company I met was Bob Browder sergeant Major, who informed me that Captain [Lynch] and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt [McFall] were left dead near the fort and that I would have to take command of the company.

The brigade moved back to their horses, not far from where the general freight depot now stands. mounted and moved out of town on the same road that they went in on. Rode out to camp creek twelve miles.

Next morning moved on to Mayfield, there General Buford disbanded the third and seventh regments, with instructions to meet him at Feliciana near where Watervalley now is on the I.C.R.R [Illinois Central Rail Road]. The General gave us ten days, and insisted that we bring in all the recruits posable, and all, both old and new men to be as well mounted as the country would afford.

Now no man had any command of any man, none responsible to any one. Of course a wonderful scatering took place, every man going off the best rout home. I took what was known as the Dukedom road, with quite a number of others. Some turning off at every fork in the road. As I had rode my horse very hard the day before I now saw that he was giving down to that extent, I doubted his ability to carry me home that day. Stopped fed and let him rest an hour, then walked and led, reaching home quite a while after night.

Brother Wess and Jim had been more careful of their horses reached home before night. Of course had lots to talk about again. And now for ten days all enjoyed ourselves finely. Had a chance to ride all over the country, go when we pleased, and where we pleased, and stay as long as we pleased. A greate privilidge for old soldiers.

On our way to Paducah General Forrest [Forrest] sent Colonel Fulkner [W. W. Faulkner] to union city [Tennessee] with 12<sup>th</sup> Ky regment to capture Colonel Hawkins [Lt. Col Isaac R. Hawkins of the 7<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry, U.S.A.] and his garison, which Col Falkner done with but little loss.

On returning south General Forest [Forrest] took the Tennessee brigade with him, and went to Fort Pillow on the river above Memphis capturing the whole fource. And from the best information that I have been able to get there was a greate slaughter of men, the yanks called it masacree. [*The Fort Pillow Massacre. According to Shelby Foote, "of the 262 Negro members of the garrison, only 58 - just over twenty percent - were marched away as prisoners, while of the 295 whites, 168 - just under sixty percent - were taken. The rest were either dead or in no shape for walking. Here was discrimination with a vengeance...."*] General Forest [Forrest] lost but few.

## Chapter 45

### *All reunited and riding over the country.*

When the day came for rendevoze at Feliciana, men began coming in early, in squads from every direction, so that by noon nearly if not all were present with many recruits.

[*From Shelby Foote's The Civil War: (Following the attack upon Paducah, Forrest withdrew to the south and) "at Mayfield...he halted to ... furlough his three Kentucky regiments, with instructions to go to their nearby homes for a week, there to secure new clothes and mounts, at the end of which time they would reassemble at Trenton, fifty miles south of the Tennessee line. This they did, on schedule and to a man, many of them accompanied by recruits...."*]

General Buford had arrived with third regiment and many recruits. A greate contrast between this day now a little in April 1864 and the tenth of September 1861 when my company first started to the war. Now perhaps nine hundred or a thousand men

all mounted and nearly all armed, then only fifty muskets and none mounted, except on wagons and buggies. Now every man the custodian of his rations, which consisted of a piece of bread and meat in a sack hung on his shoulder, then rations were packed in large boxes and consisted of bread meats and all the dainties that the women of the community had the art to fix up, and I would say, they were not slouches in the culinary art.

We left town that evening, but where we stoped that night cannot now remember. The next I know is that we went into camp near Walnut Grove Church some nine miles south west of Feliciana. This must have been four or five days after leaving town.

Next morning after camping at Walnut Grove Church we mounted and took the road toward town and reached there about ten O'clock. Rested for a time then took the Clinton road reaching there near night and camped.

Next morning took the Milburn road and reached there near noon.

I had been detailed with my company for rear guard and was perhaps a mile behind when column stoped to feed and eat dinner. General Buford walked back some distance met me and said, I want you and your company to go with major Smith to Mayfield this evening to collect rations and forage then told me where to find feed for my horses.

After feeding and resting Major Smith and staff rode up said he was ready to go. We mounted and reached town by the middle of the evening. Collected all rations and forage wanted. Then went into a stable for the night. Done fine until three O'clock in the morning when General Buford came in and hustled us out.

The general left Milburn went to Paducah emptied[?] one stable there that the Tennesseans failed to get too on the twenty fifth of march previous. In this raid General Buford porcured two hundred horses without the loss of a man.

Next I recolect the regiment was in camp near McKensey [McKenzie] in Henry county Tenn. Where we went to from Mayfield Ky I have no recolection what ever. The time is a blank to me until I find myself in the above named camp. I cannot know how long it had been but perhaps two weeks.

Lt Col Sherel [L.J. Sherrill] was in command of regiment. He came to me one morning and said, I want to take a detail from each company and go back to Ky to pick up some more recruits. And you get ready with ten men to start at noon.

We rode north passed through Cottage Grove [Tennessee] and camped between there and Boydsville [Graves County, Kentucky, on the Tennessee line]. Moved on to town next morning. There the Col dismissed each company to go to their own vecinity and gether up all recruits posable and meet him here on a certain day about a week off.

I took the Feliciana road with my squad about twenty miles distant. Reached the neighborhood a little after noon dismissing the boys for one or two days, to meet me at Feliciana. From town I took ride north some miles then west in Hickman county then south and recrossed to south side of Bayoudesha creek and stayed with unkle Elie Latta that night, next morning moved westward on south side of creek as far as Moscow, thence south to state road and back to Feliciana, having been on this tramp three days.

Here I dismissed the boys to meet me at town or along the road next morning. So we could go on to Boydsville as it was the day to meet Col Sherel [Sherrill]. We had picked up quite a number of boys, some middle aged men. Started for Boydsville and got



there before night, the Col had got there and procured forage left a man to tell me where to go with my company and await orders.

The Obion river being very high could not cross there, anticipated staying here several days, but some time in the night a scout came in and reported the yanks on our trail, Col Sherel [Sherrill] thought best to move higher up the river, mounted the men with him started on, sending a courier to me with instructions how to follow.

When the messenger found our camp, I was a half mile off at a friend's house. By the time I got back to camp had decided to stay where we were until day light. I followed at daylight crossed Taripin [*Terrapin Creek in Graves County ?*] on the story bridge.

From here sent two men ahead to have breakfast prepared and forage ready. The boys rode on lively some six miles to Bob Caldwell's, had every thing ready for us when we got there. After feeding eating breakfast and resting awhile moved on up the river [*North Fork of the Obion River in Tennessee ?*] to Cooks bridge. Then turned south to Paris [Tennessee], learned that Col Sherel [Sherrill] was six hours ahead, and he left word for me to come on to McKensey [McKenzie, Tennessee] where I found him about sundown that evening.

Here my memory fails me again, have no recollection of any camp or move until we got to Tupelo Miss the latter part of may, except one incident at Corinth.

One morning two men of Co H reported to the Doctor having chills, he gave them quinine as was his custom but in a few moments discovered that he had gave them Morphine by mistake. He went to work to make them throw it off but only succeeded partially with one. They soon began to get stuped.

The Dr thought exercise the best remedy at hand. so to walking them up and down the road. A man under each arm of both of them to hold them up, and in a little while had men placed every little way with buckets of water to dash in their faces by the dipper full. This water would rouse them for a few moments, then had to be carried until the next dipper ful was dashed in their faces.

Thus they were kept moveing until middle of the evening, when the one that had thrown off a portion of the morphin rallied to that extent that they gave him time to rest, and in a few days was well and able for duty. But the one that failed to throw off any of the morphine seemed to grow wourse, they kept up the water treatment. Before night took him to a creek where the water was half thigh deep would wade him in it until chilled then walk him on the banks until warm, keeping up the dashing of water in his face.

Thus they continued all night and half of next day before the Dr thought it safe to let him rest. This man never regained his health and lived only a month or two.

There was more interest manifested in these men by the soldiers than I ever saw at any other time, even where there was thousands killed and wounded. Men gathered along the road by the hundreds and perhaps thousands all seemed interested and ready willing and anchious to do any thing for the men's relief.

#### Chapter 46

#### **In camp at Tupelo Miss. Relieved of direct command of company. And Battle of**

### **Brice's Cross Roads [June 10, 1864]**

Our brigade arrived at Tupelo Mississippi the latter part of May 1864. And it seemed that General Forest [Forrest] had his whole army in camp near.

About this time there was being worked up a dissatisfaction against me as commander of the company. C. L. Randal [Randle] who was with Col Crosland [Crossland] in Virginia during 1861 and was discharged in the spring 1862 came to the regiment now 1864. Was made captain I first lieutenant B. P. Willingham second Lieutenant. This increased the dissatisfaction with some, but I advised submission and soon all became quiet and all insubordination talk was pretty well hushed.

Now being a subaltern in company relieved me of much hard duty. When in camp company commander's duties are hard and irksome, but are not so hard on the march or in fight as when idle in camp.

On the third day of June we were ordered to draw rations and prepare to march next morning. So early next morning we were called into line. Captain Randal [Randle] rode up and assumed command of company.

Our brigade had orders or pretended [sic] orders to report to General Johnston in Georgia. We moved eastward two days, then ordered back to Tupelo, which took us nearly three days to return, as it rained and flooded all streams.

Had just got in our old camp, when ordered to draw and cook rations. Next morning early were called into line and started north, and moved up the railroad twenty miles perhaps thirty by night [to near Booneville].

Col Lyon [*Colonel Hylan B. Lyons of the Eighth Kentucky Infantry Regiment, Mounted*] had been made brigadier General and was in command of Ky brigade four regiments viz 3<sup>rd</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. About camping time the General ordered Col Sherrill [Sherrill] who was in command of 7<sup>th</sup> to take his regiment out near a place called Blackland [a small settlement to the west of Booneville] where he would find forage, and to be saddled ready to mount by sunrise next morning.

Had no hurry orders from the Col that morning, until the General rode up at the head of brigade. The General ordered Captain Randal [Randle] to mount his company and come to the front as quick as possible. Then ordered Major Hale [H. S. Hale] to mount the regiment and follow the brigade. The captain mounted his company and started, had to gallop on side of road for perhaps two miles to gain the head of column.

General Lyon instructed Captain Randal [Randle] to gallop on and gain two miles ahead of him, then send a Lt. with three or four men half mile or more in advance, and to keep a sharp lookout for yanks as they were in camp last night some five miles to the right [west] of the road [Wire Road] we were on, make all inquiry possible. When we had gained our distance slowed down to a brisk walk.

Captain Randal [Randle] then sent Lt Willingham with J Hare Blair[,] Jim Pirtle Bill Evans and Henry George in advance instructed to keep a sharp watch and if yanks were discovered a head to fire a few shots then dash back.

Thus we rode for perhaps ten miles, By this time had learned a good deal about the yanks and expected to find them on our road before we could pass the Brice Cross road, as it was the desire of General Forest [Forrest] so as to be on south side of yanks.

When our advance had got within about a mile or more of the cross road Pirtle and Evans saw two or three yanks sitting on their horses, they stoped looked the best they could until Willingham with the other boys came up, the yanks seemed to have not seen them until about the time Willingham rode up, our boys then fired a few shots and all dash off in wonderful hurry and back to the company which halted the moment we heard the guns.

As instructed Captain Randal [Randle] ordered retreat in gallop back to the brigade, the object was to keep the yanks ignrant of our intention until all was ready to strike When we met head of brigade, General Lyon instructed the Captain to return as near the yanks as he could without being seen by them, dismount move forward form skirmish line and drive those videts back just as far as he could with reasonable safety and hold them until he could get brigade lines forward.

And away we went in gallop as far as the captain thought safe, dismounted and away we went on foot for some distance, the captain then ordered me to deploy the company to the left of the road and to keep left up even with him and he kept moveing forward. This hustled me with left of the company to keep up, soon came in sight of the yanks on the road and began fireing and kept moveing forward and soon our whole line was fireing rapid but on we went until the yanks fire became heavy.

The Captain then ordered a halt and to protect ourselves behind trees, I was then at the left of the line. We were keeping up a continual fire, so were the yanks, four or five to one of us. We had drove them back near a mile. I am persuaded we were now facing a whole regiment.

Soon after this General Lyon rode up at the head of brigade, had left obleked some distance before he reached the fireing line and passed to our left, moveing in trot. As soon as he got near enough to speak began to asking where the yanks were. I told him the best I could, he moved on a little to the left until brigade had passed out of my sight except 7<sup>th</sup> regiment which had been sent to the right and did not come in sight of where I was at that time.

The General moved on until he got well up in their front before he dismounted his men. Major Hale had gone to the right of skirmish line dismounted, and all seemed to be ready to charge at the same time.

Now by this time the ammunion of the company was becoming exhausted, Captain Randal [Randle] sent an order to me to go back to the ordnance wagon and bring up ammunion. I started in run by myself, and why I didnot take a man with me I donot know, but have often wanted to pinch myself for this mistake, as it would have save greate fateague but then I went alone found the wagon got perhaps forty pounds of cartridges started forward and just as I got to the road here comes General Buford at head of Tennessee brigade in a brisk trot just as if he was going into the fight end foremost.

Will now go back to where I started to look up the ordnance wagon. I had just started to look up the wagon when I heard the order forward, ring all round the line. Our line was in [an] ell so that we were attacking the yanks in their front and left at the same time. And in a very short time heavy fireing all around the line and by the time or before General Buford got up to the line the yanks had become panic stricken and fled leaving one gun and perhaps two that they had hurried to the front.

Will now go back to where General Buford was passing me. I started in trot as soon as the road was open keeping almost up with brigade until about the same place that I had left the skirmish line. The firing had gone to the right I turned in that direction through the woods, and soon came upon Levi Moss, he had been shot through the neck. I got him a canteen of water fixed him a pillow the best I could, saw Dan Boas [Boaz] lying near by dead.

I picked up my sack of ammunition and on I went in the direction that I started when I left the road, not far when I struck an other road that seemed to run at right angle with the one that fight had began upon. *[This would be the road from Memphis on which the Federal Army, under BGen Samuel D. Sturgis, was approaching Brice's Crossroads.]* And here met men that I knew, with prisoners, they told me the boys had lots of ammunition taken from the yanks. I threw down my sack and on I went in a good run and soon began to pass guns casissons wagons ambulances and in fact every thing that belong to an army train, the road was full, it seemed to me for two miles, but I may have been overcited about the distance.

I came up with regiment while passing this deserted train and soon came to a hill overlooking a valley that was half mile wide, yanks made a stand on the hill across the valley, and fired several volleys at us but doing us no damage, except one bullet hit Captain Randal [Randle] on a side pocket where he had a small book that was about an inch thick, which saved his life, the bullet pierced half way the book which was just over his heart, this jolt lade him up for a time.

About this time a column of men came down the valley from our left entered the road and passed a head of us. I suppose those men were the Tennesse brigade, as to where the other Ky regments were I had no idea. As soon as this column had passed we moved across the valley and some distance in the woods the other side. And went into camp for the night as night was now upon us.

And now for supper as none of us had any time to eat anything all day. Many of the boys had broken into comisary wagons, had got genuine coffee ham loaf bread and many other dainties. We had a fine supper sure enough coffee with sugar in it. Thanks to Mr. Sturgis for so well a loaded train and turning it over to us.

Some time in the night our horses came up forage with them and after feeding, not long until all was quiet, as fateague with greate excitement will were [sic] out the phisical man.

Will now sum up a portion of our days work, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of June 1864. Our brigade had rode some fifteen miles *[south on Wire Road from Booneville. to Brice's Crossroads]* before we met the yanks, then drove them some five miles *[north on the road toward Memphis]* captured many prisoners and all their wagon train also all but two pieces of artilery includeing every thing that roled on wheels with all their contents.

*[According to Shelby Foote, Forrest's total acquisitions amounted to "18 guns 176 wagons, 1500 rifles, 300,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition and much else. He himself lost nothing, and though he had 492 killed and wounded in the battle...his capture of more than 1600 men on the retreat brought the Federal loss to 2240, nearly five times his own."]*

The Tennessee brigade came up just about the time yanks were getting shakey and

of course some of the yanks saw the Tennesseans coming and numbers grew much faster in their minds than real. And then fort Pillow came to their minds and as remember fort Pillow was their cry all the way from Memphis out, then they thought another sure enough fort Pillow if they did not get away and legbail was the only chance. [*One of the three brigades of Federal infantry at this battle was of black soldiers, who, Shelby Foote says, "had taken an oath to avenge Fort Pillow by showing Forrest's troops no mercy."*] Teamsters cut their harness to loose their mules and left it [*the wagon train*] scattered along the road.

Will now go back to where we had gone to sleep, we did not sleep long until I heard [Sergeant Major] Bob Browder calling to get up and get ready to mount all was in a bustle in a very short time, and not long until we were mounted and in column on the road, but moved very slow until some time after supper.

About this time the Tennesseans had come up with the yanks and was now pressing them hard, and in a short distance began to meet prisoners the Tennessee boys were capturing, they were bringing them back by the hundreds. And while the yanks were so hard pressed, got one of the two guns they got off the battle field so badly bogged in a creek that they left it there. I was told afterwards that Generals Sturgis and Greison [Greirson] got back to Memphis with one six pound gun.

While following the Tennessee boys saw many dead and wounded yanks mostly negroes at one place so many that we left the road and went through the woods for quite a distance as we did not want to trample them with our horses.

Thus the pursuit continued until near noon, when the Tennesseans were exhausted by fighting and sending guards off with prisoners. Our brigade then got to the front 12<sup>th</sup> Ky leading 7<sup>th</sup> in rear. When the 12<sup>th</sup> got up with the yanks pitched into them red eyed caught many mostly white men as the Negroes were put in rear and had all or nearly so been caught by the Tennesseans.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Ky made one charge that proved to be destructive lost several good men, but took quite a number of prisoners. After the 12<sup>th</sup> became exhausted then 8<sup>th</sup> to the front then the 3<sup>rd</sup> all taking more or less prisoners.

At last our regiment got to the front in bad shape to do much as perhaps half or two thirds or more of our boys had fallen out by horses having given down. We were now ten miles passed Ripley [Ripley, Mississippi] and getting late in the evening. My horse became exhausted I exchanged with brother Wess and sent him with horse back

By this time the yanks that had not been caught had become very fleet, so that it was hard riding to come up with them and to keep up. Late in the evening had galloped for quite a distance perhaps a mile when we came to a lane and there stood four or five yanks sitting on their horses not more than two hundred yards from us they fired at us not hurting any one and off they went.

I ordered a charge, but Major Hale looking farther a head than I had done, saw what he feared was a trap and stopped the charge. We rode on slowly through the lane, saw no more yanks. If the yanks had set a trap for us, they had abandoned it before we got there though a fine place for one.

When we had come to the woods at the end of the lane halted and General Buford rode up and after viewing the situation said, Boys, them yanks are as tired as we are and if

we let them alone they will let us alone and there is a good place to rest and sleep, and here we will give up the chase, and all sleep all night and as long in the morning as you want too. There was only about forty of us.

I have heard General Buford criticized for not putting guards out, but it turned out just as he said. We were not disturbed and by morning were wonderfully refreshed, and if we had had as good a meal for breakfast as we had for supper two night previous wood [sic] have been in fine spirits, but had but very little or nothing for ourselves or horses.

#### Chapter 47

#### **Returned to Tupelo, and encamped for two weeks.**

When the sun was perhaps two hours high General Buford told us to make our way back to Tupelo the best we could and that you will have to get off the main road in order to get rations or forage and that you need not maintain an organization and do the best you can for your horses.

And now to retrace our steps back to Tupelo near seventy five miles, not knowing when or where we could get any thing to eat, or to feed with, though we could graze our horses, as the grass was fine almost every where.

We all soon got on the road in squads, but moved slowly as our horses were very sore from yesterday's run. After a little while began to scatter going to the right and left. I turned off to the right found forage to feed my horse, nothing for myself until I got back to Ripley, there I got some dinner then nearly night, I then rode a little way and found a good grass patch, here stoped took off my saddle, gave him a fine opportunity to fill himself full.

About dark tied him to a tree, lay down went to sleep and knew nothing more until sunup next morning.

I then started on, by this time my horse was getting over his soreness and could travel pretty well. I kept the road that we had chased the yanks on two days previous, saw where many had been burried, and some I am sorry to say were not burried deep enough to prevent the hogs from rooting them up and tareing them to pieces.

I cannot now remember how far I traveled that day as I stoped to let my horse eat grass several times and in no hurry, I did not go very far, donot think I reached the cross roads until next morning.

There was some wounded to that extent that they could not be removed, so there had been a hospital erected and rations furnished, and here I got a good meal the first since leaving Ripley some forty hours previous, also some corn for my horse.

By this time all our captured property and prisoners had been removed. It had taken me two days and a half to retrace the road that we had drove and chased the yanks in one day and a half. I cannot remember positively, but think I stayed over until next morning, then moved on down to Tupelo reaching camp about noon, finding most of the boys had beat me there, and had got their horses in reasonable condition except a few that was still stiff and criply, brother Wess had nursed my horse to good shape, I had taken good care of his during my return, rode him just enough to work of[f] his soreness and

given him a chance to eat all the grass he wanted and some corn.

In two or three days all had got to camp.

On arriving at camp learned that Levi Moss had been sent to Lauderdale springs with a good prospect of recovery, which was a surprise to me, for when I left him where he was shot, expected him to be found dead just as I left him and told the boys where he could be found.

Captain Randal [Randle] had recovered from his jolt so that he was himself although a little sore.

By about the 18<sup>th</sup> June had nothing to do but attend our horses, cook and eat, thus we remained for about two weeks.

#### Chapter 48

### **General Smith equipping an army in Memphis, to make another raid south. Off on scout and picket duty in front of Smith.**

*[“Maj. Gen. A.J. Smith, commanding a combined force of more than 14,000, left LaGrange, Tennessee, on July 5, 1864, and advanced south. Smith's mission was to insure that Maj. Gen. Nathan B. Forrest and his cavalry did not raid Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's railroad lifeline in Middle Tennessee and, thereby, prevent supplies from reaching him in his campaign against Atlanta.” His orders were to find and “follow Forrest to the death if it cost 10,000 lives and breaks the treasury.”]*

Now about the first of July General Smith [Major General Andrew J. Smith] began collecting another army in Memphis, to march south east. But General Forest [Forrest] had a way of always finding out all the movements of the yanks so that he knew what they were doing very nearly as well as they did themselves. Here in lay General Forest [Forrest's] greate fort [sic], to keep his men consealed and to know just where and how many there was of the enimy.

General Smith began his movements about the first of July [July 5] and of course Forest [Forrest] must prepare to meet him. He first sent Captain Tilor [H. A. Tyler] of the 12<sup>th</sup> Ky regiment with one hundred men intrusted to meet Smith and hover around him and detain all he posably could, but to take good care of his men. That is not expose them dangerously.

And at or near the same time ordered a detale of five hundred men and officers to report to Col Bill Forest [William Forrest, the General's brother] at Ripley, for rest and picket duties. I was in this detale also several of my company. Major Hale was with us I think second in command. It took us all day perhaps two days to reach Ripley, went into camp about a mile south of town.

Next morning all was in a stur and bustle getting all the scouts and pickets collected with their several commanders. I think about two hundred men were sent out in about fifteen squads to go some fifteen to twenty miles in front, the scouting parties were directed to go forward until they met the yankee scouts which would be perhaps forty miles.

By ten O'clock the last picket squad moved off for their post. I was left over for next day or perhaps the third day as they were not expected to stay more than two days until relieved. In due time I was called with about fifteen men and sent about fifteen miles directly towards where the yanks were said to be.

Kept videts out a mile or more, here we stayed two days and nights in peace until a little before day the second night when we heard a gun fire by advance videt and as a matter of fact we mounted our horses quick and stood ready for the fray. Not many minutes until we heard horses feet, soon decided that it was only one horse, in a few moments more Jim Cox [probably J. D. Cox, 3<sup>rd</sup> Crpl of the regiment] rode up about as much out of breath as his horse, reported that he had killed a yank that was trying to slip around him through bushes, but cracked the dry sticks so that he could be heard. And when the yank had got even with him took the best aim he could at the noise, and fired. Then listened at him kicking, so I know he is dead.

Fearing the yanks had discovered our locality decided to drop back a mile or two and did so, and here remained until after sun up. Then moved forward cautiously, but when we reached the place where Jim had killed his yank, there we found a sure enough dead cow. All fears of the yanks knowing our location passed away, and we felt easy, and in a few hours our relief came and back to camp we went to rest. While out on those scouts and pickets post the citizens would feed us very well, had to carry forage for our horses.

After resting one or two days was sent out again, this time with another set of men on another road, while out this time no incident worth noting, only regular picket duty.

By the time I got back to camp the yanks were reported to be getting close by so that our scouts and theirs were meeting quite often and having little running fights, yanks always leading, I suppose they were out for the purpose of locating us.

I had been in camp perhaps all day, reports coming in thick of how fast the yanks were moving and heading directly for Ripley. About sundown Major Hale sent for me to come up to his quarters for instruction. I walked up there about two hundred yards, the Major said he wanted me to go out on the Pokahuntus [Pocahontas] road to the picket, take command and send captain (I forget his name) back to camp. Get ready as quick as you can I will have all instructions ready.

Went back to my camp filled my forage sack full of corn, put some rations in my haver sack, saddled up mounted rode up to the Major. He gave me written orders for the captain, and then told me how to find the post, it was sixteen or eighteen miles. The most of the way [was] a plain open road used much, the balance of six or eight miles a dim blind kind of road. Major Hale was very minute in describing how to find where to leave the main big road.

It [was] then dark but I started for my lonesome ride. I rode for quite a distance, at last came to the farm on the right where I was to turn to the left, I knew the place by star light, though I had never been along that road before. Hearing I would get lost in the woods, concluded to stop and stay where I was until daylight, dismounted dropped down in fence corner with my arm locked in my bridle reins and slept fine the balance of the night, although the yanks were reported to be moving in our direction and getting close by.



Got up when light enough to see clearly, and there was my road that turned off through the woods. Mounted and on I rode finding the picket in an hour or more. Delivered the orders to the captain, he then turned his men over to me mounted his horse rode off. I never met him again.

I let the videts remain just as they were when I took command. Lollod about until near noon when some ladies that lived near made their appearance with a large dishpan and it about full of peach cobbler that was fine and as much as all could eat. Thought then that I did not care if I stayed as long as peaches lasted. But then soldiers never know, in an active campaign we fare sumtously one day then two days do with out any thing to eat.

About the time we were eating our cobbler heard in the distance some heavy firing our scouts and the yanks had met. We concluded the firing was some twelve mile off and some distance farther south than we were as we were near the Tennessee line. This firing was repeated several time during the evening, but by dark it had all ceased and every thing quiet, not a gun to be heard any where.

We talked over our position the yanks getting as close to town as we were they north west we a little east of north. Looked as if we stood a good chance to be cut off from our command, but knew that I could woods it to the east around the yanks, as there was no stream that would interfere much. We were in an untenable position, but decided to stay there unless the yanks attacked us then act according to circumstances, so down we lay and went to sleep did not wake until good light.

By a little after sun rise scouts had met and fearce firing insude. I then mounted my men and rode back to the main road. And just here I met a courier with orders for me to do just what I had done. The firing continued at intervals and seemed to get closer to town and I would move a little nearer town also. Thus we continued all day, until late in the evening. I saw bill Evans [probably W. H. Evans of the regiment] rideing at a lively pace I knew he had orders for me.

The order was to come in lively, and if I should be cut off to woods it to the left and rejoin the command a few miles south of town. I started in a lively trot and kept it up, and when I got in sight of town there was Col Forest [William Forrest] with all his men in line of battle and as we rode up opened the line for us to pass through, the whole line turned and followed us the Col leading. Moved two miles south of town formed line and fortified the best we could with logs rails and bresh.

I dismissed my men and told them to rejoin their own portion of the command, I went to the detail from my company and regiment. Yesterday we fared sumptuously on peach cobbler, but to day not a bite had we to eat of any thing soldier like.

Next morning moved south east, met General Buford with his devision after noon, and all turned in the direction of Pontotoc, as the yanks had taken the road that way. We moved slowly almost all night, I got very tired hungry and sleepy, I went to sleep several times rideing along the road, but when my horse would stop I would wake up and feel refreshed for a little while. We stoped a while before day, lay down and slept until after sun up.

We had struck the Ripley and Pontotoc road some miles north of Pontotoc. We then moved on a mile or more south of town formed line on top of a hill on south side of a valley that was a half mile wide. Built us pretty good breast works out of logs rails or

any thing that we could get hold of.

Here we got rations, the first I had seen since eating the peach cobbler spoken of, two whole days intervening between this day and cobbler day, equal to seventy hours.

#### Chapter 49

### **Heading off the yanks at Pontotoc. Anticipating fight. Yanks move east, we follow. Battle at old Harrisburg [AKA Battle of Tupelo, July 14, 1864].**

About night could hear the yanks coming into town [Pontotoc], sent out a skirmish line, and instructed to sleep on arms, nothing troubled through the night, but as soon as it began to get good light yankee skirmishers began an advance on our and brisk firing ensued for a time, then eased off, yanks falling back out of sight, and in place of fight lay idle all day and night.

Next morning could hear a commotion about the yankee camps, could not tell what it ment, but after a time General Chalmers [James R. Chalmers] rode up to left of line the highest ground about there, put his field glasses to his eyes, and decided the yanks were moving east [toward Tupelo] in place of coming out to meet us, and so stated.

And off he rode in gallop, and in a little while here came our horses, mounted took side road that lay paralel with the one the yanks were on, and rode hard all day and until after dark, then turned to the left and struck the Tupelo road at old Harrisburg one and a half miles west of town [Tupelo], just where I had camped two years previous.

General Buford had pushed some of his men forward and got a few shots at the yanks when passing cross roads. Here at the cross road where the head of our column had come to a halt all were sitting on our horses listening to the yanks in their camp which was not more than a half mile off, all in plain view of each other had it been light.

After a time General Forrest [Forrest] sent a verbal order to Col Crosland [Crossland] to send one of his companys around south of the yanks and establish pickets as near to them as safe and watch their movements just as close as posable and report at once any indication of a south movement [i.e., toward Mobile, Alabama, not yet in Union hands].

Col Crosland [Crossland] and myself were sitting on our horses near each other, when the staff officer rode up and delivered his order from the General. Captain Randal [Randle] was on the Col's staff at the time and had been from the time we reached Pontotoc. And because I was in command of the company when the Col got those instructions, [he] turned to me and said you heard all that order, I told him I did, do you understand them, I think I do. Well you know all the woods fields and roads as well or better than any other man in the regiment. And you take your company and do the best you can but take good care of your men.

I started and went perhaps two miles south, on the same road that we had come in on, turned east through the woods, had gone but a short distance half mile or more when Wilson Edwards orderly sergeant's horse and my own began to be excited.

We knew that we were getting close to the yanks, we talked over the situation a few minutes and decided to get back to the road and go farther south. But by this time the

boys were all asleep, and here Wilson and I had a hard job to wake up the boys, and get them to understand the situation with out making any nois, as we feared any disturbance would bring the yanks upon us and we did not want any fight at that time.

Finally got all awake and back to the road that we had left, then moved south some distance a mile or more. When we came to a road that turned left through a lane, this we took and I began to leave some pickets with all the instructions that I had received, left pickets every half mile. And by the time I had gone two miles eastward had left all but five of my men and Lt Willingham.

I now discovered a lane going north, and here I left Lt Willingham with three men. I took the other two Wilson Edwards and Bill Evans with me down that lane direcly towards the yanks, a field on the left woods on the right. Rode perhaps a half mile, when we came to where the fence next the woods turned to the right in a kind of sag or branch.

Here our horses began to be excited, we knew yanks [were] not far off, could hear a kind of lumbering in their camps but thought it a mile off. After sitting here and listening for a time I jumped down threw my bridle rain to one of the boys, then said, I would go across that neck of woods to the field on the other side, thought I would have a much better chance to hear.

Ran perhaps two hundred yards came to the field and there sat a yankee on his horse some two hundred yards up the rise in the field. I watched him closely for a time, he seemed to be rideing his beat of about two hundred yards a little quartering [sic] from where I was at the edge of he bushes.

Saw a tree about a third of the way to the yank, decided I could reach the tree by starting when he would turn his back to me and away I went to the tree, stood against the tree next to him. As I knew it was darker where I was than on top of that hill where he was and as a man cannot see out of light into the dark, knew he could not see me. Here I stood for quite a while listening to the nois in camp and watching my yank.

I had about decided in my mind that the yanks were crossing old town creek as the nois sounded just like wagons on a bridge. But became very tired set down to rest a little and about the next I knew it was getting light so I could see the buttons on my yanks coat.

I was now in a dilema as to what to do, but when he turned his back sliped around the tree and kept it between me and him until I reached the woods, then ran to where I left the boys with my horse. But now they were gone, my horse also, thought to find them at the other end of the lane, but had gone but a little way when bang bang went quite a number of guns just where I expected to find the boys and my horse.

I knew the yanks were between me and the boys, so jumped over the fence into the field on the west side of land and started west in a run. This field had not been in cultivation this spring and weeds had grown to about as high as my head. I had gone but a short distance perhaps a hundred yard and got on higher ground where I could see the mouth of the lane where I had left Willingham and the boys. I looked the best I could, but could see nothing of the boys.

But just at this time up rode about twenty yanks and moved on the same way I knew my boys had gone off. I got back in higher weeds crouched a little and can assure you the grass grew but little under my feet for about a mile. Those yanks were about a half mile to my left and rode as fast as I ran.

At last saw captain Horn of the third Ky [probably J. Clay Horne] coming meeting the yanks, yanks turned and fled. I then lay down to rest, resting for a time got up and started on, a little north saw a house half mile or more off in the direction I wanted to go, stopped and asked for some breakfast.

Had found a woman with three or four small children there. The woman got me breakfast in a little while very churfully. Would be glad to meet this woman now, just to thank and let her know that I have never forgotten her kindness.

Now by this time the battle was beginning to rage fearsly. I was then some three miles from the heavy fireing. As soon as I had rested a little started on a foot not having seen or heard of my horse. I moved on the best I could, and when I reached the ground where the Ky brigade had made their distructive charge, the first man I met was Major Smith division comisary who I knew.

*[The Ky. Brigade he speaks of is his own, Lyons' Brigade of Buford's Cavalry Division. The Brigade at this battle consisted of four Kentucky Cavalry Regiments: the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and Faulkners. Shelby Foote's description: "July 14 dawned hot and still, and the [Confederate] troops on line were vexed by delays....Around 7.30, a Kentucky brigade near the center jumped the gun and started forward ahead of the others, who followed piece-meal...with the result that what was to have been a single determined effort...broke down from the outset....[The Confederates] lost 1326 killed and wounded and missing, [the Federals] barely half that.]*

He says you have been reported captured how did you get away, I told him I was a good runner. After talking a few minutes told me he thought the brigade would pass the hospital in a short time and how to find it, soon found the hospital and there was [a] wonderful sight. I had never seen any thing of the kind before except at Shilo more than two years previous. I was then wounded and sick from the loss of blood, and of course paid but little attention to it.

But now had a good chance to notice though the battle was still raging fearcely. General Forest [Forrest] seemed to be directing in person, I think he had lost his hat, could see his white locks flowing in the air. While making himself so conspicuous I wonder some yank did not shoot him down, but if he got a scratch I did not hear of it.

While at the hospital noticed many wounded, and the doctors O how buisey they were, cutting out bullets and cutting arms and legs off. I noticed a four bushel tottan [sic] basket almost full of legs and arms. One man I noticed closely, he had been shot just over the left eye, his brain ouseing out a lump as large as the half of a hen egg, but was breathing as smoothly as a baby asleep, there was nobody that seemed to be paying any attension to him. And when I left him, had no idea of ever seeing him again, but met this same man again about thirty years afterwards apparently sound, but was told that he had derange spells. I do not remember his name, but he belonged to our regiment I think Captain Nowlin's [D. L. Nowlin, Company "G"] company.

Perhaps an hour after finding hospital General Buford came riding by leading Ky brigade, my regiment in front and sure there was my horse and all my trapings just as I dismounted from him about midnight the night before.

Will give some of my ideas of how the battle was fought. As stated above our

army had I think pretty well all collected at or near the cross roads at old Harrisburg the night previous. Lines were formed that morning. General Buford[ 's] division on the left, Tennessee brigade [Gen. Tyree H. Bell] on the left of division, General Roddy [Philip D. Roddy], on the right, which really placed Ky brigade in center of the line.

Donot know where General Chalmers was placed or whither [sic] he really had a command of his own, did not see him that day. [*James R. Chalmers commanded the First Division of Forest's Cavalry, which was placed in reserve as the battle lines were being formed. Chalmers received conflicting orders throughout the battle from various sources, hindering effective support to the other units.*]

I have heard much censure and criticism about that days work, as to who was to blame I donot pretend to say. But have my doubts as to the intension of making a charge on their works that they had all night to build. But think it most likely that the Ky brigade being flushed with victory over Sturges [BGen Samuel D. Sturgis, at Brice's Crossroads] only a month previous, had such great confidence in themselves thought they could whip the whole federal army. And some one heard some one hollow and thought charge, and hollowed charge then repeated along the line, and charge it was with the Ky brigade alone. I have never heard of the man that gave the order or ortherised the order to be given.

The Ky brigade had an open field with a little sag between our lines and the yankee lines, the yankee lines a little more than a half mile off. And by the time our men had gone half way yanks saw that the other lines were not moveing, turned all their fire on this one short line from right front and left, yanks being an infantry or double line, ours being a cavalry or single line, they had not less than six men to our one, and they behind works. Of course the fire being so murderous our men could not stand it, broke and fled leaving many dead and wounded.

In a short time Roddy was ordered to charge but made a light attack and was driven back with some loss. Just a little after this is when I arrived on the scene and was talking with Major Smith. And in short time fireing began around to our left, and as the hospital was a little in that direction but more to the left, I moved on and by the time I reached the hospital or a little before came in full view of both yanks and our men that was shooting at each other.

There I saw General Forest [Forrest] superintending the fight in person. Our men advanced but short distance perhaps two hundred yards after I got in sight of them. When they began to retire which they did in good order with no confusion. As this fight was so far to left the yanks could not infilade our men without shooting their own. So our men didnot suffer so severely as the other brigades had done.

This was the grandest sight I had a chance to take notice of during the whole war. Those men in advanceing would stop and seem to take good aim fire, walk forward load as they walked then shoot again, and when they began to retire would walk back until loaded, then stop turn round, take aim and fire. Thus they continued until they reached the woods, will say was near a half mile, and would say that they didnot seem to be in any hurry about any of their movements.

[The] yanks did not seem disposed to follow and ceased their fireing as soon as our men were out of their sight.

This winds up the fighting for to day this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of July 1864. My understanding at the time was that this was Bell's [Tyree H. Bell] Tennessee brigade and have never heard it disputed.

About the time all had got quiet is when General Buford came along leading brigade as stated on a preceeding page. I think the General had been holding the Ky brigade as a reserve behind the Tennesseans during this last fight, as he came from that direction. The General moved on down to the next station some five miles south of Tupelo, with Ky brigade and if he had any other troops with him, I have no recolection of seeing any of them.

Went into camp got forage and rations with good prospect to get a good nights rest, and in little while all were sound asleep. It is surpriseing how soldiers will come out of a hard fought battle, ly down and go to sleep victory or no victory or how many dead and wounded they had left on the field.

#### Chapter 50

#### **Second day around Tupelo, and old Harisburg. My horse died.**

We all got a good night sleep last night and feel greatly refreshed this morning, but by the time we had eat our breakfast and fed our horses were called into column and started north, where we knew the yanks were unless they had skeedadled and this we didnot believe.

Moved on half way or more to Tupelo, halted dismounted moved forward some distance, then formed line of battle move forward to very large field looked as if it was a mile long east and west and not less than half mile wide, it was not in cultivation except a strip on the north side near two hundred yards wide planted to corn which was thick and rank.

We form line just on top of a hill on the south side of a dreau [draw] that lay lenth ways [in] the field a little north of center. Stood here for a time when a skirmish line was ordered forward, my company was detailed for our regiment and ordered to deploy to the left so as to cover the regiment, each regiment sent forward skirmishers Major Hale commanding the whole line.

After we had crossed the dreau [draw] where the weeds had grown very rank and was nearing the corn, Major Hale siting on his horse quite a distance to my left ordered double quick. The order was repeated by all line officers and instantly the boys started in a trot until it reached my company, I then hollowed steady boys steady, and in an instant all slowed down to a walk that was in my sight, could not see very far as we were entering the corn at this time.

We didnot go exceeding ten steps when we met a volley of bullets that seemed to me would cut all the corn down in a minute. All broke and fled without any orders from any body and back to the line. There was some got tangled in those weeds in the branch and failed to reach the line before our men began a heavy fire at those yanks in the corn. Some of the tangled boys run the gauntlet some lay still where they had fallen.

Harvey Stevens [probably H. W. Stephens] says he went down the branch until he

got from between the fire then turned up the hill and got to the line. As to myself a weed had caught the sole of my boot, ripped it loose back to the heel and there hung, and of course threw me down, and by the time I had released my foot bullets were sisin both ways over me to that extent that I decided to stay where I was although some yankey bullets were staveing into the ground very uncomfortably near, but didnt think the yanks would come any nearer as they had shown no disposition the day before to push on us.

After a time the yanks fell back to the woods and all fireing ceased to my great satisfaction, I will assure you that it became very monotonouse to me. I got up and up the hill to the line where all but two or three of the boys had returned, they came up in a few minutes.

No body got hurt in my company and if any in regiment or brigade donot now have any recolection of it, and if we hurt any yanks, they carried them off, as we marched over the ground and found no dead or crippled yanks.

After a little there was one yankee officer that would ride up on a hill where we could see him planely, he seem to be watching us closely, I told the boys to take a shot at him, and almost instantly five or six guns were fired, and O how quick he did get down from there, but in a few minutes made his appearance again, but a few shots made him get, saw no more of him.

About this time our horses came up, mounted move forward in line over the ground that we had fought over that morning now after noon. When we reached the woods turned into column and moved on through where the yanks had been in camp since the second night previous. They had left a number of wounded such as they thought unsafe to remove.

I soon discovered when our horses were brought to us that mine was very sick, but urged him on so that I kept up with company for two or three miles. We were then in persuit of the yanks as they had began their return to Memphis. My horse gave down so I had to stop, I stayed with him until near midnight when he died.

The regiment followed on perhaps an other mile where the yanks had prepared to check our boys by the way of an ambush. Nothing daunting our boys dismounted and pitched in to them but was repulsed with loss of Lt Col Sherel [Sherrill] killed and Monroe Stokes [J. M. Stokes, Private] of my company shot through the left lung, and others wounded but do not now remember who they were. [*Lt. Col. Sherrill was killed at what is called the Battle of Old Town Creek, about four miles from Tupelo, and his death is mentioned in General N. B. Forrest's Tupelo battle report.*]

## Chapter 51

### **July 16<sup>th</sup>. Burying the dead. Sending wounded to hospital. Moving to where corn was more plentiful. Going after another horse.**

When my horse was dead last night I gathered my saddle and trapings and started back the way the regiment had gone last night after dark. I had no idea where they would stop, but thought I could find them, I tramped until nearly day before I did find them, lay down and slept two or three hours.

Up in the morning I got a horse from one of the boys and rode out on the ground where the Ky brigade had made their fatal charge. Sad to look upon there lay the dead just where they had fallen two days previous, all wonderfully swollen, and black, could barely recognise them, if it had not been for their clothing, many we could not have told who they were.

About the time I got on the ground, the burial detale arrived and began their work by digging a hole by the side of the dead man, throw the dirt the opposite side and when deep enough would role him in and cover him up.

I have heard many condemnations and criticisms heaped on this man that man and other men for the mistakes made in bringing on and making the fight of past two days. Who was to blame I know not, but a great mistake was made a blunder where by many good men lost their lives, their bones now bleaching on that old field if they have not returned to their mother dust.

I have often thought that egotism and self confidence was largely responsible for the failure, if you call it a failure. We done a portion of what was designed, that is we drove Smith [Major General A. J. Smith] back out of Mississippi to Memphis, but did not hurt him much, but our failure was in getting ourselves so badly hurt. If we could have ruined Smith as we had done Sturges [Sturgis] a month previous it would have filled our desires, and we would not have regreted our loss so greatly.

After a few days when we had buried our dead and taken care of the wounded the best we could, moved down the rail road [about 40 miles] to Prairie Station where there was plenty of corn. Not having a horse to ride I put up with the wagon train and got along very wel. Having a brother that had died some months previous down at Crawfordville [now known as Crawford] some fifty miles down the road , I procured leaf of absence to go down and get the horse that my brother left there.

I reached Crawfordville about noon, stayed over until next morning. Found here an old scool mate Dr Jackson, who I had not seen or heard of for years, was glad to meet him.

Next morning mounted my horse and started back took nearly all day to reach Starkville where I was well acquainted. Having served on the conscrip bureau six months previous to being mounted. Of course stoped over for the night, went to the wedding of Lt Sea of my regiment [probably W. H. Seay of Company B] who had been placed there to fill my place.

Of course had lots to talk about, so much that it took all next day to get through. But by the next morning my friends had kinder eased off asking questions, so I mounted my horse and rejoined my command that evening.

## Chapter 52

### **General Forest [Forrest] Middle Tennessee raid in September.**

Now for about six weeks I am blank, so far as recolection of any move or camp, or any thing that transpired until one morning about the first of September, I find myself with the army on top of a bluff near Kaulbert [Colbert] Shoals on Tennessee river,



moveing directly towards the river, and at same time could see men crossing on horseback. Rode on down the bluff to the water.

*[For his Middle Tennessee Raid, Forrest assembled his force of about 4500 men at Cherokee Station, Alabama. They set out on September 21, crossing the Tennessee River at the Colbert Shoals. Source: "A Battle From The Start," B. S. Wills.]*

Our regiment right in front third regiment just in our front could see all or nearly all in the water from knee deep to half sides of their horses, some swimming. One man I saw who was riding or rather had had been riding a little mule, had got into swimming water and became dismounted, but had managed to get hold of his mule's tail and onto it clung until he reached the shore. This was Roane[?] Willingham have heard him speak of it often since but at the time thought him a goner.

Col Crosland [Crossland] seem to have hesitated about taking to the water when he had reached it and had halted and in a little while General Buford showed himself at the head of the Island signaled us to come that way. We turned almost to right angles from the way the third was going, and crossed without any mishap, except my horse fell in a hole, sank down so I got my feet and legs wet almost to my knees.

All got over the river by noon[?] with the loss of two men, who reports said was drown.

After resting a short time General Forest [Forrest] started for Athens Alabama where there was a yankee fort maned by six hundred men. Reaching there next evening, and invested the fort. And during the night formed lines first one place then an other, so that we got but little rest.

Then after sunup [September 24] moved again up near the fort on the north west side, not more than four hundred yards from it, the whole space covered with felled timber and bresh to that extent that it looked to be almost imposable for men to pass over it. *[The fort was an earth work, 180 by 450 feet, 1,350 feet in circumference, surrounded by an abatis of felled trees, a palisade 4 feet high and a ditch 12 feet wide with its bottom 17 feet below the parapet. The garrison consisted of about 450 men. From the Internet.]*

Here we were instructed how to make the charge. Our brigade was in three lines, 7<sup>th</sup> regiment in front 3<sup>rd</sup> next then 12<sup>th</sup>, and were instructed to keep still, quiet and be sure not to fire a gun until we got the order to charge. Which would be done in the following order. Leading regiment would start in double quick and when it had gone one hundred and fifty yards, then the second regiment would start, and when it got some distance, the third line would start thus scatering us alover that fallen timber. A desperate place to contemplate.

Here we remained for some hours, still and quiet dreding the work laid out for us to do. My position was on the right of front line. O how I dread the job, I can almost taste it as I write, now more than forty three years ago.

About the time we thought the order to charge would come, saw General Forest [Forrest] with a number of his staff riding direcly towards the fort with a white flag over their heads. They rode up near when the Col commanding [Colonel Wallace Campbell of the 110th U. S. infantry] with some of his staff walked out and met the General, there they seemed to hold a conversation for a time.

The Col and his staff turned round walked back inside the fort, and in a few

minutes came riding out, then he and the General with their staffs rode off down the road where our horses were being held, and in about thirty minutes all came riding back and all went inside the fort, and in a few minutes down came the flag.

And now O how we did want to yell and hollow, but Col Crosland [Crossland] made us hush up. Now in a little while our regiment and perhaps the others were moved by the right around to the other side of the fort, during this move could hear what seemed to be a lively skirmish fire about a mile or more south of us, and soon discovered that it was coming nearer.

Our regiment form line to meet the advancing enemy and in a short time here came a company of men on horse back, said to have been General Forest [Forrest] escort falling back before twice their numbers on foot moving as fast as they could walk loading and shooting. Those mounted men seemed to have as great courage as the yanks and shooting back at them.

Thus they continued until the mounted men got back to our line, we let them through and by this time the yanks saw the fort had surrendered and threw down their guns and gave themselves up as prisoners. [*These were detachments of the 18th Mich. and 102nd Ohio, 350 men in all, under command of Lieut.-Col. Elliot of the 102nd, sent from Decatur to reinforce the garrison at Athens.*]

All but one young man who thought to play Johny as he had on a gray jacket, but some of us saw him come out of the yankee line and throw down his gun, it required three of us Henry George Lt Willingham and myself to make him be quiet and not run off.

By noon or little after the prisoners were started off, also such of the property as we did not need with us on our ride through middle Tennessee.

Some time in evening we started for Sulpher trestle where was another fort garisoned by about four hundred yanks. [*The Sulphur Branch railroad trestle, 72 feet high, 300 feet across a deep ravine, guarded by two strong blockhouses and an earthwork with garrisons of 400 men and 600 cavalry, under Colonel William H. Lathrop. Source: "A Battle From The Start."*] We had just got out side of town [i.e., Athens], when we halted. I noticed a man, I suppose had been a sutler with quite a number of hats down on the ground, a number of men around him apparently trading and remembering that my hat was getting well worn I threw my bridle rane to one of the boys jumped down, laid my hat on the ground and noticing a natural colered beaver, tried it to my head, it just fit, got up went back to my horse just in time to move with the column. That sutler I have never seen since.

I made an even swap with him which is said to be no robbery. That hat I wore all fall and winter, slept with it on my head almost every night until I got home the next spring and on until I got tired of it and threw it away.

We reached Sulpher trestle next day about noon [September 25]. They made fight at us but having now a number of guns, brought two across the river, and taking four or five in charge at Athens, that made us quite a respectable battery. And we poared it to them in such stile as soon brought them to terms of surrender. [*The artillery barrage lasted about two hours, dismounting all the Union artillery and killing Colonel Lathrop. "A Battle from the Start."*] During this fight I had charge of horse holders and was not in the line. We burned every thing that was combustibile that we could not carry off.

We started for our ride around in middle Tennessee next morning, and now for about ten or twelve days we were riding almost night and day, or burning and destroying federal property and rail roads, we tore up many miles of rail roads and bridges, a block house at every bridge, would capture the garison unles they skedadled before we got there.

During our ride around found one negro refugee camp where there was a thousand perhaps two thousand women children and old decrped men. And O how they did yell and boohoo. But to no perpose, we burned all their tents and belongings and left many almost naked.

One night on this trip I remember useing a big flat rock for a bed, hunted a small stone, which I used for a pillow by turning the soft side up and useing my new hat for casing.

In our winding struck a block house between Franklin and Columbia, with about seventy five men that didnot want to surrender. General Forest [Forrest] had to resort to his bluff game as he had sent his artilery back from Sulpher trestle. The Lt. commanding surrendered we burned the blockhouse and bridge.

And now for Tennessee river as it was rising, struck out a south west course crossed duck river some ten miles below Columbia [Tennessee].

The first day after crossing duck river, I was put in charge of this last squad of prisoners with my company as guards, no mishap until going into camp at dark. I was placing sentinels around the camp, when one yank tore off through the bushes. Instantly my thought was that if I raise any disturbance others would brake to run, then shooting would begin, and who would get hurt I did not know, so I went along quietly, placed my sentinels, and if any more got away that night I knew nothing of it.

Next morning an other company was sent to relieve me and my company and we took our place with the regiment. By this time General Forest [Forrest] seemed to be getting in a hurry to re cross Tennessee river, the yanks were preparing to push on us, so we rode almost night and day, reached the river one morning [October 6], found some flat boats that we used as ferries, and all had got across by middle of evening except Lt Willingham.

He had been in charge of cattle drivers[,] about twenty[,] with perhaps two hundred beef cattle, when he reached the river and was about loading his cattle on the boats, yanks came close by shooting, and as he had but little help saw that he could not cross, but scattered his cattle in the woods took his men and put out down the river, and finally crossed and rejoined the command.

We had been on the north side of Tennessee river some twenty perhaps twenty five days and had accomplished much. Will now sum it up the best I can. Captured two forts with about one thousand prisoners I think six guns, quite a number of horses and a quantity of comisary and quarter master stores. In all about twelve hundred stands of arms and about two hundred prisoners from block houses making twelve hundred in all. Destroyed many miles of rail road with bridges block houses also one negro refugee camp.

All this with the loss of two men killed two men said to have been drowned and three or four men wounded, the killed were Captains Cochran [*J. T. Cochran, Company*

*E, of Farmington, Ky. killed at Tarpley's Shop, Tenn., Sept. 27, 1864]* and Knowlin [*D. L. Nowlin of Company G*] of our regiment, and if there was any body else hurt I have no recollection of them. Those men got killed and hurt in a skirmish that came up unexpectedly one evening. There may have been a few wounded in fight at Sulpher trestle.

According to the idea I have of dates it was now about the 20<sup>th</sup> September 1864. [?? *The bottom of this page has been torn off. The crossing of the Tennessee River northbound was on September 21; southbound, October 6. Since this last sentence appears out of place, it may have been meant to be torn off also.*]

### Chapter 53

#### **On south side Tennessee river. Moving down to Fort Hindman [Heiman]. Capturing steamboat loaded with army supplies. Going home.**

Now being on our side of the river, where we did not look for yanks to come, of course had a good chance to rest for a time, not long until we began movement down the river, some times near it, then thirty miles off. This move continued until we reached fort Hindman [Heiman] on the [Tennessee] river near the Ky line.

*[Forrest started north on October 24, and reached a point on the Tennessee River near Fort Heiman by October 28.]*

Here in short time [October 29] came a steamboat [*the Mazeppa*] up the river in range of our guns, fired a shot across her bow, she turned for the other shore and an other shot went through her machinery cutting steam pipe, she ran ashore and all the crew took to the woods, except the captain.

Two or three men of third Ky swam the river, took yawl brought the end of a line across loosed the boat from the bank of the river. men enough got hold of the line to pull the boat over to our side of the river.

At the time of the shots at the boat, our regiment was some five miles off, moving in that direction. It seemed to put new life in every man, increased our speed to a trot, and in a little while met coureor that gave us the infermation that General Buford had captured a boat heavy loaded with army supplies, and to hurry up and help unload.

It took no hurry order to start us in a gallop that soon brought us up in sight of the boat that was just being hauled ashore. This was one time no man wanted to be horse holder but managed to have enough men to take care of the horses. Balance to unloading with a vim seldom seen among soldiers.

And had been at work an hour and a half, when we could see a black volumn of smoke riseing apparently out of the woods down the river. soon could see that it was moveing and was getting nearer to us. There being a good long strate stretch in the river could see quite a distance and after a time a boat came in sight. General Buford put glasses to his eyes, announced that it was a gunboat.

I being near him at the time, [he] ordered me to take the regiment of horses down a hollow near by quick as posable. I started in run repeated order mounted my horse and started to the end of line hurrying the boys all I could. But when about half way [down]

the line, here came a shell taring through the tree tops, passed us a little and exploded.

The explosion of that shell beat all my hurry orders and soon we were well behind a big hill in a deep hollow. I had not got out of sight [sic] when I saw a black smoke rising from the boat that we were unloading, the General ordered it fired.

Here we had made a fine haul, if we could have had time to take care of it, but pushed like we were, could only load our horses. Almost every man got what he thought he could carry, we had no wagon train.

*[The Mazetta "was a rich prize, indeed, for the ship's consignment consisted of shoes, blankets, heavy winter clothing, hardtack and a jug of French brandy. Since Forrest did not drink, Buford decided to take the brandy for himself, telling his disappointed men, 'Plenty of meat, boys, plenty of hard-tack, plenty of shoes and clothes for the boys, but just enough brandy for the General.'"]* From "A Battle from the Start."

After night awhile Captain Clanton of the 12<sup>th</sup> regiment [*Captain G. W. Clanton, Company C, 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Ky. Cavalry*] and myself concluded we wanted to go down home about sixty miles. So by some means made arrangements to go home, and we decided to start just as soon as we could get ready, we gathered ten or twelve of our boys each, and started by ten O'clock. I think Captain Clanton must have had not less than three bushels of shoes and then other goods.

I had all I could manage of shoes blouses blankets and perhaps other goods. Our men were all loaded with such goods as they thought to carry home. We reached home next evening.

#### Chapter 54

#### **At and about home for a week, then returned to command in Henderson county and on to Tuscumbia Ala.**

Stayed at home and in the community for about a week, when I thought it prudent to move out. Had collected some of the boys that had been absent since coming out of middle Tennessee. Had now some twenty or more men with me.

We met by appointment at Dukedom [*on the Ky.-Tenn. border*] one morning, moved on passed McKensey [McKenzie] that evening, and camped for the night. As the country was said to be full of bushwackers we spent a very uneasy night and was glad when day light came.

Moved out early this morning, and many running men did we see during the day, they seemed to want to hide from us. Thought of shooting at them, but the idea of killing a runner was rather revolting. Se we kept on our way making all hast posable, as we were about as anxious to get away from them and to our command as they seemed to want to hide from us.

Found our command that evening in Henderson County, we then felt safe. The command had just come from Johnsonville where they had burned a very large lot of army supplies several acres in extent by throwing hot shot across the river.

*[Federal forces captured Fort Heiman, in Kentucky on the Tennessee River, in 1862. "It remained in Union hands until mid 1863 when it was deemed safe to abandon.*

*However, 30 miles south, Johnsonville Tennessee had become a vast Union supply depot. Large portions of these supplies were used to nourish Sherman's army. In late October 1864, General Nathan Bedford Forrest occupied Fort Heiman and set a trap for Union transports and gunboats. Sinking some of the boats and salvaging others, he equipped them with artillery for a raid on Johnsonville. This raid was immensely successful. The wharf for a mile along the river was ablaze and all supplies were destroyed." Source: The West Kentucky Corporation web site.]*

In a few days we started south, and in a day or two was presidential election day in the United States. Col Crosland [Crossland] feeling some anxiety to know how the boys felt, thought to take the vote of the regiment. Halted and left into line. The Col then instructed for those that favored McClellon [General George B. McClellan, Retired] to ride a few steps forward and those that favor Lincon [Lincoln] to sit still. And when the order was given to move, my recollection is that just about half moved forward making a tie in regiment. This was first tuesday after first monday in November 1864.

On our move south passed through the Shilo battle ground, the first time I had seen it since the day I was wounded following General Cheatam [Benjamin Franklin Cheatham]. Saw much sign of the fight, trees torn to pieces by cannon shot horses bones laying about in many places.

Have not seen the grounds since, now nearly forty six years since the fight.

About this time learned that we were on our way to join General Hood [John Bell Hood] at or near Decator [Decatur] Alabama. And from there all were going into Tennessee. Moved on slowly hugging the bend in the river until we went into camp near Tuscumbia, here we learned that General Hood's army was near and about ready to cross, a bridge spanning the river had been layed.

*["General John Bell Hood had determined to make a final bid to force Sherman out of Georgia by striking into Tennessee to threaten the Union commander's line of communication and supply. For this operation, Hood wanted Forrest to unite his command with the Army of Tennessee." Source: "A Battle from the Start."]*

That night about dark came a brother-in-law of mine to our camp who belonged to Polk's Corps in Hood's army that I had not seen for more than two years. And as I was only about two weeks from home could tell him all about his people, and while talking he decided to start home next morning, if he could get lieve, got up walked off lively, next morning about the time we were getting ready to mount here he come with lieve, to go home, asked how to go, I instructed him the best I could, and told him that he must leave McNary Henderson and Carrol countys as far to the right as you can as the woods are full of bushwhackers, and you will stand a good chance to be killed before you can get through, he started one way I the other and have never seen or heard any thing of that man since, now forty three years since.

## Chapter 55

**Crossing Tennessee river in front of Hoods army, and fighting the yanks every day all the way to Columbia and all night at Columbia. One yank sliped close to me, put a bullet between my arm and body.**

This morning. [*probably November 21*] rode perhaps a mile up the river, and there was the bridge, the first of the kind I had ever seen, it was what was called by some people a floating bridge. And was a floating structure anchored every little way all across the river.

General Buford headed directly for the bridge, and onto it he went, we following 7<sup>th</sup> regiment in front, of course Co A next to the General. I donot know when the army crossed, but suppose it was one continual ride and tramp until all was over, the bridge then taken up and loaded on wagons

The General then heading due north the best I could judge of the course, and kept moveing all day. Struck a lot of yankees before night, gave them a little bresh and went into camp.

Next morning turned more east ward kept moveing and would find yanks every day, but would drive back easely.

I think it was after crossing the Alabama line into Tennessee I was left behind at a blacksmith shop to have horses shod did not get through that day required nearly half of next day, when through started lively to overtake the command, this we did in a little while as they had lay up all evening and slow this morning to start.

I overtook the brigade just as they were entering a narrow valley with high hills on either side, and at this time could hear a scatering fire some distance in front. I rode up to my regiment which was leading the brigade, and there was General Buford directing in person.

Now by the time we had taken our places in line, the yanks became stubborn and seemed not willing to give back any farther. We began to prepare to dismount so that we could charge them. When to our great surprise here came a roar of musketry up the valley from behind us. And as I have said before, cut off[f] a soldiers chance of retreat you scare him.

Here we were firing in front and heavy firing behind and no chance to climb the hills on either side. Here was the worst scared set of soldiers I ever saw, if you take their looks for any thing. General Buford's eyes looked like little moons.

The General sent a squad of men back to find what it was. One would turn back every little way and report could find nothing, but the firing continued. After a time which seemed to be hours, the officer in charge of the scout returned and reported that the firing was General Jackson [William H. "Red" Jackson, in command of another division of General Forrest's cavalry] over in the next valley to the south of us, this word gave great relief to that extent that [we] yelled wonderfully, the yanks in our front got away quick.

During this rumpus Col Crosland [Crossland] caught a bullet in one of his feet, I saw nomore of him during this campaign.

This little fight was not far from Campbellville in middle Tennessee perhaps a little west of main road.

From here we moved on towards Columbia fighting the yanks every two or three miles driving them back, and as it was a general retreat with them, they only wanted to check our advance and was not hard to drive.

At Columbia the yanks made a stand as if they were set on not letting us go any farther. We reached the vicinity the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> Nov General Hood with infantry was keeping close up with the cavalry. When we began to crowd the yanks, they made fight.

Col Falkner [William W. Faulkner] of 12<sup>th</sup> regiment commanding brigade, ordered Captain Randal [Randle] to dismount his company deploy as skirmishers and drive the yanks back into their works. We drove them near a mile, when they seemed to have got reinforcements, and as it was getting dark, and having reached what seem to be a cross fence through a field, thought it prudent not to go any farther for the present.

Captain Randal [Randle] established his headquarters at the south end of a row of negro cabins that was about one hundred yards long, and instructed me to place the skirmishers along the fence east some ten or fifteen paces apart, which extended the line perhaps three hundred yards.

And in a little while the yanks discovered our location, and kept up a steady fire.

Our boys soon saw by the flash of the yankee guns that they were in what we called rifle pits, about ten men to the pit, about seventy five yards apart, and some three hundred yards in our front. some time after the turn of the night, I think they must have received fresh reinforcements, as their fire increased considerably, so that Captain Randal [Randle] got a little uneasy for fear of a charge, and ordered me to go back get my horse and go to Col Falkner [Faulkner], tell him the situation and to please send help.

I started soon found my horse mounted and rode perhaps a mile or more, when I met an officer with twice as many men as we had. The Col hearing our fire, and knowing our force was light, thought it best to send us help. I conducted them first to where our horses were, then to the Captain.

The Captain instructed to strengthen our line, but not to extend or lengthen. We now had three men where we only had one. We kept up a sharp fire all night, some times sounded like full lines, were firing to hurt, but the heavy rail fence protected our boys so that not one of them got hurt at all, but the rails were splintered wonderfully. It being very dark the shooting was aimed at the flash of each others guns.

One incident in reference to myself. We kept a good fire in the cabin at headquarters. I was standing about ten feet from the door, so that the light from the fire in the cabin would shine on me, or any that was there when the door was opened. The yanks having one pit in line with the lane in front of the row of cabins, they could see the situation, and one yank concluded he would get one Jonnie sure, so he left his pit and came to the end of the row of cabins and waited for light to shine his man.

As it was I was his he thought, he fired but his bullet passed between my left arm and body, doing no harm except cutting my clothes and scaring me behind the cabin. For the moment I was as badly scared as at any time during the whole war, unless it was at vicksburg After this were very careful how we opened that door.

#### Chapter 56

**From Columbia [Tennessee] moved on to Springhill. charged the yanks down a hill next day on Franklin. Had the fight 30<sup>th</sup> November 1864.**



About the time it was getting light the yanks eased off their firing, and soon all of them were gone. As to whether we hurt any of them we knew not, as we did not go to their pits. A little after sun up was ordered to rejoin brigade, now had one days rest, next morning General Buford leading started eastward up duck river. And crossed at a cattle path some half mile below the Bob Wallace mill, some eight or perhaps ten miles above Columbia. The water half side deep to common size horse.

From here we took a west of north course and got near the Columbia and Franklin pike some time in the evening. And here General thought of cutting the road intoo, so as to have a good chance to capture quite a lot of prisoners.

The yanks were on the retreat from Columbia to Franklin, but the general made a mistake as to the place to make attack. We were behind a ridge that lay paralel with the road, the top of the ridge some half mile from the pike with a slope down to it. General Buford was misinformed as to the situation.

We formed line on our horses behind this ridge and ordered forward to top of hill, then to charge down that slope. We obeyed with a yell and down that hill we rode with a vim. We soon found wide deep gullies. I came to one I thought was ten feet wide and as deep, and as I was so near it before seeing it, I saw in an instant that I must go into or over it, I loosed my bridle dug spurs into my horses sides and over he went, with a wonderful jolt when he hit the ground, but he survived and so did I.

And by about this time all could see the mistake we had made. Between us and the road was a creek with a fence on the bank next the pike, where there was yanks I would say lots of them. They shooting and running but more comming and shooting. We had all halted without any orders from any body that I heard and here we stood, watching the yanks shooting at us.

In a little while here came a piece of artilery up the road in a gallop and when at the right place halted unlimbered turned it upon us and fired, it seem to me without loading. And when that cannon ball came plowing a ditch in the ground through our line I can assure you there was no farther necessity for order to retire over the hill, and we retired, not in as good a line as we had when we began the charge.

How we all got away with as little hurt I never have been able to understand, unless it was by special providence. One man lost his horse and himself wounded, not so bad but what he could run as any cow, and if any one else got hurt I have no recollection of hearing any thing said about it.

Now getting late in evening rode a few miles on towards Franklin and camped for the night. I have hered and read much about the failure to capture scofield [Union General John McAllister Schofield] and his army at Columbia and spring hill, blame put on this that and the other man, but who was to blame I cannot say, but think it most likely that General Scofield [Schofield] himself did more to prevent capture than any one else, if he had lay still all day in columbia, so as to give us plenty of time to get around him we certainly would have gobbled him and his army, as we had two or perhaps three men to his one. But they would not be still, but Jonnie like when in a tight place were good runners.

If you had seen them as I did passing where we made our charge down that hill I

believe you would say fast runners, the road seemed to be full, all running towards Franklin loading and shooting at us, and the sluice seem to have no end, they kept coming shooting and passing all the time I was in sight of the road.

November the 30<sup>th</sup> 1864. This day is known by all our historians as the day the hard fought Franklin battle took place.

This morning bright and fare, moved on towards Franklin. General Buford leading with Ky brigade on the right flank, we stayed on right flank all day.

I donot remember having any scrap with yanks to day, until late in the evening, and that just a short time before General Hood attacked the works at Franklin. We were on a road about two miles east of Franklin that crossed harpeth river up there. Just before we reached the river, we met a lot of yanks that disputed our proceeding any farther, so we dismounted and moved on them.

Our line didnt go far when the yanks said no by poaring a tremendous fire into our line. I had been left in charge of horse holders, the nois was so great and so close by I could not stand it any longer, turned my charge over to Wilson Edwards [probably R. W. Edwards, 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.] and galloped down that slope to where the brigade was.

But by the time I got there, a few of the last of the yanks were climbing the bank on the other side of the river. Our boys had pored it to them, but seemed that they killed more horses than men. I donot remember seeing any dead or wounded men, but quite a number of dead and crippled horses, one horse in particular floundering on the far bank of the river that looked to be wel supplied with trapings, and as I was in need of just such things I struck out in a lively gallop for him, but when I got to the river it looked to be deep, but without hesitation plunged into it, found it up to by saddle skirts.

By this time my horse was so nigh dead it was no trouble to strip him, which I proceeded to do in about as much hurry as I ever done any thing, as there was at that time a column of cavalry passing along the road just on top of the bluff out of my sight, but sounded as if within fifty yards, but excited soldiers would not measure distance correctly every time. I threw saddle with all trapings across my horses neck bridle on my arm, mounted and back to the line lively, and after a little conversation back to my charge of horse holders.

Here I dismounted and began to unpack, found I had an almost knew [sic] McClellan saddle with pockets three wollen blankets two gum blankets blue over coat two saddle bankets and bridle, all almost new. I then striped my horse put on my new saddle and bridle and strapped on all the blankets I wanted put on my new over coat.

I then told the boys to take my old saddle and blankets if better than theirs. I then mounted adjusted the sturups and felt well equiped for the winter. The fact is seven blankets with a saddle for a pillow would make a good bed for a Major General, better perhaps than General Forest [Forrest] had much of the time. All these things I took good care of, carried all home the next spring they were worn some of course.

Brother Wess made about the same haul I did, he had left the line went for his horse striped him and was returning wading the river, we met about the midle of it, water up almost to his shoulders.

A short time after I had made my toilet, got an order to move the horses down to where the line was. By this time it was dark, the battle was raging fearsly in front of

Franklin. At this time I was ordered to take charge of a detail of fifty or sixty men and form a line from where we were to connect with General Hood's right, which was near a mile through the woods, instructions were to turn all stragglers in the direction of their commands, and at the end of my line was instructors for the different commands.

Along this line I rode all night back and forth turning a large number perhaps five hundred or it may have been a thousand soldiers in the direction of their commands.

Our loss in the little scrap near the river in brigade was perhaps fifteen wounded no dead. Harvey Stevens [probably H. W. Stephens] of my company was hit near the right knee, and is a cripple to day. Lt Lapiece [Charles LaPice] of company K 7<sup>th</sup> regiment was shot in foot, I cannot place the others just now.

As stragglers had quit passing back, was called into camp about daylight.

#### Chapter 57

### **Some idea of battle of Franklin. then on to blockhouse No. 2 near Nashville. Capturing train.**

Will now give some of my ideas of the battle at Franklin Tennessee the 30<sup>th</sup> of november 1864. In first place General Hood was bulldogish, seem to have had no fears about him, and dashed at the yanks with a vim that cost him more than was possible for him to ever recover.

I have heard many tell something of their experience and observations, also have read many descriptions by participants in the fight, and was in hearing of the noise myself and saw some of the shell fuses burning.

I come to this conclusion in short, General Hood got his lines formed in front of the Federals almost twice their length, and began the attack kinder by detail, one division or brigade at a time, soon after another and each repulsed in turn.

Quite a number reached the works, there many were killed some were pulled over and held prisoners. Many were found dead for several hundred yards in front of the works.

As Hood's line was almost twice as long as Federal line if he had made the charge simultaneous with his whole line results may have been very different. But as it was, Hood's loss was very great, the fact is many of his company and regiments were almost annihilated. The backbone so to speak of the army was broken, and all had lost their bulldogishness to a great extent.

Even Forrest's [Forrest's] men were dejected, although not seriously hurt. But as a large percent of his men had seen three years and more of active service, the private soldiers had learned something of generalship to that extent, they knew there was great mismanagement.

Near the head of this chapter I branded General Hood as being a bull dog. but the fact is if Hood had been the only bull dog there was in his army they would have transferred to General Green's command the first and second years of the war.

Now another fact is that a bull dog is a bull dog, and is hard to conquer but when beaten at his own game, he becomes as docile as a lamb. But as a large part of General Green's men were hid in the woods at the time of general surrender of course knew

nothing of it at the time.

[The End]

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### Appendix.

As stated in the begining of the preface, I have written my recolections of my personal experience. And will now add some reflections. At the begining of the war there was a vast amount of egotism among citizens and soldiers, one south man could whip five yanks any where at any time, and as arms were not plentiful, every blacksmith in all the country was put to hammering on the castaway files and rasps fashioning them into big long knives. Some companys could be see that almost every man had one of these knives hanging at his side.

My company had quite a nnumber of them at the begining, but they were apt schollars and soon learned that those were useless appendages, also learned that five yanks could surround one man very easily, so this getting in our rear became the scary part of the war, and. many were the times that we would get up and skeedadle in the dark sometimes in the rain to get to a safe place, when perhaps there was not more than two to one in fact sometimes we would run when only imagination said they were coming drunk.

The fact is we soon learned that yankee soldiers were were about as good as the Cecesh as we were sometimes called by Federals. We had some men that could not stand a big nois, it always gave them a headache and away they would go, and. I suppose the Federals had the same class of men in their army perhaps a greater portion as many were foreners and hirelings.

The war is now a thing of past, and I am fully persuaded genuine peace now exist among all the old soldiers that have any title to be called a veteran of the sixties.

There is a lot of men. that was hid in the woods that does not seem to be satisfied, they are what we called bushwhackers gerilers and hideouts.

There is some of the latter class still among us and you can soon. tell what he was by the stile of his conversation.

Now a little talk in reference to pensioning confederate veterans by the United States. There has been some talk on that line for some time. And I have been where a few of the confederate veteran camps have condemed the movement. Comrads let us lay down our bull hedednes and accept any pension that the United States government will or may offer us, that kind of an act would relieve us of the parole that we are now bound and have been since the spring of the year 1865. We would then be free and. independant men in every sence of the word. We are only paroled soldiers at this time, it is true that there was an act passed by Congress that relieved us of crime and gave us the right to vote at all elections, but said nothing about paroles, which left us just where we are to day, paroled soldiers. Now one other argument, while there are many of the old soldiers [who] are independant of a pension having plenty of this worlds goods to live on at ease, and having rings on their fingers shoes on their feet and the fatted calf when ever desired.

But all are not so blessed. There are many that have them not, and a small pittance would be treat help to them in their declining years.

It is true many of the southern states are pensioning their old veterans, but this is only state buisness and as those men were sent out by the state, the state is under obligations to them and is only paying a just debt.

Not so with the United States, we do not claim any thing in the way of a devt, but something in the way of a gift would relieve us of all cramp, we would feel free as

american free born citizens.

From www.kyseeker.com website; Christian County

THOMAS F. CLARDY, M. D., stands prominent among the physicians and surgeons of this county. He is a son of John C. and Elizabeth ( Cayce) Clardy, and was born in Christian County, Ky., on the 9th of June, 1838. He was educated in the select schools of the neighborhood. supplemented by a course at the Georgetown, Ky., College, where he graduated in 1858. When he was eighteen years of age he began the study of medicine under the preceptorship of his brother, Dr. J. D. Clardy, of this county. He afterward attended lectures at the Pennsylvania University of Philadelphia, and in the year 1861 graduated from that institution with the degree of M. D. The same year he entered the late Civil war as Surgeon of the Seventh Kentucky infantry, and afterward was Surgeon of Buford's Division of Forrest's Cavalry, in which he was engaged to the close of the war. In 1865, on the 10th of October, he married Miss Lizzie C., daughter of David S. and Sophia (Woodson) Lamme, of Boone County, Mo., and to them have been born two children James R. and Mary E. Besides a large and lucrative practice of medicine. Dr. Clardy is engaged in farming, having 350 acres of valuable and very productive land, which he successfully cultivates in wheat, corn and tobacco. He is a Deacon of the Salem Baptist Church, and is an active member of the orders A. F. & A. M. and I. O. O. F.

### Transcriber's Notes

The first part of the journal, up to including chapter 17, is copied from a typewritten transcript done some time ago on a manual typewriter. Transcribing from the original handwritten memoirs begins at chapter 20.

Pirtle's spelling and punctuation are maintained as closely as possible. He did not maintain any standard for paragraphs, often making each sentence a paragraph. Thus many of the paragraphs in this transcript were formed as it was being transcribed.

Anything added to Pirtle's text, explanations, full names, dates, etc., is enclosed in brackets.

Two books were used to help follow the action and are often referenced in brackets. They are Shelby Foote's three volume work, The Civil War, and Brian Steel Wills' A Battle from the Start. The Life of Nathan Bedford Forrest. Much of the other added information was gleaned from various web sites of the Internet, generally not cited.

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