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A Pretty Hard Business': The Civil War Diary of Philip Goode

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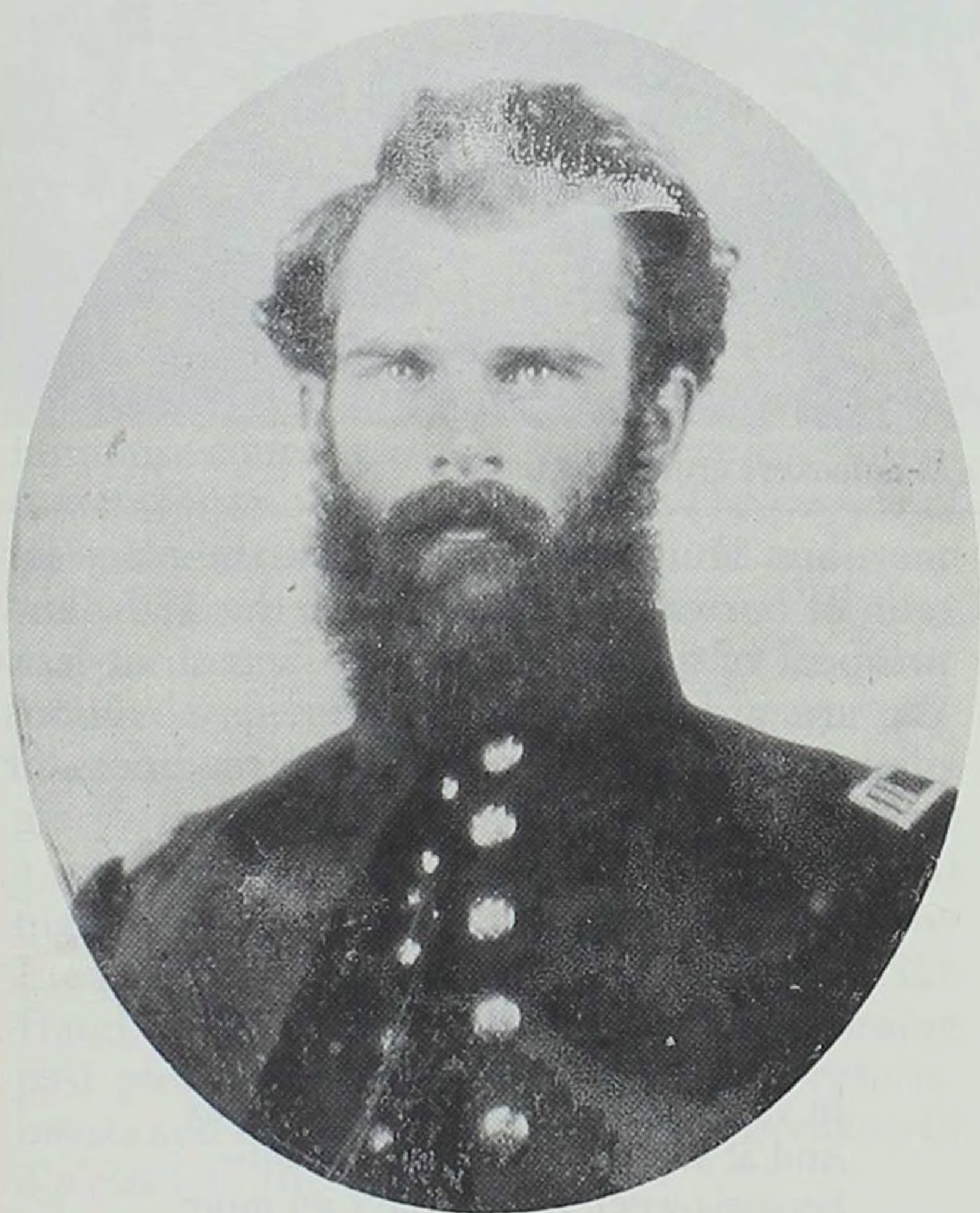
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'A Pretty Hard Business'

The Civil War Diary of Philip H. Goode

transcribed by Edward W. Vollertsen



Philip H. Goode's two-month diary includes his account of the April battle at Pittsburg Landing, or Shiloh.

Camp Halleck, Keokuk, March 15, 1862

The 15th Regiment is still at Keokuk. After remaining Inactive some five months we are still at Keokuk but the time of our departure is at hand. The ice [that] has during so many months blockaded the river and cut off communications from below is almost gone. . . . A boat came up today within sight of town but after battering at the ice a while gave up the undertaking and went back. Our experience so far in military life has had neither hardships nor dangers connected with it but soon it will be different. We are going to the scene of conflict, there to face the enemy. How will we conduct ourselves? Will we be able to place the fame of our Regiment side-by-side with that of the glorious Iowa Second? I believe that it is the firm determination of all of us to act like men and like patriots and all of us feel a strong desire to prove our claim to merit on the field of battle.

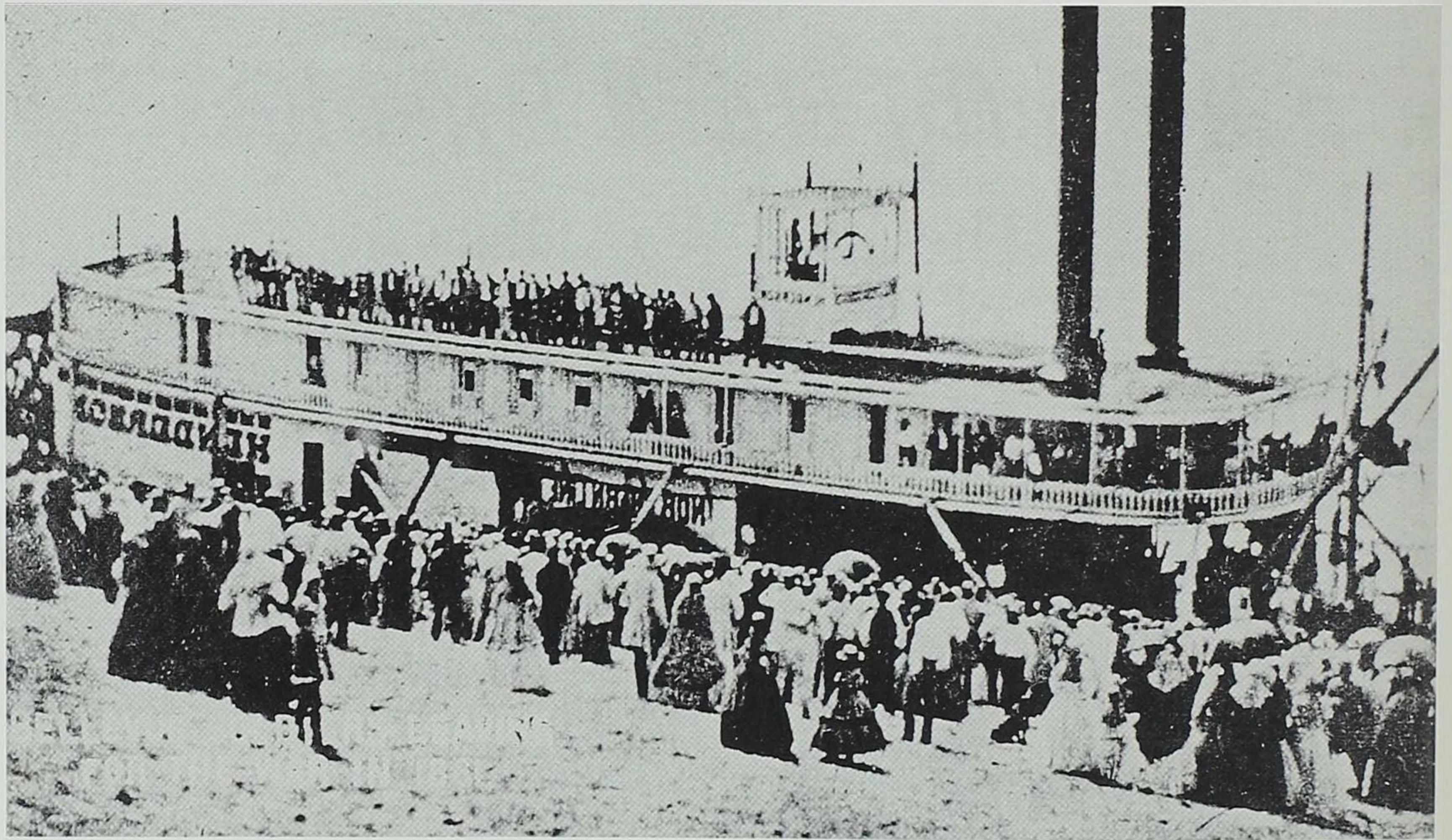
But it is a serious thing to face death in any form. When I think of my own home, the dear wife and helpless little ones that I have left

Philip Hayes Goode was born February 7, 1835, in Madison, Indiana, to William H. Goode and Sarah Burfort Pearson. By 1856 the family had moved to Glenwood, Iowa, where Philip married Margaret F. Galeher on December 24. In October 1861 Philip joined Company F, 15th Regiment, Iowa Infantry. His diary ends the day after he resigned. Back in Glenwood, he published at least two issues of the *Mills County Standard*. On November 23, 1863, he reenlisted as a captain in the Fourth Independent Battery of Iowa Volunteer Artillery. After the war,

Goode worked as a lawyer. On February 27, 1877, he committed suicide.

In editing the diary and letters for publication here, some punctuation and capitalization were added for clarity and ease of reading. Spelling was corrected minimally. Beginning lines indicating date and place are here condensed to one italicized line. Brackets indicate editorial additions; ellipses mark omitted material. A complete copy is in the State Historical Society of Iowa library in Iowa City.

—The Editor



Soldiers on the *Bill Henderson* leave Bellevue, Iowa, in 1861 as onlookers crowd the bank.

behind, life is indeed sweet and I almost shrink from the uncertainty of a soldier's fate. This evening I have been looking to receive a letter from the one dearer than all others to me, my affectionate wife. I have not received it. My thoughts involuntarily turn in the direction of home. Shall I ever see those dear ones more? Or have I kissed them and spoken my farewell for the last time in this world? God alone knows and while I feel a strong desire to be spared to rear my own little ones and enjoy the sweet companionship of my wife I am equally desirous to do my duty as a citizen and as a soldier. I am not insensible to danger but I believe the man is truly brave who while he realizes the danger he incurs has nerve enough to do his duty. May the time soon come when the necessity for shedding blood will no longer exist in our beloved and once happy United Country.

Camp Halleck, Keokuk, Sunday, March 16, 1862

. . . The river is at last open and the *Hannibal City*, a Saint Louis packet, came up this evening. The *Die Vernon* is expected up tonight. It was announced to us on dress parade this evening that we will leave on Tuesday

morning. Hurrah for Dixie. Just the place for men of our caliber. "Bully" for the 15th, and prospect of getting down into Secesh at last. We are ordered to cook three days' rations tomorrow and have everything in readiness for marching.

In vain Secessia boasts her fair
 (sable hair)
 Their white-eyed beauties and their
 kinky hair
 In vain exalted chivalry she charms
 And at supremacy for cotton aims.
 Secessia weep thy chivalry no more
 Secessia weep king cotton's lost his power
 Tremble Secessia for thy boasted sway
 The mud sills armed are eager
 for the fray. . . .

Camp Halleck, Monday, March 17, 1862

Beautiful day. Arrangements for our departure are rapidly being made and the packing for removal is going on briskly. About noon we are informed that we can not get off tomorrow but will get off Wednesday morning. It is a disappointment to us. . . . I went to a concert tonight and after the concert to an oyster supper at the residence of H. H. Sullivan,

Esquire, now Sutler to our Regiment. Had a very pleasant time. All the officers . . . were there. Also, Lieutenant Charles J. Ball, 13th Regiment Infantry Regular Army.

The mumps have broken out among the 17th Regiment and I suppose they will go through ours.

I received a letter this morning from my dear wife. It was a very welcome one to me for I had not heard from her for more than a week. All well at home and for that I am thankful. I had almost omitted to state that we lost another man today. His name was Johnson from Fremont County, disease measles. He was buried at 4 p.m.

Camp Halleck, Tuesday, March 18, 1862

Our last day in Keokuk. It was announced to us this evening at dress parade that we will start without fail tomorrow. The boys appeared on dress parade with knap sacks, canteens, and haversacks. They made a good appearance. An immense concourse of citizens were assembled to witness our last dress parade. The people of this place have been very kind to us and seem to feel really sad at our departure. Well they may for many brave fellows will start for Dixie tomorrow never to return. Many hearts now "beating with high hope" and anticipating glory's achievements in a few months, perhaps a few weeks, "will molder cold and low." At night I attended an oyster supper given by Lieutenant Charles Ball and Captain Pike Hand to the officers of the 15th. The evening past pleasantly and livened by jokes, retorts, boasts and responses and we did not breakup til 3 o'clock in the morning.

Steamer Jeannie Deans, Mississippi River, March 19, 1862

. . . It commenced raining and continued to do so til 4 p.m. The men were drawn up in line in front of the quarters ready to start and at 4 precisely we embarked. Notwithstanding the mud and rain the street along the river was crowded with people to witness our departure and we feel assured that we carry with us the best wishes of the good people of Keokuk. . . .

Benton Barracks, March 20, 1862

At daylight this morning our steamer was

opposite Alton, Illinois and about 8 a.m. we reached Saint Louis. The 23rd Missouri Regiment arrived just in advance of us. . . . They gave us three rousing choruses as we past which were returned with interest by our boys. The 21st Missouri (Colonel Moore's) lay below us on the Steamer *J.C. Simms*. They had embarked for the "Land of Dixie" and are engaged in loading their luggage. About 10 a.m. we left the boat and formed in line on the levy, we marched through the city and out to Benton Barracks a distance of about four miles. . . . We were cheered on all sides and the windows were filled with ladies waving their handkerchiefs to us. . . .

Benton Barracks, March 21

. . . In the evening Captain Blackmar returned with a telegram from General Kirkwood announcing that our First Lieutenant James G. Day is commissioned Captain of Company C, Captain Simpson having resigned. This has been expected by us for some time. I received the appointment of First Lieutenant in place of Day. Tonight we held an election in our Company for Second Lieutenant. Our Ordinate Sergeant Job [Joe?] Throckmorton was elected almost unanimously. Speeches were made to the Company by Captain Day, myself and Lieutenant Throckmorton. After each of which the boys cheered loudly. . . . At 10 o'clock at night Captain Blackmar, Captain Day and myself went up to Colonel Reid's headquarters and announced the results of the elections and the Colonel wrote immediately to Governor Kirkwood applying for a commission for me as First Lieutenant and for Second Lieutenant.

The 16th Iowa Regiment landed from a steamer about dark tonight and attempted to make their way through the mud and rain to the barracks. They lost their way, wandered around and came in in small parties about 12 o'clock very muddy looking objects.

Benton Barracks, Saturday, March 22nd

. . . I this morning learned that a soldier was poisoned by eating an orange which he had purchased of a huckster woman. He was taken sick immediately after eating it and died before they could get him to the hospital. The orange

was examined and found to contain poison. There are hundreds of huckster women all through the barracks selling apples, oranges, cookies, pies but a man risks his life if he eats anything they sell. I wonder that the Commander allows them to come in at all.

This morning a soldier picked up an apple on the sidewalk and was about to eat it when he discovered that it was plugged on one side. The plug was drawn out and it was found that poison had been inserted. We will have to be very careful what we eat or will half of us be poisoned by this Secesh.

. . . Up to this time we have been boarding with the men, having as yet no cooking arrangements of our own. Today I commenced boarding with Colonel Sullivan (our Sutler). He has a "contraband" for a cook that does things up in very good shape. . . .

Benton Barracks, Sunday, 23rd

We are almost beginning to forget there is a Sabbath. At 9½ a.m. the Captain had not yet returned [from a trip to the city] and I took charge of the Company at inspection. The boys mostly spent the day playing ball. Our Chaplain remained in Keokuk in charge of the hospital where we left the sick of our Regiment so we can have no Regimental services. I'm sorry for

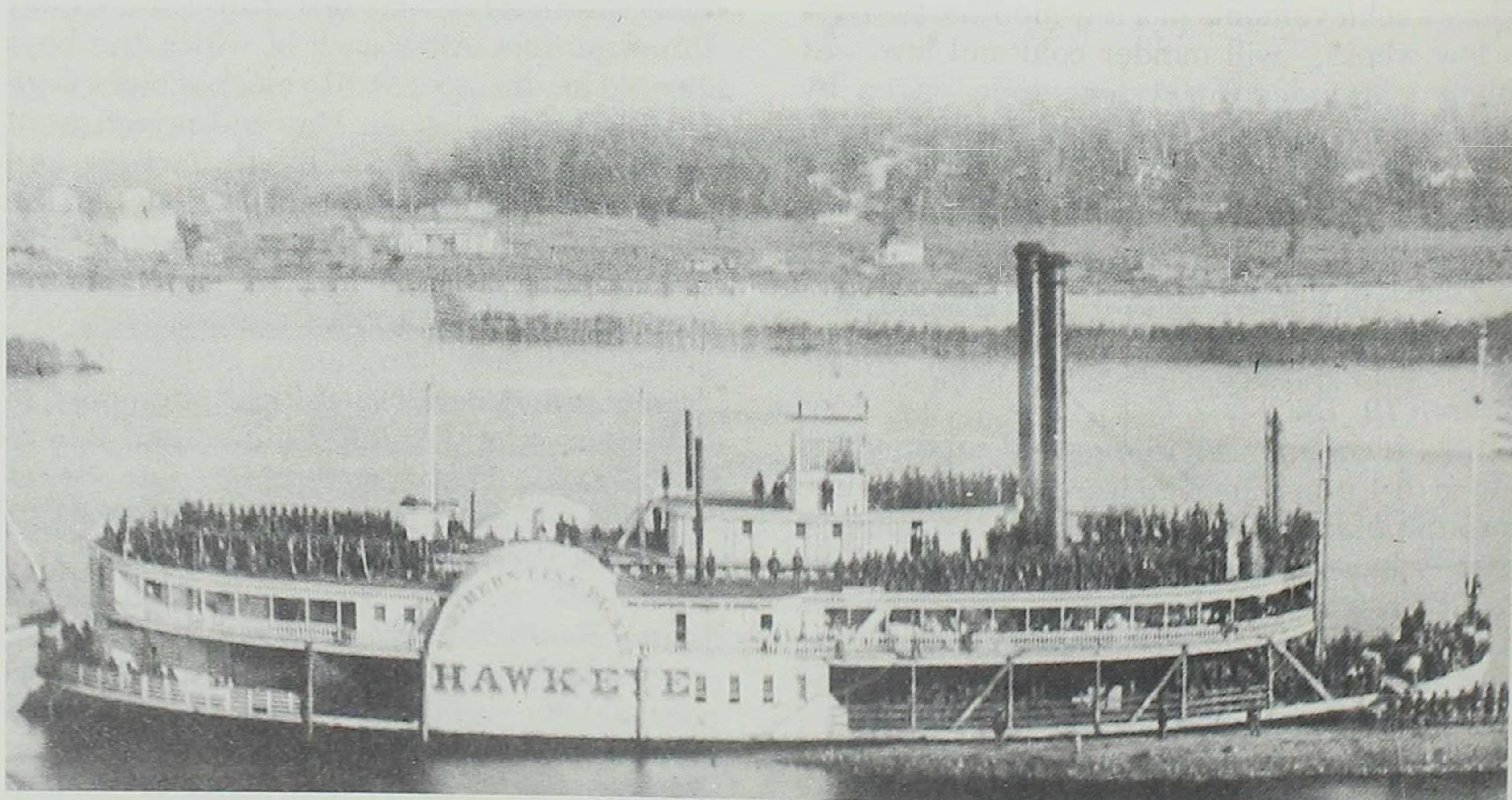
it for I think the boys begin to need some religious restraint.

A number of ladies came out today. I think of home, the dear wife and children that I left there and feel a strong inclination to give up military life and go home to the love ones that miss me there. But I believe duty calls me the other way. Oh how I will rejoice when the war is over and we get back to home comforts and better influences than those which now surround us. I fear the morals of the boys will suffer by the indolent life we have been leading. . . .

Benton Barracks, Monday, 24th

Weather cool and cloudy, mud beginning to dry up rapidly. It is reported this morning that one of the guards was shot last night by a concealed foe but I do not know as to its truth. . . . Morning Company drilled from 5:45 to 7 a.m. Squad drilled from 8 to 9:30 a.m. Battalion or Company drilled from 2 to 4 p.m. Dress parade is at sunset.

. . . We appeared on Dress Parade at Benton Barracks for the first time today. Our Regiment drew a large crowd of spectators and was unexpectantly pronounced the best in the barracks. A number of persons mistook us as regulars from the regularity and precision of our



The *Hawkeye State* carries troops to the South. Diarist Goode rode the steamboat *Minnehaha*.

drill. Not an officer in the Regiment but was proud of his men.

This evening a week has elapsed since I heard from home. What can be the matter? I can not but believe that my wife writes regularly but from some cause I get no letters from her. Well, soldier's luck. . . .

Tuesday, March 25th

. . . Major William H. English of the 4th Iowa Infantry was here today. He is just off the field and looks healthy. He brought 300 secesh prisoners taken at Pea Ridge. Our arms and tents arrived today. There is every indication that we will be expected to take the field soon. Our arms are the best quality of Springfield muskets. They will be distributed tomorrow. The character of the Iowa Regiments stands high here. . . .

Wednesday, March 26th

Day fine. Our wagons were brought out today. The mules also and drivers detailed from different Companies. Nothing else of note. No letter from home yet. I feel very much troubled about it. Can anything be the matter with my family?

Thursday, March 27th

Regiment drilling in the morning. Our drivers are actively engaged in breaking and training our mules. Our ammunitions arrived this morning. . . . About a dozen of the men we left at Keokuk in hospital came down. They reported three men from our Company dead, the rest recovering. The sick that we brought with us are recovering rapidly and the general health of the Regiment is much better than when we came here.

Friday, March 28th

. . . We are now well clothed, well armed and fully equipped for a march. In the afternoon we had hard thunder showers.

This evening on Dress Parade Colonel Dewy informed that we were under marching orders and we have orders to prepare as rapidly as possible. The armament was received with hardy cheers from the officers and men. We do not know where we will go but expect soon to be where fighting is going on. I have still had no

letter from home and I greatly fear that I will have to leave for the field without hearing any more from my dear family. . . . There are many privations connected with a soldier's life but the hardest thing for me to bear is the uncertainty of hearing from home. I hope all is right there. No one but the husband of a loving wife can appreciate the feeling of loneliness and anxiety that expresses me this evening. Good night dear wife, good night dear children. Should anything serious befall you it would break my heart. Well some time I hope to be with you again.

Saturday, March 29th

We learned this morning that we will start Tuesday morning. Our destination said to be Tennessee River to join General Grant's Command. All is excitement in the Regiment. . . .

Sunday, March 30th

. . . Received a letter from my wife at last dated March 14th, 15 days on the road. I hope I may not always have to wait so long for letters. Well it is some satisfaction to know that my family were well 15 days ago but it leaves a large margin for anxiety and suspense. Captain Blackmar and myself were busy a very late hour at night making up payroll reports and getting the Company books in order.

Monday, March 31st

Our last day at Benton Barracks. In all probability the next place we stop will be in the enemy's country. Everything is boxed up, marked and loaded in the wagons and on the way to the river. . . . Tis a tiresome business, this waiting for orders to move but it is part of a soldier's duty.

Steamer Minnehaha, Mississippi River, Tuesday, April 1st

. . . We had to wait for a long time before the call beat to fall into line which was at 11:25 a.m. Three other regiments, the Iowa 16th, the Missouri 23rd, and a Wisconsin Regiment also fell into line with us and marched down. Also five batteries of artillery. In all there was a column considerably over a mile long. We did not get on board til 2 p.m. and the boat did not start til 5 p.m. Four other boats go down the river with

us to take the other regiments and battery. We left landing first. Our boat the *Minnehaha* is a large boat and runs tolerably well but she is very heavily loaded and quite old. We are crowded together on board like so many hogs. It was with greatest difficulty that the officers could get state rooms. Shortly after dark while the boat was going at full speed . . . she struck a sandbar with so much force as to nearly throw down all who were standing in the cabin. I was somewhat apprehensive that she might be injured but she backed off and went ahead all right. About 9 p.m. one of her tiller ropes gave out and she had to run into shore to get it fixed. . . . When the boys went to bed the boat was literally covered with sleeping men. You could not walk through the cabin or around on the deck without stepping on them. . . .

Steamer Minnehaha, Mississippi River, Wednesday, April 2nd

When I waked this morning the boat was under way but I learned had not been long. . . . As I walk about over the boat I cannot help reflecting on the uncertainty of our fate as soldiers. I look round at the boys vigorous with health, young, full of hope and eager to meet the foe. How many of the boys will return, certainly not all. Then who will be the missing ones? Perhaps some of my best friends, perhaps myself. I feel sad when I think of the strong probability that ere a month many of us will sleep the sleep that knows no waking but so we will die gloriously and fill a soldier's grave. It is comparatively easy when prostrated by disease and suffering intense physical pain to look on death with resignations as a relief from present ills, but when the man healthy and vigorous with many ties to bind him to life thinks seriously of the subject he cannot but feel a strong desire to live if not incompatible with the interests of his country.

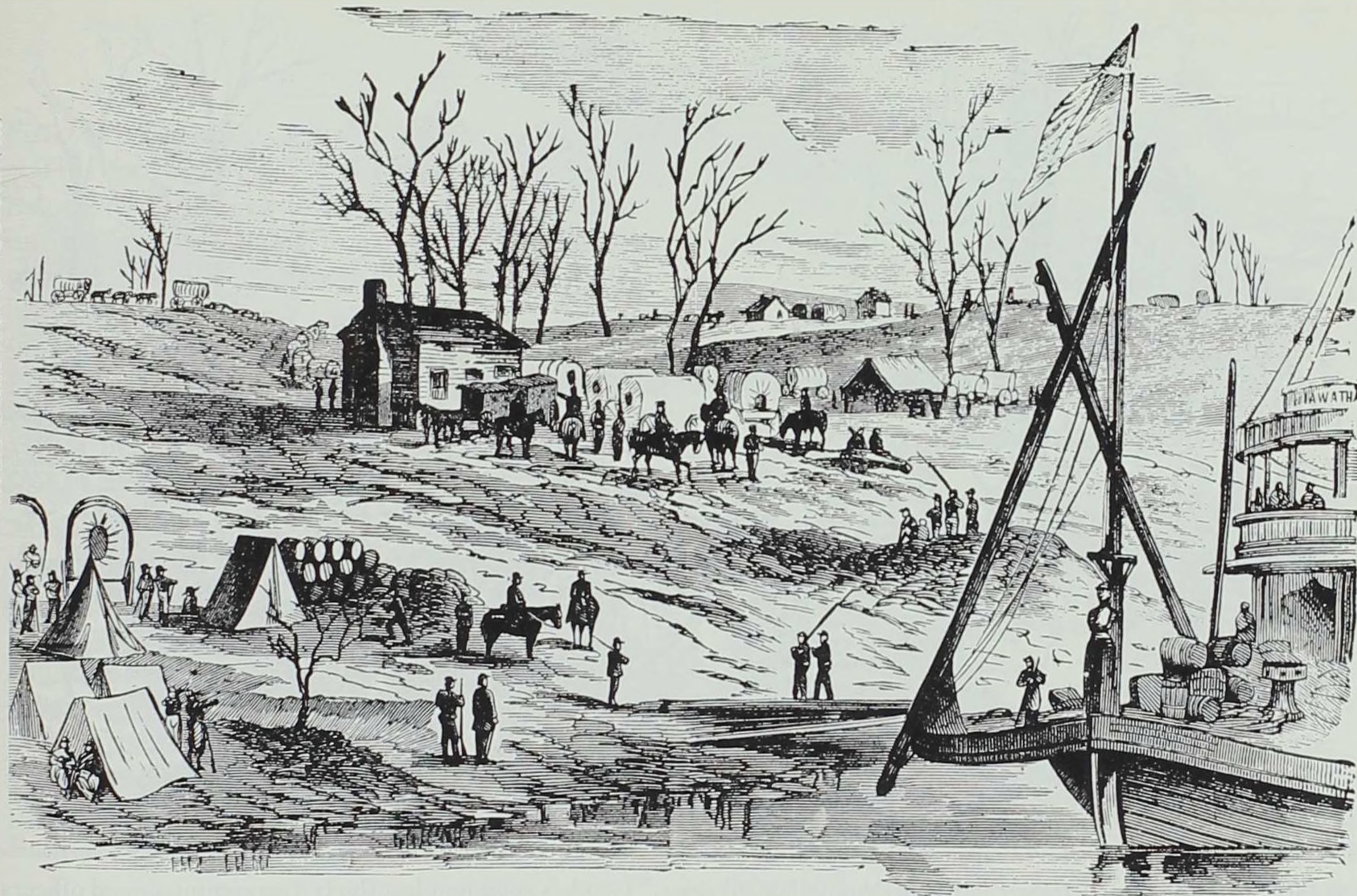
. . . About 7 p.m. we passed Cape Girardeau, Mo. where several battles were fought between Jeff Thompson and our forces. The place is still fortified and from the boat we could distinctly see the heavy earthworks and the cannon peeping over the embrasures. A gun was fired for us to round, to which of course we did without delay as the 2nd gun would have carried a shot.

. . . Just as we were turning from the Mississippi to come into the Ohio we were very nearly run down by a steam tug. . . . Night before last there was a very heavy storm at and above Cairo. At Cairo nearly all the steam and wharf boats were blown across the river and several sunk. . . . While we were there the Steamer *Illinois* came in without her chimneys, having lost them overboard in the storm. Her decks were broken in and the cabin almost totally destroyed. Other boats showed symptoms of having suffered severely. There are a number of cannons at Cairo but no fortifications. . . . I saw a great number of large bomb shells, grape canister, and roundshot on the wharf boat. I laid in some provisions such as crackers, cheese, and bologna sausage for the trip ahead of us.

Steamer Minnehaha, Ohio River, April 3rd

Started from Cairo about 8 a.m. The Ohio River is very high and quite muddy, is not the dear tranquil stream it generally is but I feel a strange attachment to it. It is the stream near which I was born and many of the happiest hours of my childhood were spent upon its banks. But my present trip up it is a sad one, sad because I can not help thinking of the very melancholy circumstances which occasions it. About 4 p.m. reached Paducah, Kentucky which is just at the mouth of the Tennessee River. The boat had considerable amount of freight for this place and remained over night. I took a stroll through the city. It is a place of 8,000 inhabitants and once fortified . . . but it is now in the hands of the Union men. Nothing however but the presence of our troops keeps the Rebels in line. The place is full of them. The people generally look sulky and dissatisfied, very much as if they are under the influence of bayonets and would cut our throats if they could. I enjoyed it hugely for I have suffered from them when they had power. Now their own mouths are closed and I must say their vexation is only half concealed. I like to hear them holler for the Union when they hate to but they are afraid to do anything else.

Saint Louis as well as Cairo is under martial law but one does not realize it as fully as at Paducah. In Paducah armed sentinels pass the streets day and night. Half the houses in the



April 6: "Reached this place about 4:30 a.m. Soon after daylight a heavy cannonading was heard on our line. . . . Ammunition was served out and we started for the scene of action." Above: Pittsburg Landing.

place have guards before the door. The churches are closed so far as the legitimate use is concerned and transformed into hospitals or arsenals. Business is entirely suspended and fine hotels and business blocks are used for hospitals or some other government purpose. There seems to be a reign of terror in the place. In the evening I had the pleasure of hearing an address from Honorable Ethridge of Tennessee. . . . His language was strong and forceable and I never heard such a skating as the Rebels got and the beauty of it all was there were many present to hear it and they had to submit for Uncle Sam's boys were there. . . .

Steamer Minnehaha, Tennessee River, Friday, April 4th

Did not leave Paducah til evening. I saw large stacks of guns, a great quantity of clothing and ammunition and several pieces of artillery that were taken from the Rebels at Fort Donelson. All were marked CSA. A report reached us this morning that a fight is already going on between our forces and the Rebels at or near Corinth. . . .

Steamer Minnehaha, Tennessee River, Saturday, April 5th

This morning our four day rations which the men prepared before leaving Benton Barracks were exhausted. They had enough for breakfast but have had nothing since but dry crackers and it is now 2 p.m. Quite early this morning we passed Fort Henry. . . . It is a low flat piece of ground with no defenses but earth works. The buildings are small log cabins and show the marks of the bomb shells. Our troops do not use them but are quartered in tents. I was anxious to get off and pick up some relics of the battle but had not time. . . . The boat lay by for about two hours. At night a guard of 60 men was detailed and stationed on the hurricane deck to act in case we were fired into. No disturbance.

Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, Sunday, April 6, 1862

Reached this place about 4:30 a.m. Soon after daylight a heavy cannonading was heard on our line and we were ordered to take the field. We were drawn up in line, ammunition



FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED FAMOUS LEADERS AND BATTLE SCENES OF THE CIVIL WAR (1896)

At Pittsburg Landing: "Horses and men dropped on all sides." Goode's regiment lost thirty-two commissioned officers.

was served out and we started for the scene of action. We were led into an ambush and the Regiment suffered severely. They held their ground gallantly under a galling fire from the front and right flank. Our Colonel, Major and Adjutant were wounded. The Lieutenant Colonel had his horse shot under him, Captain Blackmar was disabled by a shot from a cannon ball and taken off the field. I took command. I received a shot in my right hand which shattered my one finger and otherwise disabled my hand. A Regiment over to the right of us broke and ran, then another, then our Regiment began to retreat Company at a time and at last all went, our Company being one of the last to leave the field. In our Company we lost three killed, 14 wounded, one mortally, two dangerously. The Regiment lost 32 commissioned officers in the fight, 2 were killed, 15 wounded and 2 of the wounded taken prisoners.

At the river our Regiment rallied and went back and maintained their position during the fight. I was unable to go back. There were some dozen large steam boats at the landing. The ground was covered all around the landing with wounded and dying who had been brought in. I went on board the *Minnehaha*. Surgeons so busy I could not get my hand dressed. Ah, the

sights on that boat. Men mangled in every conceivable way groaning and many of them yielding up their last breath. I sat on top of the boat and watched the progress of the battle. The gun boats *Tylor* and *Lexington* were just above us in the river and thru shells into the enemy. As night closed in the firing ceased and the report came in that we were gaining ground on the enemy. I suffered too much to sleep. Spent the night up in the pilot house of the boat. Rained hard all night. One of the gun boats occasionally thru a shell into the enemy to keep them uneasy and to soldiers from time to time fired random shots.

Pittsburg, Monday, April 7, 1862

Early in the morning the firing commenced again in earnest. Buell's men had come in during the night and were largely reinforced. Our boys went back with a will and firing with telling effect on the enemy. I had one of my fingers amputated. The boat without my being aware of it left the landing and started for Savannah seven miles below to leave the sick so I was unintentionally taken along. The sick and the wounded were taken off at Savannah and placed in tents. . . . I spent the night on shore in a tent. Rained all night.

Pittsburg Landing, April 8, 1862

This morning early I got aboard the boat to return to Pittsburg but the boat did not start until 10 a.m. . . . We learned that the Rebels were defeated with great loss and were being hotly pursued by our cavalry. . . .

Pittsburg, Tennessee, Wednesday, April 9, 1862

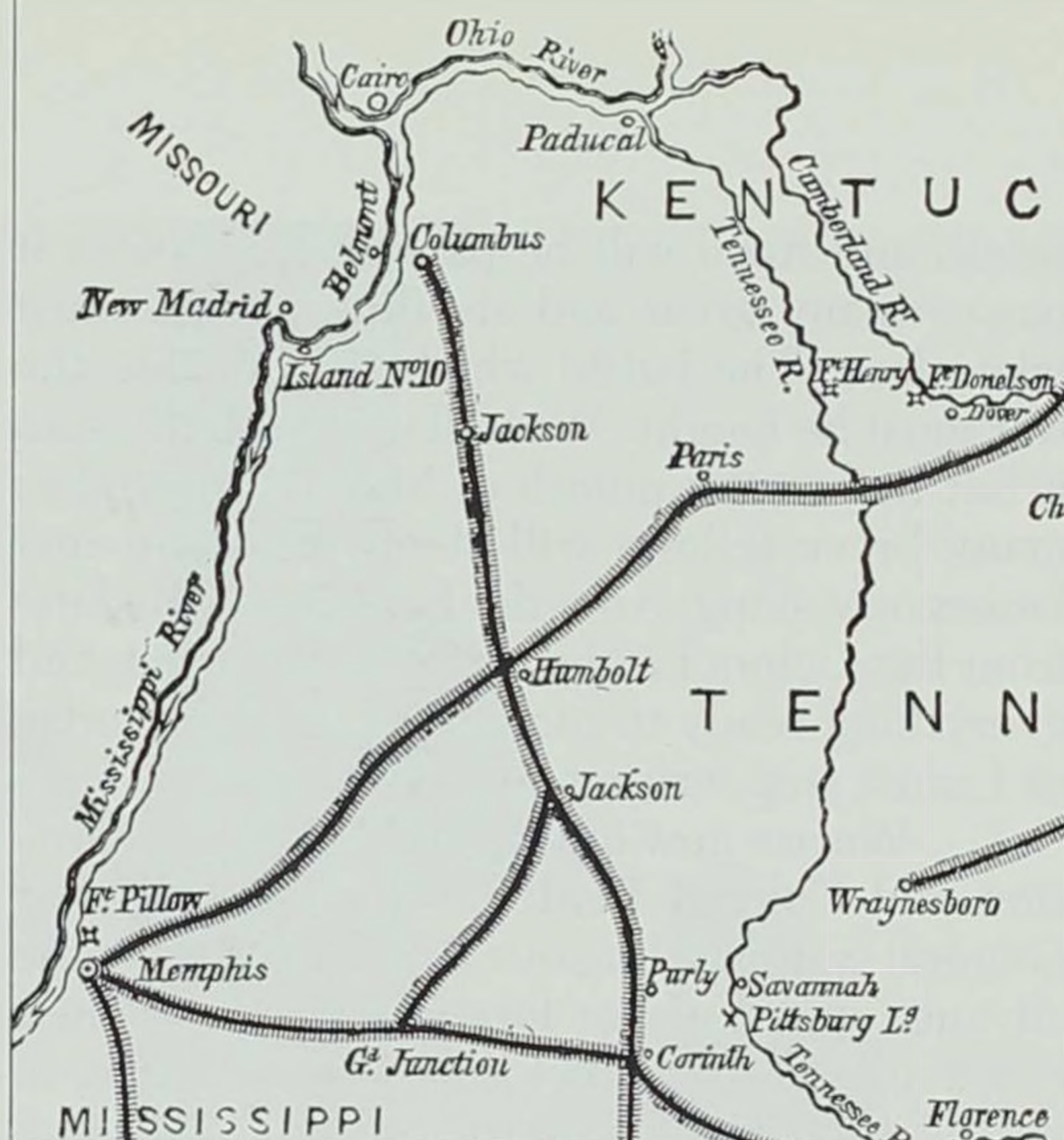
Got a place for some of our sick on the boat to be taken to the hospital. Sent the rest to camp. About noon went out to camp myself, found our tents just arriving. The boys had been sleeping in the rain without blankets or tents. I had tents put up immediately but we had to sleep in the mud without blankets.

Pittsburg, Thursday, April 10th

Moved our camp about 200 yards to dry piece of ground. Great many of the boys sick. Rained nearly all day.

Sunday, April 13th

Weather fine. I had the boys open the tents and spread their blankets to dry. A great deal of artillery was taken out during the day to worry the enemy positions. We will undoubtedly have another battle within a few days. Dress parade again this evening. Rained some during the night.

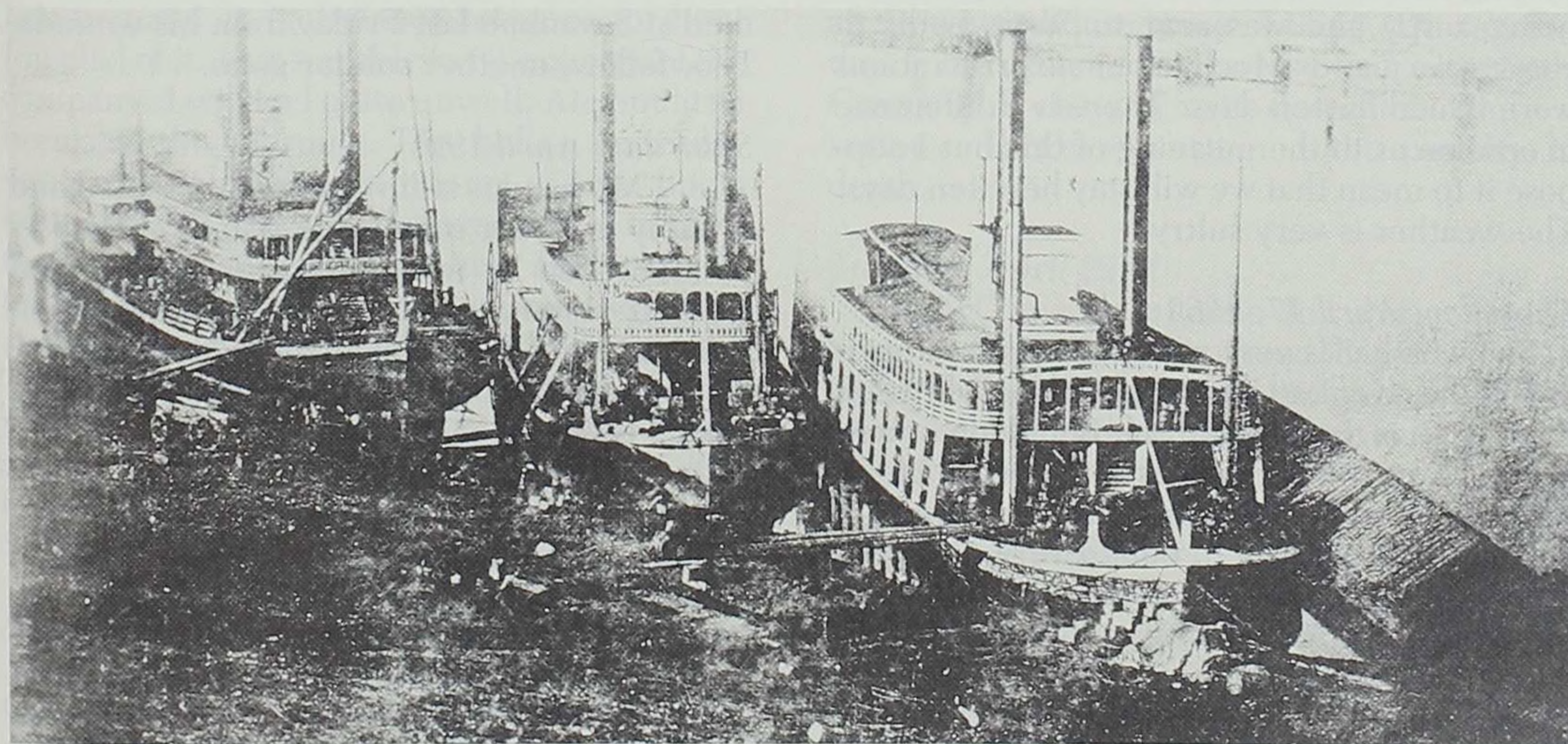


Monday, April 14, 1862

. . . Artillery still passing us all day. The battle can't be far off and to judge from our preparation the victory can't be doubtful. It is reported that 2,500 Rebel prisoners were brought in this evening. Eighteen Rebel deserters came into camp this evening. Said they had been pressed into service and that they were Union men. They took the oath of allegiance and were mustered into U.S. Service.

Tuesday, April 15th

The middle of the month but little over two



April 6 entry: "There were some dozen large steam boats at the landing. The ground was covered all around . . . with wounded and dying who had been brought in." This photo, taken a few days later, shows Grant's headquarters boat, the *Tigress* (center). The gun boat *Tylor*, barely visible here, is docked on the opposite shore.

weeks and April will be passed, but before it passes many great and startling events must take place. The battle which is to decide the war must be fought. We will undoubtedly gain it but before the month of May is ushered in many brave fellows will sleep the sleep that knows no waking. An order has just reached me from the Colonel to have the tents struck and everything ready to move by 11 o'clock today so I must stop writing and go to work.

. . . We are now in General McKean's Division and Colonel Reid, his Brevet Brigadier General commanding our Brigade. We are the advance guard of our forces and are within a half a mile of the picket line. When I begin to write I never know what the roll will call us into line before I get through. Our present camp is a beautiful place, dry and comfortable. A great many of the Rebels killed in battle were buried here. One grave is right at the corner of our tent and others scattered all around. . . . It may be well to state that Colonel Reid does not owe his elevation to any brilliant conduct on the field but to the fact that he is Senior Colonel, verifying the adage "the bigger the foot the better the luck."

Wednesday, April 16, 1862

This morning a Rebel was taken prisoner lurking inside our lines. He was suspected of being a spy and was sent to Saint Louis in charge of a guard. Much to our surprise rations were issued for ten days. There is a difference of opinion as to the meaning of this but I suppose it to mean that we will stay here ten days. The weather is very sultry.

Thursday, April 17, 1862

The weather is very warm. Troops are passing up the river and it is supposed by many that the design is to surround the Rebel forces and compel a surrender with as little loss of life as possible. The Secesh buried at the corner of our tent is beginning to emit a very disagreeable odor. We had some more dirt thrown on him today. I suppose he was not put more than a foot under ground. That is the way the boys buried them. Our own men they put a little deeper and stick up a board to mark the spot. Our Sutler who has been at the river moved out today. I had been doing without tobacco for

several days. Went out and got supply for chewing and smoking. Also got a bottle of lemon syrup and a jar of damson's preserves. I have felt as if I was almost starved for something better than hard bread and fat meat. Oh, well soldiering is a pretty hard business just at the present but I guess we can stand it, til we get the Secesh disposed of any how. My hand is slowly getting better. The inflammation is subsiding but it is not healing much. Yesterday received a letter from my wife urging me to resign. Several days previous I received one of a similar character. What shall I do? The reasons she gives for my coming home are good ones. My family is helpless and without friends. They need me at home but I can not resign honorably while there is daily probability of a battle. I have promised her that as soon as the active duties of the campaign are over I will resign, go home and leave family no more. I think the time is at hand when the hard fighting of the war will be over. . . .

Friday, April 18th

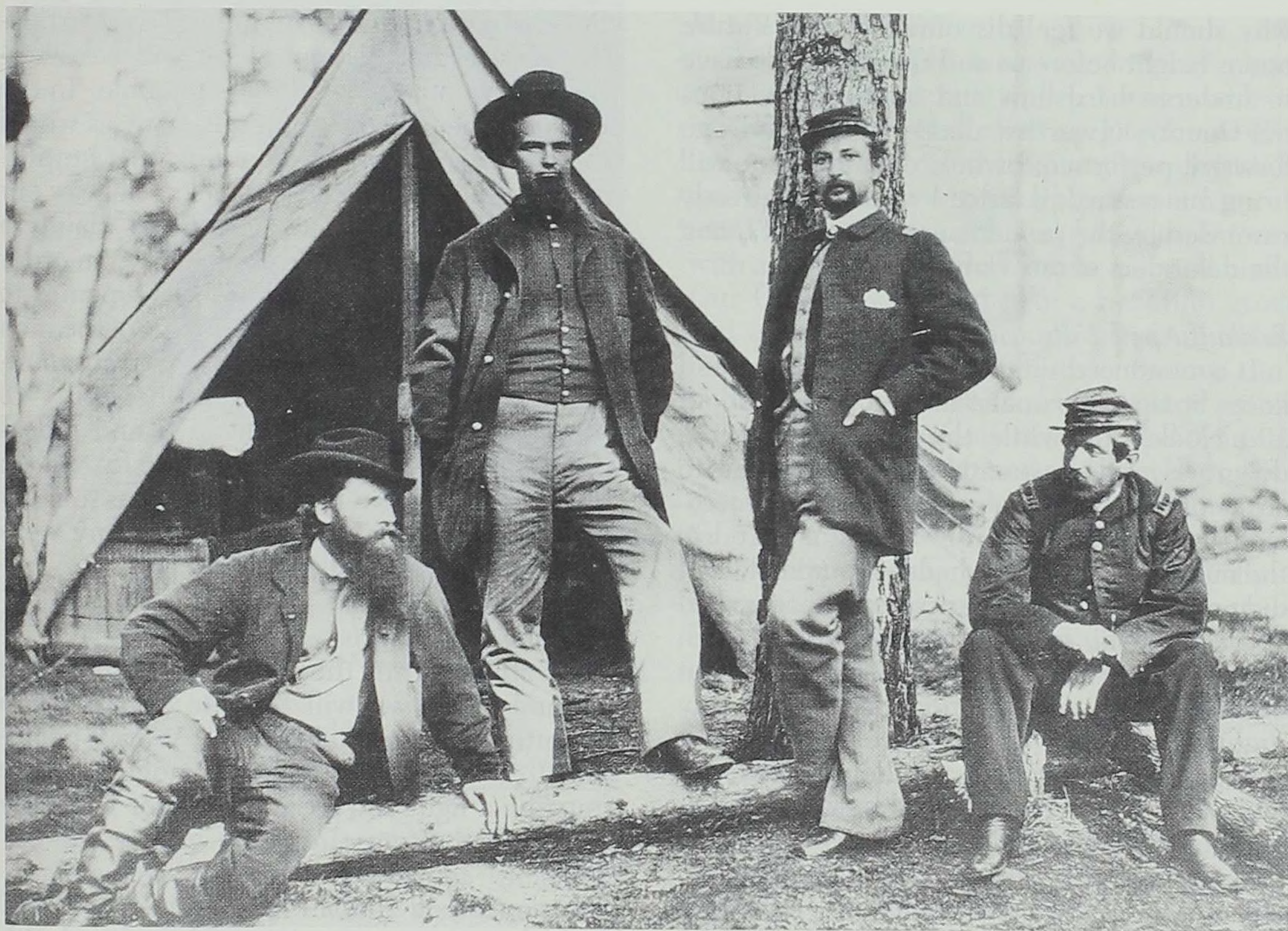
. . . Lieutenant Throckmorton and myself spent the morning making out lists of the clothing, pay for the boys of our Company who are wounded or sick and detached from the Company. I learned yesterday that S. W. Scott, one of our boys who was wounded in the battle, died at Savannah last Friday from his wounds. Poor fellow, another soldier gone. . . .

Saturday, April 19th

. . . My hand is still very much disabled and is likely to be for some time. General Wood's Division said to number 8,000 men moved forward yesterday and took up their position half a mile in advance of us so we are no longer on the post. Major Belknap has been placed in charge of a Wisconsin Regiment. . . .

Sunday, April 20th

The Holy Sabbath Day but one would hardly realize it's here. I had wholly forgotten it myself until I was reminded of it by another person. Every day is alike to soldiers. Two weeks ago today the Battle of Pittsburg commenced. What will another two weeks bring forth. It is still raining and very muddy. It is reported that Captain Blackmar is at Pittsburg



Goode writes, "No one but he who has tried it knows the privations and hardships of the soldiers. They richly deserve the nation's gratitude." Here, Union camp, 1863.

Landing and an ambulance has gone for him. I'm glad of it. I am not able to take charge of the company. I will feel quite unwell. Ate but little breakfast this morning. Day before yesterday some Secesh fired into one of our boats between this place and Savannah. Three of them were captured. General Halleck sentenced them to death and I suppose they were shot yesterday but I did not learn certainly. This will probably make the Rebels a little more careful what they shoot at. Captain Blackmar arrived in the evening but is wholly unable for duty. I am still quite unwell. Eat no supper. Still raining hard.

Monday, April 21st

Still raining. I am detailed Officer of the Guard. This is what comes of reporting for duty. Well I have learned something. . . . Some of our boys are quite sick. They get no attention whatever from the surgeon. I am

afraid we shall lose some of them. During the day I am called on to arrest two men from Company B charged with desertion. Quite a serious charge, if sustained the penalty is death. . . .

Tuesday, April 22nd

Report myself unable for duty. Quite unwell, eat hardly anything. Reported that General Pope has arrived with about 20,000 reinforcements and as many more to arrive in a few days.

Thursday, April 24th

Still quite unwell. . . . The boys are excused from drill today and are busy washing their clothes. A great many of the boys are sick and the blues seem to be prevalent among officers and men. I believe that if the boys were at home feeling as they do now it would be a hard matter to get them into the service again. But

why should we feel discouraged? The future opens bright before us and though we do have to undergo hardships and endure privations our Country is worth it all. Let us cheerfully go forward, perform our whole duty and time will bring our reward, if indeed we are not already rewarded by the proud consciousness of being the defenders of our Country. . . .

Friday, April 25th

It commenced raining during the night and keeps it up with unabated vigor. . . . About 10 o'clock p.m. while the rain was pouring down and mud all around we received orders to strike our tents and be ready to move immediately. . . . Our Company wagon got mired in the mud and everything had to be unloaded. It did not get in til nearly dark, then our tents had to be pitched, suppers cooked and all such things done. Our situation was anything but agreeable, sleeping in mud on a cold rainy night. I was still quite unwell myself but walked over rather than ask the dignitaries of our Regiment a chance to ride, though I was fairly entitled to it. Soldiering is bad enough at best but is made worse by the negligence of officers whose only apparent use is to ornament the Regiment and draw salaries. They seem to consider the highest crime known under military law and I believe are glad when the sick die so they are relieved from the trouble. Well we are fast finding out some of our officers that we supposed to be men [? End of sentence missing.]

Saturday, April 26th

. . . The whole Brigade . . . is now being inspected by some very ornamental looking gentleman whom I presume to be General and staff. Well it is but little use to be a dog unless you can be a big dog. After inspection of arms and accoutrements the Company books were called for and were examined. Ours were pronounced "well Kept." . . .

Sunday, April 27th

The morning dawned clear and pleasant. After Company inspection in the morning our Chaplain held divine services in front of field officers quarters. He read at length some passages of scripture and offered some well timed

and sensible comments on them. I was particularly interested. I suppose we will have services every Sunday when it is possible. In the afternoon he called together as many as would come and held prayer meeting. This he purposed to do several times a week. I believe our Chaplain is a good man and he is plainly a working man. After tatoon at night . . . an order was sent around to Captains of Companies to inspect the arms and accoutrements of the men and see that they were supplied with ammunition as a night attack was apprehended. We roused the men from their beds and did as ordered, gave the men the order to rest on their arms and went to bed and slept as soundly and dreamed as sweetly as if no enemy were within a thousand miles of us.

Monday, April 28th

No attack during the night. I think there will be none, but we will have to march on to Corinth if we want to fight. . . . We are beginning to get tired of waiting. We know that there must be a fight and we want it over with, the sooner the better.

Tuesday, April 29th

Early in the morning the road was lined with troops all taking the road to Corinth. Brigade after brigade of infantry, squadrons after squadrons of cavalry and battery after battery of artillery crowded along the road during the entire day. Cannonading was heard in the direction of Corinth. About 10 o'clock the long roll was beat and the whole Brigade was called into line. I was quite weak and the Colonel sent me an order to take command of the guard, relieve Lieutenant Throckmorton then in command and let him take charge of the Company. Our men were ordered to stack arms and get their canteens filled and 24 hour rations in their haversacks and be ready to fall into line at the tap of the drum. This they did and at about 1 p.m. were given "forward march." I remained in charge of the camp. We supposed at the time that a decided advance on Corinth was intended. We afterwards learned our Brigade was sent out to support General Lewis Wallace who had made an attack on Purdy (a small town west of Corinth) to destroy the Memphis Railroad. After marching about



HARPER'S PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR (1866)

"May the time soon come," Goode begins his diary, "when the necessity for shedding blood will no longer exist in our beloved and once happy United Country."

10 miles they were informed that General Wallace had succeeded without them and ordered "right about march" and returned to camp. It was already night so they encamped for the night. As Officer of the Guard I had a pretty hard tour. Lay out on the wet ground until 9 o'clock when I felt very unwell and at the risk of arrest I went to my tent and laid down with my clothes still on giving the Sergeant orders to call me if I was needed. . . .

Wednesday, April 30th

Our Regiment got in about 10 a.m. very tired. . . . I omitted to state yesterday that S. G. Bridges, a jeweler from Keokuk and a particular friend of the Regiment, arrived here with a magnificent silk flag, his own gift to the Regiment. Such kindness touches our hearts for it shows us that we have friends [who] are watching our movements with deep interest and are not willing to believe any slanderous report put in circulation against us. Mr. Bridges took our old flag back with him to present to the State Historical Society. Its tattered condition will be a sufficient evidence that we have been where balls flew thick and fast. . . .

May 1, 1862

Started early this morning, weather pleasant, moved about four miles. I was unable to march with the Regiment so I took my own time. I stopped to rest frequently and got into camp about noon very much exhausted. . . . I passed a restless night and [was] threatened with a bilious attack, have quite a few all night. Our Company ground is in a beautiful grove and our march was through pleasant, shady trees without any under brush. But we can't enjoy it. Our movements are restricted within narrow limits and if any time we feel tempted to let our systems relax and give ourselves up to enjoy the pleasures of the scenery or of the cool refreshing breeze the brief stern word of command and from some part of the camp recalls us to the fact that we are soldiers in an enemy's country. . . . No one but he who has tried it knows the privations and hardships of the soldiers. They richly desire the nation's gratitude.

Friday, May 2nd

Weather still pleasant. We have for a time been attached to a Brigade, commanded temporarily by Colonel Crocker of the Iowa 13th and composed of four Iowa Regiments. . . . We had been in General McKean's Division but now in General Sherman's (Port Royal Sherman). I am quite unwell and taking medicine today. I have to get back up and fix it for myself and I can not help thinking that if I were at home the careful hand of my wife would prepare it and I might rest myself in bed. But here we must work sick or well. . . . We are said to be within seven and a half miles of Corinth. The next move will perhaps take us within cannon range and then the work of devastation and death will commence. Who will survive that bloody contest no one knows and it is not unlikely that this may be the last that I shall ever write in this journal. But if I should fall I want my family to know that I have tried faithfully to discharge my duty and the heinous pain that I suffer in view of the uncertainty is when I think of them. . . . If we succeed at Corinth as we hope to I can not see how it is possible for the war to last much longer. . . . It may not be out of place to mention that since the Battle of Pittsburg I have only once taken



Wounded soldiers from the Battle of the Wilderness. As at Shiloh, Union and Confederate casualties were high.

my clothes off to sleep. I hardly think I shall know how to behave myself if ever I get back home.

Monday, May 6th [5th?]

Since last Friday I have been unable to write and am still quite feeble. We moved our camp seven miles on Saturday. I walked the entire distance. It was too much for me and completely prostrated me. On our route we passed through deserted Rebel camps. They left in such haste that they left blankets, mattresses, clothing, provisions and ammunition in large quantities. Saturday evening General Pope took Farmington, a small town some four miles from Corinth with 1,500 prisoners. . . . We are . . . at Monterey where Beauregard dated his dispatch to General Grant asking permis-

sion to come and bury his dead. The whole country is swarming with soldiers all on the move and everything indicates that a strike will very soon be made. . . .

Sunday, May 11, 1862

I have again been compelled by the state of my health to neglect my journal. Since writing the last I was taken way from camp and brought to the place where I have much better care taken of me. I am still quite weak. Have to walk with a stick and keep to my bed the greater part of the time. Captain Blackmar is here laid up with his back. Yesterday the order came to break up this hospital. The sick will be taken down the river, the convalescent will be taken to Hamburg some miles above and those able will return to camp. . . . Yesterday fighting

was going on all day with the enemy on the left of our lines. Reports say we had 150 men wounded.

Yesterday I sent in my resignation as First Lieutenant and asked a discharge from the service. I doubt whether it will be accepted. It has caused me a struggle to do this but I believe it is best. I am not able for duty, have not been and not likely to be. It is of no use for me to stay doing nothing while my system is running down all the time. The weather is getting intensely hot and water is getting scarce. Good water we have never had in Tennessee.

Tuesday, May 13th, 1862

Still unwell but better than I have been. I am quite weak and afraid that my back will fail entirely. I am very anxious to hear from camp. I think I shall go out and report for duty the first chance. I will probably have one today or tomorrow. Got three letters last night from my wife and from my sister and one from my friend Noah. I must answer some of them this morning. The weather is very hot, hot enough for July up in Iowa.

The report this evening is that Corinth is evacuated. If so there will be another general movement of the Army. . . .

Wednesday, May 14, 1862

Morning fine but very warm. The mosquitoes trouble me. . . . I have had no chance to get to camp. Have just returned from the bedside of one of our sick, Marion Harman. He has typhoid fever I think is out of his head and will not recover I greatly fear. Poor fellow, he has a wife and children at home whose hopes for life will in great measure be blasted. . . .

Thursday, May 15th

. . . Weather warm and roads very dusty. On the road [back to camp] saw 16 teams of six mules each run away and cause a general smash up. . . . I found that our men had been called into line of battle. . . . After waiting under arms for about four hours word was received that Corinth had been evacuated and they were ordered back to camp and dismissed. They broke ranks with a shout. . . . Resignation I sent in some days since was never placed in the Colonel's hands and I this evening wrote

out a new one and handed it in. I think it will succeed but I can not know with certainty for several days. There can certainly be no dishonor attached to resigning when after facing the enemy six weeks expecting a battle we find them gone and no probability of a fight. . . .

Friday, May 16th

A heavy firing is heard in the morning and we begin to indulge some suspicions that Corinth is not evacuated after all. We have orders for our Regiment to be ready at 9 o'clock with one day's rations to go out on picket guard, but from the heavy firing we expect a general engagement. . . . Are close enough as we lie in the open air to hear the Rebel drums and rattling of the cars on the track. . . .

Saturday, May 17th

. . . A heavy firing begins and is kept up with but little intermission during the afternoon. It seems to extend along the whole line and we suppose the engagement to be general. . . . We suffer very much during the afternoon from heat and want of water. We camp at night in line of battle with two lines in front and two in the rear of us. The artillery which we are to support is just in front of us. We suppose a battle to be fairly begun and expected to be followed up tomorrow. Lie on our arms all night. I still have a dim suspicion that the enemy have mostly evacuated Corinth, leaving only a sufficient force to retard our progress until the main force gets well out of the way. . . .

Sunday, May 18th

I awake very much refreshed and in place of being roused by the roar of cannon and the music of long roll everything is quiet. Everything looks as if we might have a very peaceful Sabbath day. I hope it may be so. I think the soldier, harassed as he is by uncertainty and kept in a continual state of doubt, should have one day of rest. There is not even picket firing. . . . I can get no definite information in reference to the fighting yesterday. Suppose I will know nothing until I see it in the papers. That is the way we are generally informed in regard to our own movements. The fatigue party sent out this morning are engaged in

building breastworks in front of our lines. Forces are still being moved up from our rear. Every movement seemed to be made with utmost caution as if there were a certainty that the enemy were in Corinth and an attack on us anticipated. The artillery horses are constantly kept harnessed and saddled. All this does not convince me that there will be a fight but only that General Halleck does not know exactly whether the enemy have gone or not and he does not intend to be surprised. We all have the utmost confidence in him. I wish we could say the same of all the officers under him.

. . . If I had my resignation back I should not send it for some days as the time I handed it in I thought Corinth evacuated and no chance for a fight for some time to come, perhaps not at all.

As it is I am badly situated. My resignation is probably by this time approved but will perhaps not reach me for a day or two. If I go into battle and get wounded or taken prisoner my pay will be stopped because I will no longer belong to the Army. Should I be killed or disabled for life, suppose I or my heirs would be entitled to no pension as I will be out of the service at the time and not entitled to pensions other than a citizen going into battle. I am in a state of suspense. . . . If my dear family were only provided for I have no disposition to quit the service. . . .

Comments: Colonel Reid informed me that . . . if I got into engagement before I received acceptance of my resignation my pension is alright and I will stand as if I had not tendered my resignation so if there is a battle, here goes.

Monday, May 19th

Had another first rate night's rest. Yesterday evening late we were ordered carefully to inspect the guns of our men and see that they had 50 rounds of ammunition, two days' rations ahead and prepared for an early march this morning. . . . It is now just 5:30 a.m. . . . I have had no breakfast. Am sitting on the trunk writing on a box and smoking my pipe. I am in a state of great suspense. I have heard that my resignation is returned accepted. I do not know whether this is true if it is in the Adjutant's hands and I will have not been notified of it. I would like to know the truth. I am the third officer in the Regiment who has resigned.

Another Captain sent in his resignation last night makes the fourth. In less than one month I believe half of the officers in the Regiment all resigned. . . . We had just got our wagons loaded when an order came that the orders to move had been countermanded and we must unload. This we began to do when another order came to let things remain as they were for a time and wait orders. In a few moments the Major came around, ordered us to get our Companies formed as the enemy were advancing on us. This we immediately did. The wagons with the Company property were ordered back to the rear. Additional details were made to work on the breastworks. After forming our Companies we waited some time, no further orders were given. We ordered our men to stack arms and the rest but be ready to fall in at a moment's notice. In this position we waited the supposed advance of the enemy all day. But they didn't come. In the evening our tents were brought back. While we were engaged putting them up the enemy advanced throwing shell at us with the intention I suppose of ascertaining our position. They all fell far short of us but sufficiently near to wake up some of our large siege guns which I think the Rebels soon found to be a hornets' nest. Their shells burst immediately after the report of the guns. I sat down on the knapsack, took out my watch and timed ours. The most of them exploded in from 7 to 8 seconds after report of the gun. Some burst in 5 seconds, some went 12 seconds, long enough to carry them three miles and I have no doubt they did execution. It was rather a cool piece of business sitting down to time shells but a soldier gets to be cool. In the evening we had Dress Parade with as much unconcern as if nothing was going on. . . . One circumstance during the day which I must mention. While I had our Company drawn up and was at my place in front Colonel Reid came up three times with orders and in every case gave them to the Second Lieutenant. I know Reid dislikes me and I can only regard it as a deliberate insult. I felt inclined to go to my tent and stay there at the risk of an arrest. The more I thought of the matter the more I did not like it and at last I went to him. Said I, Colonel don't you intend me to command our Company today? Said he, you can do as you please about

it. I told him that I had formed the Company and expected to go out with them, but that when he came around to give orders he gave them to the Second Lieutenant when I considered myself Commander of the Company. Said I, I did not understand it, it looked as if you did not recognize me as Company Commander. Said he, I did not see you. I do not know whether this is the truth or not but I had to be satisfied with it. In the evening I was detailed Officer of the Guard, whether as a favor or as a punishment for my impudence I am unable to say. Well it will not be long that I will be under his power. . . .

Thursday, May 20th

. . . . The cars at Corinth seem to be unusually busy this morning running to and fro and whistling all the time. I should not be surprised if the Secesh are getting away as fast as possible, but can't tell. . . . Got three letters in the evening, two from my dear wife and one from my Father. No stir of any kind.

Wednesday, May 21st

Orders issued early this morning to be prepared with two days' rations in their haversacks and be ready to march at moment's notice. . . . We may have a fight or may not. . . . I am almost getting tired of this continued suspense. We know nothing 10 minutes ahead but that is one of the trials incident to a soldier's life. If we do get into a battle and I fall, good bye my dear wife and children. If I [die], I die loving you as I have always loved you, only it seems to me more fervently. It seems to me I could die more cheerfully if I could only see you a few moments to speak a few loving words to you, but Dear I have to leave it to you to imagine what I feel and what I would say for I cannot express the multitude of emotions that come crowding on my mind. But this much I assure you, I am not afraid to die for my country. Good bye dear, good bye. May God take care of you and the little ones. 12½ o'clock.

Not gone out yet, think it doubtful whether we do today. . . . Report says that the firing this morning was caused by a Rebel Battery throwing a shell into our lines and killing three men. Our guns opened out on the Rebels who incontinently skidaddled leaving some say

three, some say five guns, which we forthwith and due regard to the rights of property took possession of. Everything seems calm now. I go to bed early. Get a good night's rest. I have been regularly sleepy headed for 4 or 5 nights. I can sleep soundly and comfortably with the guns booming all around and the comfortable reflections staring me in the face that a shell may enter our camp at any time and very unceremoniously disturb my slumber. Well so long as they don't come I shall not mind it.

Thursday, May 22nd

Morning dawned clear and bright. The night was cool and heavy dew fell. . . . This morning there was a heavy firing heard, some cannonading just before reveille. The bugle of the artillery near us sounded the alarm and called to harness. Our drums made a mistake and in place of beating an alarm, beat the reveille. So our orderlies called the men into line, called roll and dismissed them.

The firing stopped and they were allowed to remain dismissed. I slept through all and did not wake till an hour or so afterward. . . . I do not much apprehend a fight unless the Rebels attack us which I hardly think they will have the impudence to do. If they try it once I think they will get their sufficiency of it. . . . General Halleck seems to understand his business. He is very cautious. He intends to have Corinth and will have it and the Rebel Army too unless they take the back track but I think he intends to take his own time. I have eaten my breakfast and finished my smoke. The boys, as many of them as can raise a pipe full of tobacco, are standing around smoking and talking. Others are smoking moss which they pick off the bodies of decayed trees, an article now frequently called into requisition by the smokers of our Regiment. Some pronounce it an excellent substitute for tobacco. I have never tried it myself. An irresistible laziness has taken possession of me during the last few days. If there is in the camp a lazier man than myself I would like to have him trotted out. I am really anxious to see him.

[*End of diary. More candid accounts of Shiloh and the Civil War continue on the next page.*]