

"Have Gone To Atlanta"

*The diary entries of Private Van Buren Oldham
March 13, 1864 to August 1, 1864*

Part II of II

(Word usage and writing style left as originally written.)

Edited by Dieter C. Ullrich



On December 4th, 1863, Private Van Buren Oldham returned to duty after eleven weeks of rehabilitation from wounds received during the Battle of Chickamauga on September 19th. Prior to his return, he was placed in an overcrowded hospital in Atlanta not long after the battle. As the number of wounded continued to flow into the hospital, he was sent by rail to another congested

hospital in Montgomery, Alabama where he remained until October 13th. Without the consent of his physician, he left the hospital in the middle of the night and returned to his regiment near Dalton, Georgia. After his arrival in camp, he was found to be physically unable to perform his duties and was temporarily discharged. Van Buren was readmitted to a hospital in Atlanta on October 25th. Two weeks later he was sent to Newnan, Georgia for further treatment of his wounds. There he remained until he was eventually released on the 4th of December.

Van Buren returned to his regiment while it was in winter quarters outside of Dalton. For the next three and half months he and his regiment struggled and suffered through the cold and wet winter of 1864. Hunger, illness and monotony beleaguered the camp as they unremittingly performed their daily responsibilities of drilling, marching and carrying out guard duty. As winter came to a close Van Buren again picked up his pencil and scribble his thoughts into his diary. He starts on March 13th, 1864.

Sunday, March 13

We had inspection this morning. It was reported today that we were going to West Point [Georgia]. An order was given to all the men today to turn over all baggage that they could not carry on a march. Governor [Joseph E.] Brown* of this state, in his message to the legislature, attacked the recent actions of [the Confederate] Congress in passing the military currency bill and the bill suspending the writ of habeas corpus.

The Confederate States Congress passed a bill banning Federal paper currency and regulating Confederate currency on February 6th. Eleven days later the same Congress conditionally suspended the writ of habeas corpus in the South.

**Joseph Emerson Brown served as Georgia's governor from 1858 until the close of the war.*

Monday, March 14

I have read Brown's message. He says the actions of Congress in passing the military currency and bill suspending the writ of habeas corpus is unconstitutional. I wrote a letter to a lady in North Carolina through the representation of Harv Collier*. Also wrote one to Bill Montgomery**. We had Division drill. I went down as a spectator. General [Patrick R.] Cleburne drilled also.

**Private Harvey Collier of Company G, 9th Infantry.*

***Private William J. Montgomery of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Tuesday, March 15

The day is very cold. We went down to town on drill again.

General [William J.] Hardee attends in person. General [Otho F.] Strahl drills the division; Colonel [George C.] Porter commands our Brigade, Farquaharson* being under arrest. The spectacle is grand to one who looks on to see so many men drilling at one time. General Hardee was certainly not satisfied with our drill or he would not continue it. I suffered during the night hours a ringing in my head. The day was bitter cold and as we had no houses it was really disagreeable. I have drawn for a gun.

**Colonel Robert Farquaharson of the 41st Tennessee Infantry.*

Wednesday, March 16

We have sent Harv Collier to Atlanta on a three-day furlough, borrowed from another man, to buy some bread. In the evening heavy volleys of musketry were heard together with an occasional cannon shot which caused at first much excitement but was ascertained to be a sham fight between Cleburne and [Alexander P.] Stewart's divisions. I have suffered worse from a cold than any day previous this season. My head pains me very much.

The sounds of musketry and cannon may have been from a mock battle being conducted by nearby units. The official records list no battles or skirmishes in the region on this date.

Thursday, March 17

Dr. Fenner* of Tennessee has got a furlough to go to West Tennessee. It is said that no more furloughs will be granted and is thought that active operations will commence immediately. General [Benjamin F.] Cheatham did not go in person after his men. He is only gone to Richmond. General [Joseph E.] Johnston refusing to grant him permission to go outside telegraphic communication. We had no drill today. The air is some warmer than yesterday.

**Assistant Surgeon John S. Fenner of 6th Tennessee Infantry.*

Friday, March 18

We had battalion drill but I did not march being excused by the surgeon. It is said that the influenza is fearfully increasing. The 4th regiment in our Brigade has been quarantined on account of it. In the Brigade opposite there are

some stockades, and men are in them from morning until night. I do not believe that Tennesseans would submit to such treatment. It is thought by everyone that we will move soon. George Milner* and myself stayed with Strahl's Brigade last night.

**Private George R. Milner of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*
Saturday, March 19

I promised to write a letter for Rich Moss* to a lady whose acquaintance he made while south in a hospital. He had forgotten her name. My head continues to pain me and runs free from the rising. I have drawn me a pair of pants large enough for any man. I bought a beef liver and heart for which I paid \$2.00. The papers report Grant concentrating at Chattanooga and urge upon our authorities the importance of concentration. One of the boys drew the chance for a furlough and many are into betting.

**Private R. H. Moss of Company K, 31st Tennessee Infantry, a friend of Private Oldham's from Weakley County, Tennessee.*

Sunday, March 20

I was on guard today but did not stand during the night because I was cold. Sergeant Henderson who went as far as Jackson on furlough has returned. We heard nothing from Lieutenant Dew*. Hilliard** is going home if he gets his furlough. I will send by him again for money for fear Dew does not bring it. It is said our divisions and [General William Henry Talbot] Walker's will fight a sham fight. I think we ought not to be put against each other since there are hard feelings existing between the troops. I received a letter from Vowel***.

**1st Lieutenant R. J. Dew of Company G, 9th Tenn. Infantry.*

***Private William Henry Hilliard of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

****Assumed to be Private W. R. Vowell of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Monday, March 21

I helped to clean up today but did return early since I was on guard besides I did not like to do anything under the order of Lieutenant Heley. In the evening I managed to keep off drill and at night Baucom* and myself went over to Strahl's Brigade to tell some of the boys to write if they wished. This morning

the snow on the ground is terribly deep.

**Private J. J. Baucom of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Tuesday, March 22

After breakfast a game of snowball was gotten up between our Brigade and [General States Rights] Gist's; [General Alfred J.] Vaughan's joined us and [General Clement H.] Stephen's joined Gist so that in all there were six or seven thousand men. We had colors and officers to lead us out and back. We drove the Georgians out of their camp. In the evening we engaged again and whipped out the whole division. Hilliard is gone to West Tennessee on 30 day furlough. I wrote by him to Ma and sister.

Wednesday, March 23

This morning the snow had most all disappeared. Enough however remained for another fight between our Division and Walker's. After whipping them out we were attacked by Vaughan's Brigade but stood our ground. I stayed all night with Bill Thomas.*

**Assumed to be Sergeant W. A. Thomas of Company K, 31st Infantry.*

Thursday, March 24

We fired at a target in the forenoon at a distance of four hundred yards. The closest shot being eleven inches. Out of four shots I hit the board once. In the afternoon we drilled company drill. During the night we had a severe storm of wind, which blew down great numbers of shelters. It is reported we are going to move.

Friday, March 25

I went out today with two others and cut a load of wood. It was raining. Wood is scarce here and we have to go some distance to get anything except pine. We have paid \$10 for an empty barrel of molasses and are making a barrel of "Meat Stew." Hunter* wounded at Chickamauga has come in from the hospital. He is not ready for duty.

**Private H. C. Hunter of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Saturday, March 26

We went out again today and shot at a target. Distance 600 yards. Nearest shot eleven inches of center. I then cleaned up my gun for inspection. I also washed me a suit of clothing and changed. Grant is put Chief in command of Yankee armies. Northern papers report that another "on to Richmond" will soon be commenced. Our papers do not credit this, and advise our authorities to keep a look out in that direction. A correspondent in the papers claims the honor of best recruiting for this regiment.

General Grant formally assumed command of all the armies of the United States on March 17th.

Sunday, March 27

The day has been very lonesome to me at heart. There was preaching among Gist's Brigade. I am trying to stop chewing tobacco but find it difficult. It is a wonder to us all why Joe Dew does not come back since we do not believe him guilty of desertion and we thought him shrewd enough to run the gauntlet.

Monday, March 28

We had Corps drill today. When I first came into the service I thought that only our regiment was as much as it could be drilled, so green was I, but we climbed from regimental to corps drill, and then the next thing will be an army drill. The wind blew very hard and it was very disagreeable on the field. During the night we had rain. Our rations are very scarce. Have only corn bread.

Tuesday, March 29

I am on guard. I do not know how to take the weather here. Today it is really cold. General Johnston inspected the brigade today. The Georgians in Walker's division think the Tennesseans are great fellows. We have a very bad opinion of Walker's division. Did not stand guard at night.

Wednesday, March 30

We shot at targets again today distance 200 yards. I hit within four inches center, closest shot by the company $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. The day is bitter cold. Two of the Avalanche* are furloughed and will go to West Tennessee. I came near having a difficulty

with orderly Davis in regard to drawing a blanket. He is a notorious rascal and were it not for fear of punishment would get many thrashings.

**Private Oldham refers to the "Obion Avalanche", of Obion County, Tennessee, which was Company H of the 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Thursday, March 31

We went out on the drill ground today to have what was called a "rehearsal", that is going through all the motions of fighting preparatory to a sham fight. The whole corps of four Divisions was present and maneuvered as though they were fighting. General Cheatham was present and commanded his Division. Our Brigade takes a battery from [General William B.] Bate's Division. During the night it rained.

Friday, April 1

At this time last year I was sailing through the Northwest having bidden adieu to my prison in Chicago and was returning South. We did not have the sham fight today as anticipated the weather being too bad. I went to Strahl's Brigade. Dick Dalby* sent a letter from home. The days are cold for the season.

**Assumed to be Private Dick H. Dalby of Company G, 9th Infantry.*

Saturday, April 2

We had nothing to do today as usual on Saturdays. The boys washed their clothes and cleaned up for Sunday inspection. The papers all say and everybody says this army is in better spirits than ever before. I can not see why it is even thought it is so, yet I believe the men will fight desperately in the next battle. It is reputed Forrest has burned Paducah, Kentucky.

General Forrest and 2,800 cavalrymen attacked Federal outposts at Paducah on March 25th. Colonel Stephen G. Hicks and over 600 hundred men retreated into Fort Anderson. Two assaults were made upon the fort but Hicks refused to surrender. Forrest's troops burned supplies and a steamship at the city's docks.

Sunday, April 3

Times are beginning to be as lonesome to me as some days at Chattanooga last year. There was preaching in the regiment.

I am out of money and do not know what I am to do, since the "currency act" will make money so scarce. Joe Dew arrived late in the night but brought no letters for me.

Monday, April 4

Several of the company will share money from home in amounts from five to ten dollars. I can not see why my people did not write to me since Mr. Scott* sent me word that they had received my letters. It is a rainy day and we have mud in abundance. Several of the 31st Tennessee have been here today with hopes to hear from home.

**Assumed to be Sgt. W. L. Scott of Company G, 9th Infantry*

Tuesday, April 5

Joe Dew tells a sad tale of the people in Weakley County, Tennessee. Many of them are without provisions and the last horse has been taken from most of them. Dresden is a den for free Negroes who carry the day. I am in hopes that Forrest who is now in that section will straighten them. It has been threatening rain again today. The order for furloughs for every ten men is terminated.

Wednesday, April 6

The day was beautiful. The sun shone bright and warm, making one feel like he should not be idle. Strange enough we had nothing at all to do. Even the "Goober Grabbers" were idle. It was thought at first that we would have the sham fight. In the night it clouded.

Soldiers from the State of Georgia were commonly known as "Goober Grabbers".

Thursday, April 7

Although we had a puddle of rain in the morning the sham fight was announced. Our Division and Walker's were arranged against Cleburne and Bate's. The firing resembled that of a real engagement. Several men I understood were hurt by coming too near the muzzle of the gun.

Friday, April 8

Today it has rained again. It seems that we can not have any fair weather. It is thought by everyone that we will be the

next object of attack by the Yankees. Marion Gardner* has a furlough and will go home. I wrote to mother. We have no news from Forrest. I read a letter from Montgomery. He wants to go home.

**Assumed to be Pvt. F.M. Gardner of Company H, 9th Infantry.*

Saturday, April 9

The day has been very blustery and threatening rain. Rich Moss has stayed with us all the day. He did no duty. It is thought some of the transfers will go today. I do not wish to go myself. At night I went to the 31st Tennessee and found a man ready to start to Weakley County on furlough. I wrote a short note to mother.

Sunday, April 10

I cooked today. It is seldom we have any preaching, when we do an audience can scarcely be had. Prayer meeting is very common yet better interests seem to be manifested by the soldiers. I have past the day in reading newspapers and ruminating upon the past. General Forrest Head Quarters on the 24th were at Dresden.

General Forest's was at Union City on March 24th where his command captured the town.

Monday, April 11

I have been on guard today. Henry Vaughan*, and others of 31st Tennessee have furloughs to go to Paris and Trenton, Tennessee. I sent two letters to Ma and one to Miss A[nn]a Van Arsdale]. Oh, how I wish I could get a furlough. I do not know what I would give for one if I had the money. It is reported General Forrest has retreated to Bolivar, Tennessee. I am very unwell.

The lady Van Buren speaks of is assumed to be Anna (George Ann) Van Arsdale, the 18 year-old niece of John Wesley Van Arsdale, a neighbor of William F. Bohan of Harrodsburg where Van Buren resided and recuperated prior to being sent to prison. General Forrest was believed to be in Mayfield, Kentucky during the final days of March and had furloughed many of his troops until April 3rd.

**Assumed to be Henry Vaughan of Company K, 31st Infantry.*

Tuesday, April 12

Last night while over at Strahl's Brigade I felt bad and got some pills of Blue Mass to take. Today I have felt very unwell. It has rained again. It seems almost impossible for us to have more than one day of pretty weather at a time. Brooks* and Baucom went fishing with a sieve in company with some of the 31st Tennessee and brought in a mess of nice fish. Bill Fields, Joe Dew and Dalsby are on picket.

**Assumed to be Private J. L. Brook of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

***Sergeant W. R. Fields and Private Dick H. Dalsby of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Wednesday, April 13

I was excused by the surgeon from drill. In the evening I went to Strahl's Brigade and at night Rich Moss came over and stayed with me until morning. At dress parade an order was read in the Brigade to place one man in [General Marcus J.] Wright's, one in Strahl's and one in ours in stockades with other punishment. The day is clear and beautiful.

Thursday, April 14

Today is the anniversary of the bombardment of Fort Sumter. This day 3 years ago the nation's banner was made to trail in the dust and a new nation was born. What has passed in this long interval will be recorded by Historians with wonder. I am unwell and have done no duty. I went to the city of Dalton and bought a half gallon of molasses for which I paid \$10. Roffe* of the 31st went with me. I think my health is failing me and if warm weather does not approach soon I am fearful I will have a spell of sickness. I am getting very anxious to hear from A- of Kentucky and hope that before long I will receive a letter from her.

**Private J. C. Roffe of Company K, 31st Tennessee Infantry.*

Friday, April 15

I did nothing today on account of feeling so bad. In the evening, [Arthur St. Clair] Colyar, member of Congress from Tennessee spoke to the Brigade. He is very sanguine in his hopes and thinks the war will close in less than twelve months.

Thinks we have reasons to prefer the re-election of Lincoln in the North. Says our prospects are brighter than at any period for twelve months previous.

Saturday, April 16

We have had no drill today it being the general day for cleaning up. There are no Atlanta papers yet. "The Rebel" of this morning contains news that Kirby Smith defeated Banks in Louisiana and that [General James R.] Chalmers has captured Fort Pillow on the Mississippi River. A Yankee member of Congress who was for proposing to discuss the propriety of recognizing the South is about to be executed. The day is fair.

Confederates under General Richard Taylor formed a defensive line against the advance of General Banks Union troops near Mansfield, Louisiana. Banks attempted to push through Taylor's defenses but was outflanked and routed on April 8th. The next day Banks entrenched his troops near Pleasant Hill, Louisiana where they were attacked by Taylor and his troops. The Federals held their ground and counter-attacked driving the Confederates back to Mansfield. On April 12th, General Chalmers and 1,500 men of General Forrest's command assaulted Fort Pillow, Tennessee. It would become well renown in the north as the "Fort Pillow Massacre" as two-thirds of the Union troops, many being black soldiers, were either killed or wounded during the conflict and its aftermath.

Sunday, April 17

The papers seem to confirm yesterday's dispatches. Saturday night our Brigade and Vaughan's men tore down the stockades that had been erected in Wright's Brigade by invitation of Wright's men. The guard was ordered to fire but fired in the air. A court of inquiry has been in session to find out the individuals.

Monday, April 18

I changed my diary from morning until evening. I will commence with the evening and close with the evening. The stockades are liking to create a serious difficulty. The authorities seem determined that they should stand and the soldiers will tear them down. It is said Strahl's Brigade tore his down today. General Cheatham says they must stand and those captured in tearing them down punished. General Johnston has suspended furloughs.

Tuesday, April 19

The stockade question seems to have subsided. Although I do not rush to engage in mutiny and love and respect General Cheatham, I can but hope that they will be torn down, for such punishment will have a demoralizing effect and is a humiliation worse than death. Yet what is worse than mutiny. Besides the stockades, there can be insurrection in spite of the efforts of the division and any attempt to resist authority will sully our good names. General Johnston reviewed the whole army today. I think that we will move soon.

Wednesday, April 20

The boys receive letters from home today. None had come for me. I do wish they would write. I shall never forgive them for the way they have treated me all except my mother. Strahl's Brigade continues to tear down the stockades as fast as they are put up. It is reported [General George Henry] Thomas has moved his Head Quarters to Ringgold [Georgia] and his army is advancing. A squad was sent out today it was said to fortify. We have drilled company drill.

Thursday, April 21

It is said that instead of fortifying, the men that went out yesterday constructed some thing to interrupt the enemy moves. I have been on guard and have guarded some men that helped to charge the stockades. It is said that Strahl has picked men out of his Brigade to guard the stockades. Papers reported General Forrest again at or in the vicinity of Paducah and Columbus, Kentucky. The enemy is said to be in action in front. I have written letter to Uncle Jack Cherry.

General Forrest's cavalry attempted to disrupt trade along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers and skirmished at Columbus on April 13th and again near Paducah on April 14th.

Friday, April 22

The officers of the guard have taken the responsibility to release the prisoners so that we did not have to stand guard during the night. Stood two hours this morning. Another order sent round to send all the extra baggage to the rear. Ed Walton's wife, sister of Captain Head*, is here to see him. Hilliard's

furlough is out today but I don't think he will be in for several days. I have had me a haversack cut out of a piece of carpeting to carry my clothes in when we move.

**E. S. Walton of Company H, 9th Infantry, his wife Lucy Walton and Captain H. W. Head of Company H, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Saturday, April 23

Contrary to custom we drilled Brigade drill. It seems from the dispatches that Forrest was forced to retire from Paducah. No news from the front. Every man thinks we will have to fight here very soon. I have been at work on my haversack, which I have completed and was offered five dollars for it. Some of the mess have gone fishing with the Sergeant.

General Forrest's retired from Paducah on the 14th as Union gunboats began to shell his command at Paducah.

Sunday, April 24

Last night at sunset we were ordered to prepare one day's ration. As today was my cook day and Baucom, who is my partner, being absent, I had the cooking to do myself. This morning bright and early we went to work on a dam across a creek in our front. It is supposed that the object of these dams is to overflow the country to prevent the enemy from flanking. The fishermen returned in the night with a lot and we fried the fish.

Monday, April 25

The work we did on the dam was washed away before it was completed, from the quantity of water which flowed against it we supposed the dams had broke above. Today we drilled battalion and company drill. The regiment does worse at drilling than I have known for a long time. I attribute this to the way we are drilling under so many and different officers. I drew a knapsack, and cut it to pieces to make a haversack.

Tuesday, April 26

I got a pass this morning to go to town but gave it to another man and remained in camp to work on my haversack. We have company drill in the morning and evening. The regiment is not so well drilled as one might suppose. It requires practice which we ought to have, but we have drilled under so many

different officers and these men who don't know how to drill themselves. After that the boys will not try to drill.

Wednesday, April 27

I secured a pass which excused me from drill while I completed my haversack. I could sell it now for twenty four dollars. One of Joe Dew's relatives came to see him. We have reports from the front that indicate a fight. Skirmishing going on today. It is the opinion of all that we will fight soon. We are going to move our camps - a detail being sent out to clean off the ground.

A Confederate attack was made on Taylor's Ridge near Ringgold, Georgia on the 27th.

Thursday, April 28

We have moved to our new camp ground. Last night we were acquainted with the fact that we were to be taken from the Avalanche and be consolidated with Company A of the 9th under Locke.* We are now with Company A and occupy the position of Company I in the regiment. The Avalanche and old Company C make two companies so we now have ten companies in the regiment. During the evening a heavy cannonade was heard. We have divided our mess - Brooks, Milner, Dew and Dalby gone to themselves. We have made board shelters.

**Captain J. B. Locke of Company A, 9th Infantry.*

Friday, April 29

Our boards were hauled and we have built a stove and pole beds. In all we are much better situated than at our old camp. The cannonading was resumed today in front and we were ordered to be ready to move at a moment's warning. It is said that some of the division has gone. A fight is apparent and that will be a fight scarcely equaled.

A Federal reconnaissance from Ringgold toward Tunnel Hill, Georgia occurred on the early morning hours of the 30th.

Saturday, April 30

This morning Hilliard arrived from home bringing with him letters, money, and some articles of clothing for the company. I received some shirts, socks, a pocket knife, hat and

forty nine dollars in greenback and 150 in Confederate money. Received some letters from Ma and brother, also one from Miss A[nna Van Arsdale] of Kentucky dated June 26, 1863. I was delighted to hear from home. I also received my gold watch and chain. Firing continued in front today.

Sunday, May 1

A sad accident happened last night. While a large crowd was attending divine services, a tree close by fell among them killing six instantly - four others have since died and we buried them this evening with the honors of war. Hol. Lacewell* from my old company was killed and one other man from our regiment Hicks* was slightly wounded.

**Privates Holland Lacewell and J. E. Hicks of Company G, 9th Infantry.*

Monday, May 2

After the sad affairs of yesterday I feel much fatigued being one of the members that escorted the remains of the men to the burial ground. They were buried in two rows side by side. Early in the night we cooked one day's rations and today having been at work on some rifle ditches. The enemy advanced on Tunnel Hill in the morning but retired after skirmishing a while. The division was kept in readiness to move.

Union troops met resistance at outposts near Tunnel Hill and Ringhold Gap.

Tuesday, May 3

This morning we were called out to clean up the campground. Having to suit up for a pass to go to town. I did not take long then and I came back. I then went to Dalton going by Strahl's Brigade where I learned that Walker's Division had gone to the front with one day's ration. In town I bought five pounds of peas paying 60¢ per. Yesterday I bought 3 pounds paying 75¢. I left my watch with a jeweler in Dalton to have some work done on it. I would much prefer they had not sent me my watch and chain from home. Bill Montgomery is here, having come from Cassville after his money and clothing sent him from home. My letters from home offers me much satisfaction. My folks were well. Steve Jones had been conscripted and my brother was expecting the officers after

him. I would not care so much for Jones but for my sister and her children. If they should conscript my brother then Ma, his own, and Steve's family will be without a protector. None of Ma's many Negroes had run off and neither had any of mine. Ma wishes me to remain until I can come home honorably and she was opposed to me going to the cavalry.

There are no diary entries from Wednesday, May 4 until Saturday, May 14, 1864.

On May 7th General Sherman began his march towards Atlanta. Unable to break the Confederate line near Dalton, Sherman attempts a flanking movement on the 9th through Snake Creek Gap. General James B. McPherson found the defenses too strong and pulled back. Sherman decides to swing his entire command through Snake Creek Gap. By May 12th Sherman's army had broke through the gap and Dalton was evacuated. The Confederate army had relocated at Resaca, Georgia and was again preparing for Sherman's troops.

Saturday, May 14

Early in the night we have taken our positions on the line near the center I suppose for supporting Wright's Brigade. This morning the sharpshooters commenced a terrible fight. Having no breastworks for the reverse we had taken positions under a hill. We have artillery and several batteries to our left and in front of us. The enemy seems also to have several batteries in front as continual shelling has been going on. About 12 or 1 o'clock the fight opened on the right and has been continued ever since. While writing a man reports that General [John Bell] Hood has repulsed five lines of the enemy. Night is approaching which I hope may put an end to the contest. Tomorrow will likely put an end to the fight. We have lost ten men killed on the right. Several wounded.

The Federal troops made advances upon the center of the Confederate lines at Resaca but strong defensive works and delays in deployment stalled the initial efforts.

Sunday, May 15

The fighting was resumed on the right at about ten o'clock. We were not attacked in our positions. In the evening our Brigade went to the right to the support of General Stewart. We were the 3rd line and the column advanced at 4 p.m. The line before us gave way and we were soon drawn up on the

railroad. The Yankees then advanced and the right of the Brigade became engaged. The troops on our left gave way and we were ordered to return by General Stewart. We came off in very bad order which was occasioned partly by thick woods. We lost none killed that I know. We are now back where we started to advance, and form the 3rd line.

General Sherman launched a flanking movement on the 15th, which threatened General Johnston's railroad supply line. The Battle of Resaca ended late that evening as Confederate forces withdrew from the town.

Monday, May 16

The "goober grabblers" were rallied and formed in the first line. General [George E.] Maney had his horse shot from under him. He snorted because General Stewart would not let him go on to the Yankee works. We are considered fortunate in getting out safe and General Stewart told General Maney that he could not see his Brigade cut to pieces. General Maney felt his whisky I think after we came out. We did not remain long in our positions then near dark when we moved by the left flank toward town and waited until twelve o'clock when the balance of the men joined us. At this time it was apparent that we were evacuating the place. Cannon were dismantled and divisions were moved from their positions leaving only a line of skirmishers. The Yankees were evidently appraised of our movements for they shelled the entire line and the skirmishing resembled an engagement. There was great hurry to cross the troops over the river before daylight and we were marching fast. About two o'clock we came within few miles of Calhoun [Georgia] and rested until morning when we formed a line. The Yankees were close after us for by this time firing was heard close on our rear. We remained here but a short time when we moved through the town and took a road toward Kingston. Moved a short distance and were halted in the road. Here we remained until near night. In the meantime, the enemy came up and engaged Bate's Division in our rear. We were then moved back near the scene of action - formed columns, stacked arms and are now awaiting orders. I understand that General [William Brimage] Bate drove the enemy back a short distance. Colonel Porter is commanding the brigade, General Maney being sick. Lieutenant Colonel of 6th, Harris*,

commands the regiment. Buford feigning sickness and has gone to the Hospital. The boys say he will not do too well.

* *Lt. Colonel John L. Harris of the 6th Tennessee Infantry.*

Tuesday, May 17

Bate it is said lost five hundred men but drove the enemy before him. At 1 o'clock the reveille was sounded and we were soon on the march. Early in the day we reached the little station Adairsville and filed into the woods and rested with orders not to leave our guns. The balance of the army moved further on. In the evening it clouded and commenced raining. Soon cannon were heard and it was known that the enemy were pressing our cavalry. We had commenced stretching our blankets when we were called into line and the division thrown into a kind of hollow square or ambuscade to catch the cavalry. As the enemy came near and our cavalry resisted more stubbornly, it was known that they had infantry in reserve and our lines were formed accordingly. I thought our Division were the only troops on the ground but when formed found that we had two lines in reserve. We were formed in an open field where the enemy's shooters had fair play at us and where their batteries were in full range. Although night was approaching and all prospects of a general engagement affirmed for the morrow, we expected to have a hard little fight. Behind us was Turner's battery, which we captured at Perryville, and an open field with a reserve half mile distant. Before us the enemy, three hundred yards distant, and to reach we would have to charge through an open field. A battery in front was playing on us.

We wanted and expected orders to charge the battery. Not receiving them we expected to be charged and then would come a hand to hand conflict for our reserve which was too far distant and we would save our battery. Happily however we did not become engaged although an attack was made on our right and left but was repulsed. We lost one man killed in the regiment and three wounded. The Yankees set fire to a house in front of us and after night and for some time the skirmishing was continued by its light. Some think we will fight tomorrow while others say we will continue to retreat.

General Johnston pulled back his army southeastward toward Atlanta and set up lines at Adairsville, Georgia.

Wednesday, May 18

We remained in line of battle until 12 o'clock expecting orders every moment so that we could get no sleep. We were then withdrawn noiselessly without attracting the attentions of the enemy who were busily engaged fortifying. The night was very dark and the roads muddy so that it was disagreeable marching. Coming to the railroad we marched on that for several miles crossing on the trestles. The Brigade became much scattered and many lay down and went to sleep by the roadside. I stopped half an hour before day and slept until it was light enough to see how to walk without so much difficulty. The most of the regiment got together and came on but I traveled as best suited me either behind or before. At Kingston we met with Marion Gardner who had just come out from West Tennessee. He brought me two letters from Ma which was a great relief to me to hear from Ma and know that she was doing well. Marion says that the country will soon be overrun by Yankees. I tremble for my folks. We are two miles beyond Kingston where we are resting, I have heard nothing from the Yankees in the rear. Ma writes me that there is something due me from the deed of my brother and sister's estate. I would be glad to go home and have a settlement, but Ma writes to me not to come until I can do so honorably.

The Confederate army withdrew from Adairsville to Kingston, Georgia. Sherman pursued and skirmished with Johnston's rearguard.

Thursday, May 19

We remained in our positions today until 11 o'clock when we were very hurriedly ordered to prepare to move. It was evident, however previous, that the whole army was in motion. We went back a short distance and formed our Brigade and Strahl's on the front line, Vaughan's and Wright's in the reserve. General Johnston announces his determination to retreat no farther and says we will turn on the enemy. After remaining a while in our position we moved to the right and rear some distance and will form on a ridge. I understand General Hood commands the right, General [Lucius E.] Polk the center and Hardee the left with our divisions on his right. I met Roffe this evening who is on the infirmary corps and he gave me a drink of whiskey. The associations for the relief of the wounded are on the ground ready for work.

General Johnston orders an attack upon the advancing Union lines but General Hood received reports informing him that his command had been flanked and thus prepared defensive positions south and east of Cassville, Georgia.

Friday, May 20

We were waked at 12 o'clock and called into line. Then marched off at we thought was another position on the same line, but we soon found that we were evacuating our position. In the line last night we were in reserve supporting [General H. W.] Mercer's and Strahl's Brigade. We marched in the direction of Etowah [River, Georgia] and two o'clock found us at the river together with several other Divisions waiting for the wagon train to cross. My shoes have gave out, I am almost barefoot so that I found it impossible to keep up with my regiment. Reaching the river I managed to slip through the guards and came ahead two miles and rested until the Division came up. Why we retreated I do not know. Some say that General Hood could not rely on his men to hold their position. The army is all safe on the south side of the river and we are resting. Roffe gave me another drink of whiskey as we came on, which was very acceptable.

The Confederate army continued to pull back before Sherman's grinding pursuit. By the evening of the 20th, Johnston had passed through Cartersville, Georgia and across the Etowah River.

Saturday, May 21

In the night I was waked up by Knox who had drawn me a pair of shoes. Although two numbers too large I had taken them for fear I would be accused of wishing to play out of the fight. Two men who accompanied Henry Vaughan to West Tennessee from Strahl's Brigade have returned. They say Vaughan has joined Forrest and will not return to his command. Also that the Yankees were in West Tennessee. General Forrest was at Tupelo with five days rations. It was thought he was going into Middle Tennessee. We have been resting here all day but expecting to move, I know not in what direction. The sick and barefoot have been sent to the rear. Our rations which were due us last night did not appear until this evening, so that we were scarce of something to eat. The Yankees are on the other side of the river. It is said that a heavy force has crossed

below us. It seems that so far we have the best of the fight in Virginia yet the two armies are still confronting each other. The sensation of the dispatches which announced the capture of both [General Frederick] Steele and [General N. P.] Banks in the trans-Mississippi-department have died out and we now know that both these Generals have been whipped but not captured. Two men from the company which consolidated with mine got on the cars today for being barefoot. I received my new shoes too soon and yet why do I not know that it is impossible for me to get off a good thing.

General Forrest was indeed reorganizing his troops and was preparing in Tupelo to continue his raids into Tennessee and Kentucky. General Lee and his army had effectively thwarted Grant's efforts to flank and defeat the Confederacy at Spotsylvania, Virginia from May 7th to May 19th. Generals Banks and Steele continued to slowly press General Edmund Kirby Smith's Trans-Mississippi command up the Red River in Louisiana.

Sunday, May 22

We have rested here again today contrary to all expectations. I can not hear what the enemy are doing. It is impossible to find out even what our own armies are doing. It seems that the two armies in Virginia each claim a victory. I can not but be uneasy about the safety of Virginia for Grant is aspiring to the presidential chair and his victories are generally achieved by overwhelming numbers. He cares but little for the sacrifice of his men provided he can gain his ends. This is a very lonesome place reminding me very much of the bivouac near Lafayette previous to the Chickamauga fight. I think this calm and quiet is only the prelude to one of the bloodiest battles of the war. We have orders to be ready to move at a moments warning. I am of the opinion that we re-cross the river.

Monday, May 23

We lay expecting orders to move until daylight. I felt very unwell from sleeping on the naked ground. About two o'clock we moved off left to the front and it was the opinion of some that we're going to cross the river. We had a slight shower in the evening which made it more pleasant marching. We are now camping, I hardly know where in Paulding County, however we are seven or eight miles from where we started. It

is thought that we are going to Dallas to check on the enemy who are reported to be crossing in that direction. I do not know which route the columns under Polk and Hood are moving or even whether they are moving at all.

General Sherman troops were en route to Dallas, Georgia performing yet another flanking movement this time on the Confederate left. His army would cross the Etowah River late in the day.

Tuesday, May 24

Although our time is counted from the 23rd we were not really mustered into the service until this day three years ago. Three years of soldiering works quite a change. I was then a stout robust young man, but now one would take me to be at least thirty and my health is considerably impaired. Out of the number who taken the oath with me on that day but few are left of the old company now. They have been killed, disabled, discharged, died, not a few deserted. It was my intention during the last two years to quit the service when this time came round, but the war has not yet closed and the service of every man is required. Besides I can not leave without being reported a deserter and considered as such. Feeling very unwell this morning. I had my gun, blanket, cartridge box and hatchet in the ambulance. The division did not go to Dallas but turned in the direction of Marietta. I went off the road a short distance and got a dinner and a few onions to carry to my men. Walking to overtake the Brigade I met it coming back. I guess the enemy are pressing our rear or it may be that Johnston intends fighting them here. We moved back three miles west into the woods and camped. It is raining and we are stretching our blankets to protect us during the night.

Wednesday, May 25

We remained in our position until morning when we moved out on a new cut-road and formed in lines of battle. Here we remained until near night when we were moved still farther on towards the front. Fighting going on near what I suppose to be the center of our lines. I understand General Polk is engaging the enemy with a portion of his men. It is reported General [Joseph] Wheeler has succeeded in reaching Sherman's rear and destroyed a large wagon train. It is also reported that General Lee has engaged Grant in Virginia with

success. Tomorrow perhaps a general engagement will take place. The whole army is moving into position and everything indicates the morrow is the day of trial. Would to God that it was over with. I feel very unwell and were it not under circumstances like the present I would refuse to do any duty. I have reported myself to my surgeon for three days in succession but he has gave me no medicine and has not even examined me. He thinks perhaps that I am pretending or it is quite likely that he does not think the most of me since the affairs of Christmas.

The Battle of New Hope Church, Georgia began on the 25th as General Johnston decided to draw a line twenty-five miles northeast of Atlanta to receive Sherman's assault. General Wheeler's cavalry attacked and damaged the Federal wagons supplying Sherman's troops the day before. General Lee continued to defy Grant's attacks at Spotsylvania.

Thursday, May 26

We halted last night in the road and after standing some time in the rain were told that we might build fires. We did so and lay down and went to sleep. At 2 o'clock we were roused and marched a couple of miles when we filed to the left half that distance and formed in lines on the right on the Brigade supporting Strahl who occupies a position on the mountain. We have been staying here expecting orders and expecting a dash on some part of our line. Strahl's men have fortified. It is thought that Johnston will force Sherman to an engagement. I am very unwell and if I do not get better will have to hang up.

Friday, May 27

We were waked up again this morning at 3 o'clock and moved by the left flank about 3 miles, then halted and formed on the top of a ridge - Strahl and Vaughan in front, Maney and Wright reserve. At sunrise we advanced across a valley down into the enemy's pickets capturing several. Vaughan charged the enemy's line posted on a high ridge, on finding them too strong he retired. After moving about for some time our regiment managed to get into breastworks that Bate had built. Here we remained until late in the evening when we were cut off and posted as a reserve for our own regiment which now composed the first line. Very heavy skirmishing has been going

on all day with considerable effect to both parties. Fighting has been heard on the right today. I have been sick the whole day and feel very much like I will have to go to the rear. We have lost one man killed in the fight and several wounded. The general engagement will doubtless come off tomorrow, though some are of the opinion that Johnston will retreat to the Chattahoochee before fighting.

Heavy skirmishes occurred as both armies jostled for position around New Hope Church. The fighting on the Confederate right was General Oliver O. Howard's assault at Pickett's Mills northeast of the church.

Saturday, May 28

While laying under the hill we had two or three men wounded by balls which came twenty feet high but would strike things and glance. Really there is no safety within two miles of a battlefield. Towards night (last night) getting no better I went to surgeon Turner in charge got a certificate and pass to go to the Division Hospital. It was so late however that I concluded to wait until today. Some fighting was done on our right after night. This morning at 3 o'clock the Division was moved by the right flank four miles near the church where it was formed on the left of Walker who moved with us. I left the regiment at General Hardee's Head Quarter's and not knowing where to find the hospital I selected me a cool shade by the side of a brook and slept until the afternoon when I searched and found the Hospital with Dr. Turner who had preceded me. Bob Davis is here and it is said he is very sick, but I doubt his being dangerous. There is a good crowd of wounded and some sick here. Most of the wounded have been cut off. The wounds appear more serious than those at the battle of Chickamauga. Turner gave me some medicine. I will return in the morning. The camp wagons are nearby and I went and got me a clean shirt, drawers and socks.

General Sherman orders troops to shift eastward to the railroad station at Acworth, Georgia. General Johnston foresaw the movement and counter-attacked in attempt to break the Federal advance.

Sunday, May 29

At night one of Company H, who consolidated with us, came in being sick. We slept together under a wagon. This

morning I reported to [Dr. Walter] Brice, the surgeon of Brigade, and had my name registered so that I might not be considered a straggler. A pretty heavy fight occurred during the night on the line occupied a few days since by our Division, now by Bate, without any material advantage to either party. Colonel Lamb* from Henry County, Tennessee was mortally wounded and brought in here. Everything quiet today except a little skirmishing in the evening. Dr. Brice came here and relieved Dr. Turner who went to the regiment. I reported to Brice and got some quinine. It is thought here that the army will fall back still farther and things are being prepared so that when orders come to move all will be ready. I do not believe that Johnston will retire from this.

On the night of the 29th, General Johnston orders an artillery barrage of Union entrenchments and advances troops closer to the Union lines.

**Assumed to be Colonel Jonathan J. Lamb of the 5th Tennessee Infantry.*

Monday, May 30

We did not move last night as anticipated. All the wounded were sent off during the night so that none remains but the sick. Everything very quiet on the lines. Occasionally some of the men come in to see a wounded friend but stay only for a few minutes and return. There is very little straggling, less from our Division than I have seen from others. This evening Bob Davis was sent off to the Hospital. I do not like to accuse a man wrongfully but I believe Davis is "playing off". Brice says he will send me off first opportunity. I have felt very unwell during the day.

Tuesday, May 31

The sick draw thin rations here (raw) with the nurses. The nurses use the cooking utensils first so that if a man is able to cook for himself he has nothing to cook in. Last night there was heavy firing on the lines near the center, and I understand the enemy charged our work, but were handsomely repulsed. This evening the medical slaves are packing up wagons and the loaded teams hitched. Most of the sick sent off and everything ready to move. Every man is certain that Johnston will retreat farther. Some of the sick are making considerable noise fearing that they will be left behind if the army moves. If

we can get transportation we will be sent to Marietta tonight. Dr. Brice has left me in charge of Dr. [2nd Lieutenant Joseph] Ringold of the 27th [Tennessee Infantry] regiment to be sent off.

Skirmishing continued near Allatoona and Burned Church on the 30th.

Wednesday, June 1

We left the Hospital at 12 o'clock in wagon trains and traveled a very rough road to Marietta where we found quite a number of sick and wounded to be sent south. The relief committees were here with plenty of provisions and the best attention was paid by them to the sick and wounded. After being examined, the surgeon in charge gave me a pass for the convalescent camp. At 2 o'clock we left on the cars and at 4 reached Atlanta where we got supper at the "Gate City" Hospital and are now lying here waiting further orders. Everything is confusion here - the people expecting every day when Johnston will fall back on the city. Left Atlanta in the morning of the 1st instead of Marietta as stated above. Moving about as I have been for the past several days and sick besides I could not post my diary at night and have forgotten some of the dates and events. We came in open cars to Macon and are now quartered in Hospital called Blind Asylum. During the day it rained hard and there was no other alternative than to take it.

Thursday, June 2

The surgeon examined me last night but gave me no medicine. This morning I went down in town and found Saml. Vergus who is administer of my uncle's estate, who died here several years since. We commenced a suit against Vergus for a settlement with the heirs but the war stopped it. I was here in company with my Uncle Charles Cherry and Agnis Grant in March of '61 and employed the firm of Poe, Greer and Poe as prosecutors. I saw the elder Poe today. He says that the court will not grant a hearing until the war is over. I inquired and learned where there lived a Mrs. Tutor who once lived in Tennessee but came here with my Uncle Tom Cherry many years ago. Her and his people were not considered of good character in Tennessee but she seems to be respected here. She

is very low with consumption and will not likely recover. She has a grown daughter who is a graduate and received me kindly. I was told by Mr. Poe to question the mother if she was acquainted with all the heirs of [Thomas] Cherry as she is thought to be a party to the suit against us. She was so sick however that I did not mention my Uncle at all. Returning to the Hospital felt much fatigued and am quite sick tonight.

Friday, June 3

A change of surgeon this morning in our ward. The surgeon made a very close examination of my lungs but did not express an opinion. He prescribed quinine and something else. The food here at the convalescent table is very bad so that I have eaten but little until today when the surgeon placed me on the sick list and gave me something better to eat. Quite a number of men were sent off to their commands this morning. Some went who came with me. In my room is a man with syphilis, 2 wounded, one sick. We are very comfortably situated. More sick and wounded arrived during the evening. Nothing of interest from the front.

Saturday, June 4

I felt very unwell last night having fever and headache. The surgeon examined my lungs very closely yesterday but to my inquiry whether they were seriously affected he did not answer. I know one thing I am not the man I was once - only one year ago I was in much better health. I have expected that Miss Ellen Tutor would either visit the Hospital herself or send me some food. But I guess my appearance brought to memory unpleasant recollections and they were glad when I left. I am short of money except Greenbacks which is difficult to trade and I do not like to trade it anyway. I have had the most of my clothes washed. I saw today a body louse which appeared on one of the beds.

Sunday, June 5

I am taking quinine with something mixed. Today I asked the surgeon again whether my lungs were seriously afflicted. He would not answer me directly but I saw from his book that he was treating me for bronchitis. I have felt much better today if I except a rising in my mouth which is painful. More men

have been sent off and more sick and wounded have arrived. Our surgeon is a preacher and we had preaching in the dining room today. Several ladies visited us, some with provisions. No news of interest from the front.

Monday, June 6

The surgeon did not prescribe anything for me this morning but I am continuing the old prescription. I have felt much better and think that I will be sent off tomorrow or next day. A woman, the "keeper" of a little grocery nearby of where I have bought several drinks of whiskey, gave me butter and a very large onion. I saw an advertisement here for a clerk. If I thought I would be accepted I would apply for the position since my health is very bad. But I know there is no such good thing in store for me. I came in this army with a musket in my hands (nor had I higher aspirations) and it is my doom to serve during the war as a peon in the cast of danger. A good soldier is never favored while one that is of no count is living on the "fat of the land." I have a notion of going to the theater tonight if I can manage to slip off from the surgeon.

Tuesday, June 7

I visited the theater last night under the pretense of going to see a young lady. Macbeth was played - Mr. Dalton personating Macbeth and his wife Lady Macbeth. There was a good crowd in attendance. The little boys were particularly annoying with hisses and applause. I returned at 12 o'clock very much fatigued. The boys told me this morning that the surgeon did not miss me last night. In the evening I went to see Miss Tutor and had taken charge of a letter to send through the lines.

Wednesday, June 8

I was expected to have been reported for duty this morning but the surgeon thought otherwise. I am expending money very fast. I started from the army with thirty dollars. Since I have been here I have used \$31.30. I now have on hand two dollars. I had my watch worked on to the amount of \$12.00. A good number were furloughed today, all for sixty days. I paid \$3.00 per pound for honey.

Thursday, June 9

I am still taking medicine for bronchitis and my cough I think has improved some. The papers contain no additional news from the "front." Both armies are still maneuvering for position. The Republican convention to nominate a candidate for president of the U.S. was to have met at Baltimore on the 9th instant. It matters but little to the people of the South who is the nominee. All are pledged for a vigorous prosecution of the war. Our Surgeon here is very particular about the boys leaving the Hospital so that I stay pretty close to my room, preferring confinement to asking his permission whenever I wish to walk only a few hundred yards. I purchased a pound of honey last night from a lady at \$3.00 divided it with my roommates. The fare is very sad here and no effort is made to remedy it. Yesterday noon Surgeon Green in charge of Hospitals of this city visited and inspected the dinner table. A better dinner was prepared for him to look at than has been cooked before or since I have been here. As soon, however, as he was gone the same scanty fare was resumed. Sick men now get corn bread instead of flour bread.

The National Union Convention met at Baltimore, Maryland on June 7th and 8th. President Lincoln was overwhelmingly nominated for a second term and Andrew Johnson as Vice President. The party platform called for ending the rebellion, no compromising with the rebel government and a constitutional amendment ending slavery.

Friday, June 10

I have been within the hospital during the whole of the day. I wish to go downtown in the city and see Greer and Poe before going to the front but I think probably I will get one day's notice. Nothing stirring from the front. I expect to leave Sunday.

Saturday, June 11

I thought this morning that I would have been gone by now. But the surgeon has said nothing to me yet about whether I thought I could stand the experience. The fact is, I would prefer remaining here until I at least feel well for twenty-four hours. Being out of a house now would make my cough as bad as ever. I am told that I could be detailed as clerk in the Post Surgeons Office. But I hate to apply, for it looks like so many

are after details that one would be considered as trying to play it out. I am tired of this war. I wish it could end yet not upon such terms as the enemy could dictate. When I reflect upon the consequences of this war and the curse of demoralization which it will leave among the people, I can but shudder. It will require all the intellect and virtue of the country to reduce them to subordination to the authority of law, to suppress crime, to command respect for civil authority, and to inspire habits of industry and domestic thrift.

Sunday, June 12

Last night after going to bed the Devil or some other evil spirit put the thought of whisky in my head and I got up, dressed and went to a grocery close by and had taken two drinks. I made arrangements with the woman to cook me a half dozen eggs for breakfast and this morning as soon as I could slip away from the doctors I went down after them. I paid her \$1.30 and she gave me a breakfast of eggs, chicken, butter, coffee and of course I drank more whisky. I got back to my room just in time to receive the surgeon on his rounds. At dinner, feeling pretty hungry and knowing that I would get but little to eat, I hired a Negro to cook me three eggs and bring me some bread. I am expending money very fast and the only way I have to get it is by selling my "greenbacks" sent to me by mother. The morning paper contained news that Forrest had met and defeated a force of Yankees near Baldwin, Mississippi. This puts an end to all speculation about his being in the rear of Sherman. More sick and wounded arrived today. Sherman has been reinforced by the 17th Army Corps from the west and our papers are preparing the public mind for another retrograde of our army. It has been raining nearly all day. I feel sorry for the boys at the "front" who have no shelters. I have had a man here at work on my watch to the amount of \$17.00, which makes in all \$70.00 I have paid for work on that watch since I received it from home. Only a few moments since he showed me that someone had broken the crystal I have almost got to believe that there is not an honest man in the army. If you get one to work on a watch he will steal half of its works and charge you the value of the watch. I am of the opinion that this man had taken my crystal from some other man's watch. I think I will be sent to the front or to some other

hospital in the morning as there is a prospect of the arrival of more sick and wounded. N.B. I will drink no more whiskey in this place unless I think I really need it.

On June 1st General S. D. Sturgis left Memphis with 7,800 soldiers to locate and eliminate General Forrest and his cavalry force. In a somewhat slow pursuit he found Forrest and his men at Brice's Crossroads, Mississippi on the 10th. Forrest quickly attacked the Federals with around 3,500 men and sent them reeling back north. His command would capture over 1,600 and inflict over 600 casualties.

Monday, June 13

Last night after going to bed I was told to go to the baggage room, get my baggage and be ready to leave for Eufaula [Alabama] in the morning. I had given out a shirt to have washed with which some difficulty I got back but it was wet. I roused Old Negro Jack and made him get me some rations to put in my haversack, made the man who broke my watch crystal pay me five dollars and went to bed again. This morning forgetting the resolution above I went and got a couple of drinks. Taken the cars at 8 a.m. on the South Western Railroad and at 7 p.m. reached Eufaula a distance of 145 miles. On the route we passed the prison (camp Andersonville) where it is said we have 20,000 Yankee prisoners. At Smithville the cars stopped for dinner. I paid \$2.00 and got the best dinner I have eaten at a hotel for many days. The hospital we are stopping at, I think, is a new arrangement not well fitted up for sick. About 130 sick and wounded came down with me.

Andersonville Prison was numerically at its peak in the summer of 1864 and it is believed that more than 32,000 Federal soldiers were imprisoned when Private Oldham passed the prison encampment.

Tuesday, June 14

Eufaula, Alabama is a small place situated on the banks of the Chattahoochie River about fifty miles from Columbus, Georgia and not far from Florida line where it borders on the corner Georgia and Alabama. The Chattahoochee is the line which separates it from Georgia. This river is navigable I suppose as far as Columbus. Boats pass here daily. The cars do not run near than a mile and $\frac{1}{2}$ of the town the depot being on the opposite side of the river. I saw several stores and groceries

representing that there was considerable trade carried on before the war. There are two or three other hospitals in the place but not many sick or wounded. This Hospital is entirely new and we have none the advantages yet the older hospitals furnish for the sick. All the inmates however are convalescent and able to wait on themselves. So far they furnish enough to eat. I bought me a dozen eggs and some butter, which I can relish better than fat bacon. It still continues to rain and I feel sorry for the boys at the front. Not a word of news from the army. In the ward with me is one of the 46th and one of the 1st Tennessee, one wounded Alabamian and one Mississippian, all convalescent. I feel very unwell tonight. Turns out that such bad weather gave me a fresh cold and made my cough worse.

Wednesday, June 15

I felt so very bad this morning that I kept to my bed. The surgeon came round to see me and without farther examination then to feel of my pulse prescribed nearly the same medicine that Cooper gave me at Macon. I do not think that he is half the surgeon which Dr. Cooper is. I did not go to the table for breakfast and consequently got none. The surgeon did not put me on the diet list but I managed to get my meals brought to me by one of the 1st Tennessee who is very nice to me. Ladies do not visit the Hospital here, or at least I have not seen any. Maybe when we get fixed up better they will come. I paid a Negro a half dollar to cook two eggs for me and he stole one of them. The boys tell me that they met with a lady on the streets from Memphis, Tennessee. I told them to invite her down to see me when they met her again. How glad I am to meet with a citizen from that Old State even of I never heard of them before and yet I am sad when I think of the necessity that has forced them to become exiles from their homes. It rained again today. There is a report that General Polk was killed yesterday at the front but I do not credit it.

An artillery shell at Pine Mountain, Georgia, killed General Leonidas Polk on June 14th.

Thursday, June 16

We have no nurses and one would die for want of an alternative were he not able to nurse himself. I have commenced to bribe a Negro in the cooking department with the hopes of

getting something more to eat. Like all other fools however he thinks that a sick man needs nothing. Oh for one week of perfect freedom that I might live even that much of my former life over again. If I should ever get where I could embark for a foreign country with means sufficient to carry me hence, the temptation for an after life of peace and quiet and fun would be too strong for me. What is liberty in one's hours, dying hours, when he has lived a slave all his life. I am as staunch a patriot now as in the beginning of the war. I am not so enthusiastic for my sufferings have somewhat dampened that ardor. My hatred of the Yankees is greater for I am an eye witness to their barbarity and persecutions. There is another thing I hate and I am sorry that cause for hatred exists. I mean a despotism at home. What privilege has a man of the South when there is none that he can call his own. Every man is a soldier and hence the military despotism. If I am sick is it not for me to say so, a "board" of surgeons determines that question. If they pronounce me sick I am sent to a hospital under guard, where I am liable to be reported for duty and sent back at the pleasure of those dignitaries again within twelve hours after my arrival. I go to my command under guard and am not allowed to get off the cars without being watched. But this is not half, to enumerate all would require a volume equivalent to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. I have heard it said if you wish to whip the devil you must fight him with fire but is it right to fight against foreign despotism while domestic tyranny is fast gaining the ascendancy. If I have a doubt in the world of our ability to free ourselves from Yankee rule, it can be traced to the despotism of our own government and its officials. Show me the man that does not submit to these foolish and tyrannical laws, orders, customs, and with feelings almost as repugnant and humiliating as those that first caused a separation of these states, and I will show you one that is entirely destitute of principle and is not acquainted with the first laws of human nature. He is only fighting because he sees others at it or because he has no other means of support. It is said to be a fact that General Polk is dead, was killed instantly by a cannon shot while riding out with General Johnston and others. It grieves me to have this report for he was a brave man, a good General and a thorough gentleman and Christian. His death will be lamented by all of his old corps for we loved him like a parent.

It still continues to rain some and I fear will be the cause of much sickness in the army. Medicine was prescribed for me every four hours and I have taken three doses in thirty six. That's doing business on a scale.

General Lucius E. Polk was critically wounded by artillery fire at the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain but survived the crippling injury. He was however permanently rendered unfit for further duty by the wounds inflicted upon him.

Tuesday, June 17

Rain, Rain, Rain, who ever seen the like for this season of the year. Poor soldiers are those who are at the front without any shelter. I feel sorry for the boys but should be thankful that I am permitted to enjoy the privilege of a good house to shelter me although I am sick. The Negro who I have attempted to bribe to feed me is very indifferent and seemingly does not bring me a lunch whenever I wish it. He is afraid I guess. It is reported that the Yankees have assaulted Petersburg, Virginia, capturing the outer line of entrenchments. The surgeon made some remark about my laying up this morning. I wish he had my feelings for a while. When told that the nurses or ward master was not giving me my medicine he only said that "then it was useless to prescribe it." I should think it his duty to see that I receive it. I have been moved out of my room into another much more cleanly and comfortable, the other boys remaining. No news from the Georgia front.

General William F. Smith was under orders from Grant to attack Petersburg, Virginia on the 15th. General Beauregard foresaw the attack and prepared defenses. From the 16th to the 18th the Federal force hammered away at the Petersburg defenses. After losing over 8,000 men killed and wounded Grant decided to lay siege to the city.

Saturday, June 18

Several ladies entered my room today, but few with something to eat. From a Negro girl that brought milk for the hospital I got as much buttermilk as I could drink. I also bought another half pound of butter for which I paid \$1.75. I went to the Barber and had a shave. I paid my Negro two dollars more, with the hope that he will do better in bringing me something to eat. I am now going to the tables after my meals when I do not get enough to eat. It still rains some little. This evening in

purchasing a plug of tobacco from a merchant I managed to cheat him out of the value of the tobacco. Whether this is right or not I will not decide. I only know that a soldier has to make every edge cut or he can not live. Thus far whenever I make a dime off a citizen, a "speculator", I think I have acted in self-defense. A man can find plenty of friends when he has money and will use it frequently to their benefit. My roommates help me to eat my butter and chew my Tobacco with as much nonchalance as it possible for them to assume.

Sunday, June 19

My Negro won't do. He has not fed me yet. He is either making an ass of me or he is afraid to accomplish what he has promised. I shall make him come right one way or the other. Today some milk and (etc.) brought to this room was eaten by us and highly relished. The surgeon prescribed quinine for me in consequence of slight fever at night. No quinine could be had however and a substitute was furnished which I felt disinclined to take, fearing a mistake in the druggist. Everything explained satisfactory however and I swallowed it down. In the evening a Negro brought me some ripe plums and an apple which was delicious. Oh, could I be at home now to enjoy the pleasures of fruit eating as of yore, those nice streaked farm apples, how I would love to sit down in the shade and with my knife part the tender peelings. But alas those days have passed and from present prospects are not likely to return soon. Papers state that the abolition convention at Baltimore has nominated Abraham Lincoln for President and Andrew Johnson of Tennessee for Vice President. Hurray for Andrew. Who thought several years ago when he was a stump speaker in the State of Tennessee against all opposition to democrats, he would now accept a nomination on the same platform with abolition. But I am not surprised. It has rained again today.

Monday, June 20

Rain again today. I don't think I ever saw such a time before for this season of the year. A lady sent one of my roommates a cup of butter of which together with some egg bread we had baked and had a nice lunch. The surgeon did not even visit our room this morning. I think he is very indifferent anyway and does not like to lose too much time from the card table. An

old drunken soldier came in our room today and annoyed us some, but we called to the ward master and had him taken away. This evening I wrote a little note full of irony and without signing any name to it and sent it to a young lady. Its purport is to bring me a breakfast in the morning, but I fear it will bring upon my head the righteous indignation of the young female. I did not ask for something to eat but hinted that food would be thankfully received. The sky threatens rain again.

Tuesday, June 21

Last night a fellow belonging to a Louisiana Regiment, a roommate named Godwin, the same one that worked on my watch at Macon, and myself went out to see what we could find. After walking some time and feeling weak and to prevent my cough from annoying me I had taken a couple of drinks of whiskey and as is the usually the case under such circumstances I was "in for anything". Not until the chickens were crowing for the day did I come in and go to sleep. To my surprise this morning I felt no ill effects from my tramp. Never having done anything wrong in my life, but that I regretted it afterwards, this time was not an exception. Though I did nothing wrong, I can not credit myself for it. The only reason was I found nothing to do. I am too impulsive, too easily led off by others, but it is my nature and I can not prevent it. The little note I sent out last evening, insinuating the bringing in of breakfast, brought in two young ladies who were desirous of knowing my real name before they placed themselves under such lasting obligations. I was not in but on learning that I was the individual describing himself, they left an invitation for me to come and dine with them. We have rain again during the evening. I had a picture taken, paying five dollars and furnishing an old case. I am desirous of sending it to Ma by first opportunity. I bought me a very uniform piece of black rope for a watch guard for which I paid 75¢. There is some change in the position of our two armies but nothing more than skirmishing is going on.

Wednesday, June 22

One day again that we are without rain and a very warm one at that. A very nice dinner was sent us today by Mrs. Hart and several ladies. Old and young visited us. Indeed at one time there were so many ladies in the room at one time and being in a state of half-undress I felt somewhat embarrassed. I

received a handful of flowers and a nice little tea-cake from the hand of smiling young lady. She was very modest in her manner of presenting them. I have complained to the surgeon of a certain wicker [a boil], which I have long felt growing in the small of my back, but ashamed to confess it until it has grown to be troublesome at night. A young "yellow hammer" who has been home on pass came in last night bringing with him a box of provisions of which I had partaken a hearty meal. My stock of money is reduced to five dollars and I don't know what I am to do when it is all gone. However, I will not be absent from my regiment much longer and will not mind it.

Soldiers from the State of Alabama were commonly referred to as "Yellow Hammers".

Thursday, June 23

The sun shone beautiful but hot all day. Papers report the enemy attacked our left under General Hardee and was repulsed. It is plain that Hardee's corps will bear the brunt of the fight in Georgia. It is first on the right and then on the left. Wherever the enemy moves Hardee is in his front. I think I shall be sent off in a few days. An answer to the note I sent out a few days since, modestly hinting that something to eat was wanting was brought to me this morning. The breakfast came but it went to another hospital and the lady apologized for the mistake. In a note I thanked her for her generous intentions and hoped that she would put herself to no unnecessary, not omitting to apologize for writing her in the first place. We received a pitcher of buttermilk from Mrs. Hart again who sends frequently to this room. I wrote another letter to my brother fearing that he might not receive the first. I wrote him again that I would pay as high as \$2,000 for a man to swap with me that I might go to the cavalry, how much more if I had it I am not able to say. Some few are going off to the front.

General Hardee's corps was attacked at Mud Creek, near Marietta, Georgia on the 17th but the Confederate line held.

Friday, June 24

Another beautiful sunshiny day but excessively warm. The late fight of General Forrest in Mississippi exceeded any cavalry fight of the war. The force opposed to him were seven regiments of Infantry and a Brigade of cavalry with a fair proportion of

artillery. He completely routed them. It is reported here that a pretty severe fight had occurred on our left at the Georgia front. Nothing indicative of a general engagement however. Our breakfast in response to my note came this morning from Mrs. D. Thornton and was something of which I am justly proud. Not since I was a paroled prisoner in Kentucky have I sat down to such a breakfast. Ladies continue to visit us and in numbers that are likely to astonish the natives. It is said that we are to receive 130 more sick and wounded tonight and if that is the case I expect I will have to change my berth, either for one at the front or go to another hospital. I do not like to leave my surgeon here yet as I think he is a clever man and one that will do his duty toward a patient.

Sherman's forces continued to press General Johnston's defenses outside of Kennesaw, Georgia.

Saturday, June 25

A large crowd of sick with a few wounded came in last night. I have seen none with whom I am acquainted however and only imagine that they are all from other hospitals. The surgeon reported Godwin for duty and started him off for the front but he has gone by way of Columbus, Georgia and I think will then conceal himself there until the fight is over or report at another hospital. I am convinced that he is a bureaucrat and seen but little service. The fight that was reported to have recurred on our left at the Georgia front was nothing more than heavy skirmishing. A Miss Browne, whom I have not had the honor of seeing to become acquainted, sent me a couple of Blackberry pies with her compliments. I replied in a few hastily written lines. I am expecting that the surgeon will report me for duty judging me by my appearance in the face as is generally the case with him. I am not yet well however and as I am gaining more flesh tone here than I have had for a long time I would prefer remaining a short time longer. I have not felt so well today as usual.

Sunday, June 26

The surgeon asked me this morning if I thought I would be able to return to duty soon. I told him I only waited here enough to have my clothes washed and made ready. A Miss Granford sent me a very nice desert for dinner, with her

compliments saying that at an early day she would send me a complete dinner. I went round to the church with the ward master to hear preaching but seeing but a small audience we chose to turn our visit into a promenade. The day has been unusually warm and I fear it will make me sick again when I return to the army. The nights are so warm that I strip off every thing except my shirt and sleep with window open. It seems that the surgeon has heard of my going out the other night with Godwin, for this reason he sent him off and I guess would do me the same way did I not anticipate him and volunteer. I can not blame him however although I am not yet well but shall always consider him a clever man.

Monday, June 27

This morning I gave out all my clothes to an old Negro woman to wash for me, which I pay her 25¢ per garment considering that I expended \$2.50 for a half quill of paper which will take about all my money. I received a letter from Miss Ellen Tutor who thanks me very warmly for taking charge of her letter to send north. It is said here that the citizens will not worship at the same church with the soldiers and I am half inclined to believe the report, for when I went to church yesterday I saw several ladies come to the door and looking in seeing many soldiers in the church would turn and go off. Those who were in the church left before preaching was concluded. Yet for all this, the ladies seem to be very attentive to the wants of the soldiers. I made an effort to draw some clothing but was told that I would have to wait until the squad, who came in some nights since, were supplied. A man who drew a pair of shoes and sold them to a Negro was made to give the Negro his money back and had the shoes taken from him. I wrote Miss Tutor that I would call and see her on my way to the army and if she accepts my offer to correspond with her.

Tuesday, June 28

This morning I tried again to get some clothes but failing I returned to the Hospital and was told that Dr. Meriweather, presuming I had all my clothes ready, had reported me for duty. With considerable difficulty I drew me a jacket and seeing my washer-woman, I had my clothes brought in and have rations and everything ready to leave in the morning. Will go

to the depot tonight as it is some distance and the cars start early in the morning. I guess Miss Tutor will be surprised to see me in advance of the time I announced I would call on her. However, I do not care much.

Wednesday, June 29

After night and after picking up a canteen that I knew belonged to another man I went to the depot. There I met with some of the Railroad men who evinced clearly by their manners their dislike of the proposition to spend the night under the depot shed. Not having started out with the intention of pleasing them, I spread down my blanket and went to sleep. At five o'clock the train started and at 3 p.m. reached Macon. On the road I met with Jones who was a person with me in Kentucky. He is ward master of [Ocmulgee] Hospital and invited me to spend the night with him. I checked my baggage at the Brown House and am now in the ward masters office at the hospital. I saw Mr. Poe this evening and he tells me that it is not necessary for him to write to my Uncle that I can give him all the information necessary. The fight, which Cheatham and Cleburne had on the 27th, was a brilliant affair exceeding any of the present campaigns. It is said five thousand Yankees were slaughtered. The silence of the press and telegraph in regard to affairs near Richmond is ominous of evil.

The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain occurred on June 27th as Federals rushed straight on into the Confederate entrenchments. The Union was dealt over 2,000 casualties during the attack while imposing only 400 casualties upon the defenders. Private Oldham's regiment performed valiantly during the attacks repulsing a number of assaults upon their lines. The point where the 9th Tennessee defended would later become known as the "Dead Angle". The siege continued at Petersburg.

Thursday, June 30

I went this morning to see Miss Tutor anticipating a nice time as I intended to remain on until tomorrow morning again. To my surprise I found her weeping over the death of her mother who she followed to the grave yesterday. I did not remain long with her but returned to the hospital. During the day I met Bill Fields on the street, he having left the company more than a week since sick. He says Martin Ogara* is

wounded. I saw also several others from the regiment but obtained no news and will remain at the Hospital tonight.

**Private Martin O'Gara of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

July, 1864

Friday, July 1

After dark last night we went out over to town finally calling in at the theater where we paid two dollars to see a few paintings and hear a few songs sung. Two hours here was spent most disagreeably then we returned to the hospital. This morning I went to the barber had my hair cut and after going back and taking breakfast with Jones I started on the cars for Atlanta falling in with Captain Head. I have spent all the money sent to me from home, selling my last ten dollar bill of greenback yesterday for \$35.00. Reached Atlanta at 4 o'clock p.m. Found a train ready for Marietta, but thought I would stay over the night with Captain Head who was going to stop. I found upon going to the hotel however the guards were too numerous so I had taken a seat in a crowded boxcar and came to Marietta. Found the Division Hospital close to town and Lieutenant Lyons* staying in it from the effects of a slight wound. I will remain with him tonight. The battle line is close to Marietta and I can see our batteries at work on top on Kennesaw Mountain. The Yankees have approached in parallels to within a few yards of my Brigade so that rocks, hand grenades and etc. are used. The boys are seeing a hard time.

**Assumed to be Lieutenant Samuel H. Lyons of Company H, 9th Infantry.*

Saturday, July 2

This morning I started to the line with Joe Davis but on reaching the wagon camp found them ready to move to the south side of the Chattahoochee. Believing the army to be falling back I came on with the majors and am now $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the Roswell-Kennesaw Bridge six miles from Atlanta.

General Johnston ordered the evacuation of Kennesaw Mountain on the night of the 2nd as Sherman shifted troops to the Confederate flanks.

Sunday, July 3

After getting there last night and unloading the wagons I found that the boys had a couple of squashes and potatoes which we cooked with some meat I had in my haversack and made it supper. I slept with Davis and Barringer* who stretched there a blanket for a domicile. Joe tells me that Dan Young,* who was brought in from Forrest's command and was going off to the Hospital, deserted carrying with him Bob Walker.* This is the second offense for each of them and if Johnston catches them they will be shot. The rations came early this morning and the boys soon cooked them and were ready for the wagon which had taken them off. Learning that the army was moving in this direction I did not go with them. Our division I hear is close to Vinings Station [Georgia] four miles this side of Marietta. I will go in the morning if they do not move closer.

**Privates R. Barringer, Daniel J. Young, and Robert W. Walker of Company G, 9th Infantry.*

Monday, July 4

Some cannonading and slight skirmishing on the line today. I intended going out this morning but waited for Lieutenant Stanley and Stafford of the regiment who came in and they are going to stay until morning again. I learn this evening that our Brigade has gone to the support of Hood on the left together with Vaughan's Brigade. At first I heard that we had been placed under Hood permanently, which needed only confirmation to make me resolve to leave the Army. It seems that our division is the cavalry for the army, and our Brigade and Vaughan's has all the fighting to do for our Division. It is said that one Brigade of Walker's Division (Jackson's)* has been sent to Savannah. I do not see what use we have for troops at that place and believe if they are going that their destination is Virginia.

Union troops brought on an engagement at Vining's Station and continued to push the Confederate defenses back.

**General John K. Jackson.*

Tuesday, July 5

This morning I learned that the army had withdrawn some three or four miles to the line that was being fortified by the

slaves impressed for that purpose. I started out with the wagons which were turned back last night to await further orders. Found that the Brigade was moving to the left also on the present line and walked six or seven miles when I found it near the river in the woods. There is no fortification here and at this time everything was quiet. I suppose Hood is in the front. Vaughan is with us - Wright and Strahl's being left behind. General Vaughan had his foot taken off yesterday from effects of cannon shot. At the time of writing Strahl and Vaughan are moving up and the enemy are shelling heavily but not affecting our line. As usual a hundred rumors are afloat, one is that we will cross the river tonight. The enemy seems to be moving to the left but I don't think they will flank us from the rear without a fight.

General Alfred J. Vaughan lost his leg at the Battle of Vining's Station and returned home too disabled for further service.

Wednesday, July 6

Bob Davis has not returned from the hospital. Jim Hagg is here. Martin Ogara, Issac Stanley*, Cal Hicks are absent the two latter wounded. Bob Walker and Young deserted. Dr. Brice who from personal motives seeks to do me an injury has told the boys that I was not sick when sent off to the Hospital. I am going to write to Dr. Cooper in charge of the Hospital at Marietta for his testimony and as soon as this difficulty is over I am going to see Dr. Brice and demand his reasoning for asserting such a willful falsehood. During the six or seven days before leaving the regiment, on which I reported to him every day, he did not examine me, nor even to ask me what my complaint was. Vaughan and Strahl have moved to the right. The enemy are shelling some in front. All quiet elsewhere. It is yet thought we will cross the river.

**Assumed to be Pvt. Issac Stanley of Company G, 9th Infantry.*

Thursday, July 7

We have remained in our position. Artillery drilling in our front and while writing considerable skirmishing is being carried on between the pickets. No sign of a move yet. I think we will hold our positions here. Raiders occupy Jackson, Mississippi. They have roll call 4 times per day to keep the boys together. Such is the desire to go in to the river that roll

call does not restrain them. Had inspection today. I think we will move on the line tonight. The wagons with the cooking detail have been missing again.

Reports of Jackson, Mississippi being occupied by raiders was false.

Friday, July 8

We remained in our position until after twelve o'clock when we moved toward the right for a short distance, but countermarched crossing the river on the pontoon bridge and after going half mile formed a line of battle and by order of Colonel Walker's [County] Brigade cleaned off the ground thirty feet in front of the line. After resting here a while we moved up the river and formed again. I do not know what is the object of this move, for I have not heard of the enemy being on this side of the river. Strahl and Vaughan it is said are on the right and same side of the river. We drew beef last night and again this evening but it was so little that I eat all of my rations for supper each time. Last night near sundown in front of our line our battery turned loose on the enemy and a furious cannonading was kept up for some time and near daylight this morning the skirmishes continued firing as though the Yanks were advancing. No attempt however has been made to feel our positions.

Saturday, July 9

We moved up near the river and after forming a detail was made and sent to work on an eminence near the riverbank. The regiment was divided in three reliefs and I being on the 3rd relief did not go to work until 2 in the morning and worked until daylight. We had scarcely laid down to sleep when we were ordered up and moved by the right flank across the hard mud and halted apparently waiting for orders. Here we drew rations, among the last was some tobacco, which was so bad that Knox, myself and another had taken it to General Cheatham's quarters for his inspection. He was not present but his Adjutant General promised to report it to him. Indications are that we will move but I rather believe preparations are being made for a fight which probably will come off tomorrow or the next day.

Being outflanked at Turner's Ferry on the 8th, Johnston ordered his army across the Chattahoochie River during the night of the 9th towards Atlanta.

Sunday, July 10

Soon after reaching the above, the regiment commenced moving to the rear and by dark we had taken upon much by heading back in the same direction. B. F. West*, 2nd Lieutenant and acting orderly in Bob Davis' absence, turned over one of his company's guns to me. His excuse was that he had boils on his back and could not carry them. I know however that he was tired of seeing me without a gun and would ease him at my expense. After expressing an opinion about the justice of the act, I had taken his gun, etc. I thought of arguing but that it would not do for me to oppose. I was determined to leave his company as soon as possible for I see that not just the officers and men in the company but all complain that I will not do [page faded beyond recognition]. I shall leave the regiment and join the horse service, it is one of the best in the state. We marched about two miles from the river and formed a line. Our regiment sets on the left wing. This morning pickets were sent out in the direction of the river. There is a line of pickets in front of ours. I believe Johnston intends defending the passage of the river against Sherman. We have laid here all day waiting. I prepare for the enemy to develop himself. It threatens to rain and were are preparing our blankets to receive it. Rumors are afloat that Kirby Smith crossed the river with reinforcements for Johnston. It is said he may soon reach us, yet I had rather have Forrest. Sherman's rear has ten thousand additional troops there. Here today, while cannons are booming and the sharp crack of the pickets rifles reverberated along the line, one of the Chaplin's was preaching to his flock. What a contrast. The one calling sinners to repent and other summoning the soldier to his final hour.

**Assumed to be 2nd Lieutenant B. F. West of Company K, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Monday, July 11

We had a heavy shower of rain last night and again this evening. Miss Agnes Clement from Weakley County arrived here today to see her brother in the 31st Tennessee Regiment. Although not acquainted I thought I was and I went to see her

and learned that people of West Tennessee were in good spirits yet they had not heard from us since we left Dalton. Some other ladies came with Miss Clement and brought clothes to some of the boys. The ladies will carry letters for us to our people. Our Brigade moved at 4 o'clock by the left flank to near the river where it is understood we are to do picket. The remainder of the Division in its old position. Considerable talk of Kirby Smith's coming on over the river. Some report him already on this side the Mississippi.

General Smith's troops had not crossed to the east side of the Mississippi River. Contrary to those reports, he actually requested more men for assistance west of the river only a month earlier.

Tuesday, July 12

Instead of picketing last night a detail of seven men was made to fortify a position for a battery. This morning we had inspection. The pickets on the river in our front have an armistice and are not firing. On other fronts of the line an occasional shot is heard. Some cannonading this morning but very slow. I commenced writing a letter to send to mother when I was furnished a pass by Captain Locke to go to the ordnance train and exchange guns. The one turned over to me by some of his sick men being worthless. I found the train six miles distant and close by the cooking detail, off whom I partaken dinner. It rained while here and made me late getting in. On my return Capt J. L. Hall* accompanied me, whom I led through the mud only to hear him complain. Northern papers state that [General Jubal A.] Early is in Maryland and threatening Washington City. A thousand rumors are afloat, all of which are favorable so that the boys appear in fine spirits.

On July 5th General Early and around 14,000 men crossed the Potomac River into Maryland. 8,000 soldiers reached Baltimore on the 7th. Two days later, the Confederate force ran into stiff opposition at Monocacy, Maryland but by nightfall Early and his men had pushed through the Union lines. By the 11th, Early's troops had reached the suburbs of Washington but plans for a major assault were called off when fortifications around the city appeared to be unattainable. The Confederates withdrew from Washington the night of the 12th after a few skirmishes. Early and his command were pursued and hurriedly crossed the Potomac into Virginia on the 14th.

**Captain Junius L. Hall of Company F, 9th Infantry.*

Wednesday, July 13

Last night we furnished a heavy picket, seven were from my company. I would have gone on but the detail was made before I returned. They have been very quiet today although they have orders to shoot. It is strange that sometimes you can not get the pickets to shoot at each other, then again it is impossible to keep them from firing. The Yankees say they have orders not to fire while our men have orders to fire, yet will not fire on the Yankees who were or wish to be very familiar. In the evening I visited Strahl's Brigade which is now near the river also. It is said that Forrest has been forced to retire to Columbia, Mississippi. I concluded my letter of nine pages to Mother. General Bragg is said to be with the army. If he is here I think we will fight soon. I will go on picket tonight if we do not move.

The reports of General Forrest being in Columbia, Mississippi were incorrect, as it appears he was near Tupelo in early July. On July 9th General Bragg was instructed by President Davis to consult with Johnston in Georgia on his plans to halt Sherman's advances. Bragg arrived in Atlanta on the 13th. He later reported to President Davis that Johnston was not capable of stopping Union advances though he had the resources to do so.

Thursday, July 14

Last night seven men from my company were taken for picket. We were posted in the line with eight men at approximate intervals of ten to twenty paces. The boys had up a truce with the Yankees which we continued, and several of them were passing over to us with coffee and pocket knives to trade for tobacco which their army seems to be destitute of. I do not favor shooting while on picket, but under such circumstances as the present I think it is wrong for the men to communicate with each other. The authorities on our side are doing everything to prevent it, and it is positively against orders to communicate with the Yankees. Our rumors which were so (inspiring) have mainly died away. We will be relieved after dark. I wrote a few lines to Mr. [William F.] Bohon and gave it to a Yankee picket who promised to mail it for me.

Friday, July 15

While being relieved from picket last night a violent wind and rain came up. I stopped at a house on my way to camp for shelter. Harv Collier who relieved me at my post was killed in a few minutes afterwards by the fall of a tree. I went back and assisted in carrying him to the camp. This morning he was taken to the division hospital for burial. This is the second man killed from my company by the falling of a tree. Miss Clements came out to the army again today and myself and others in my company were sent forth to see her as it was our last opportunity. The wife of a Captain Walker was with her. I gave Miss Clements a letter and my picture for mother. A terrible noise is being made about the pickets communicating and General Cheatham is trying to find out the parties on our side. I do not want to see any more young lady acquaintances from West Tennessee. It unmans me and makes me want to go home worse it seems than I ever did.

Saturday, July 16

Last night expecting rain I went to a gin house close by and slept on the cotton. The picket firing heavier today than usual. Shelling is also going on briskly. I shall go on picket tonight. This evening the Yankees notified our pickets that they would shell us at six o'clock. The shells never reached our camps.

Federal troops crossed the Chattahoochee north of Atlanta near Decatur. Sherman was once again attempting to flank the Confederate defenses.

Sunday, July 17

Last night tools were brought, and in obedience to, we fortified our picket post making them stronger. This evening the Yankees withdrew their picket line from the bank of the river. We expected a shelling and prepared for it but were deceived. They had another line of pickets in view. Some speculation as to their object. George Milner and Ramsey Knox have gone to Atlanta to see the ladies from West Tennessee before they take the train for home. George went on a borrowed pass being excused by the captain. Knox went on a pass of his own from army head quarters. The brigade had orders to be ready to move when notified.

Monday, July 18

The enemy continued to shell from opposite our batteries at intervals until midnight. The shells passed to our right. Today we were completely dumbfounded at the announcement that General Johnston had been removed, and superseded by Lieutenant General Hood. General dissatisfaction exists and I doubt whether it is possible to find another man in whom the army would place such implied confidence as General Johnston. Whether fighting or retreating the men were satisfied that their General knew best and wherever he led they were willing to follow. It will no longer be the case with the Army of Tennessee. Hood's fighting quality, as demonstrated by his total disregard of human sacrifice, does by no means suit the men. If the change could have been made at another time when the crisis was not so near at hand, a better opportunity for winning the confidence of the soldiers would have been offered. But he takes command on the eve of a battle with a force numerically inferior to the enemy and dispirited from the removal of a General whom they had learned to admire for his superior skill and sagacity and who shared their utmost confidences. Whatever Johnston has done to deserve such treatment by the Department is left a secret. He alludes to nothing that would enlighten us in his farewell address. We feel (and it is the common feeling of the army that he has been the object of gross injustices) that General Bragg and President Davis are alone responsible for the evil which is likely to result. The enemy has succeeded in crossing nearly his whole force six miles above and our army has moved to confront him. All our Division has gone except ours and one other Brigade. A battle is expected tomorrow or next day. General Hood will probably teach the army other tactics than fortifying. I wrote another letter to send Wednesday by a courier for the Division.

Tuesday, July 19

We were not relieved last night as anticipated. All the other brigades were relieved. Yankee raiders have succeeded in reaching the Georgia and the Montgomery and Nashville railroads doing some damage. In the evening cavalry came to relieve us. Fighting this evening on a part of the line. Will move out on our positions tonight and tomorrow the fight will open.

General Sherman split his army, one to march along Peach Creek, north of Atlanta, another farther east moving toward the city. General Hood seeing opportunity to attack while the Federal army was separated decided to attack at Peach Creek.

Wednesday, July 20

We moved last night reaching a position on the line at midnight. Here we remained in reserve until 11 o'clock when we moved to the right and short distance and advanced in two lines, Vaughan and Wright in front. The boys at first did not like the idea of going outside the breastworks, but few failed to go. Vaughan and Wright soon came up with the enemy posted behind breastworks. Getting within fifty or a hundred yards and behind the crest of the hill the men remained here awaiting orders to storm the works which were very strong. At night we withdrew the lines and went back again to our position behind the works. We have attacked their line in several places today and captured a good many prisoners. Major Rogers* is wounded. Vaughan and Wright lost heavily.

The Union lines were assaulted at Peach Tree Creek but failed to drive the Federals from their outposts. The Union suffered over 1,700 casualties while the Confederates lost over 4,700.

**Assumed to be Major H. A. Rogers of Company I, 9th Infantry.*

Thursday, July 21

Late in the night we returned to a position on the line of works. After sleeping one hour and half we moved to the right again. The boys are much fatigued and many straggled. I fell out together with Travis and Scott* and tried to sleep some but shot and shell from the enemy guns rendered our positions so uncomfortable that we did but little sleeping. The command passed through Atlanta and we followed on foot at our pleasure. At night we came up in rear of the Division as it was on the line east of the city but the sky's threatened rain. We went to an old foundry close by where we will sleep until morning. The Yanks are shelling the city with their small guns and which the few citizens left behind are woefully scared.

Sherman's army was northeast of Atlanta pushing toward city.

**Assumed to be Sgt. W. L. Scott of Company G, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Friday, July 22

This morning we found that the Division had moved still farther to the right and we followed on. I never saw as much straggling from our Corps since we have been moving. I came up with Milner, (Collier) and Joe Dew. The latter out walked us. About noon cannonading commenced and I soon learned from the number of wounded and prisoners going to the rear that the corps was engaged. I pushed on but did not succeed in reaching the field until night. General Hardee attacked the enemy's flank and rear and captured quite a number of prisoners, 20 pieces artillery and quite a number of colors. Our loss must be heavy. Haliburton*, in my company, was killed and one man slightly wounded. I met with Knox whom I found on the road. Our men are scattered in every direction. I will sleep in the hospital.

General Hood attempted to recover lost ground by attacking the Federal flank and rear. The assault failed as the Confederates erratically charged the entrenched Union lines. Hood would lose over 3,700 men to Sherman's 1,700. The Battle of Atlanta ended but the siege on Atlanta had begun.

**W. A. Haliburton of Company A, 9th Tennessee Infantry.*

Saturday, July 23

This morning I found the Brigade in line some distance from the city and fortifying. After building our works I was sent on picket and I can see the Yanks and get good shots at them. It is reported Cheatham with Hood's old corps is moving on the enemy's right. Major General Walker was killed yesterday.

General William Henry Talbot Walker was killed by a volley fired by a Union picket line while leading an assault during the Battle of Atlanta.

Sunday, July 24

I shot as much as I wished but could not tell to what effect. The loss in our regiment from the fight of 21st was sixty killed and wounded. Half the men killed were commissioned officers. Captain Hall once commanding our company was killed. Our corps was engaged with [General James B.] McPherson and [General Francis P.] Blair's corps besides another which I do

not remember. The contest was almost hand to hand. In some instances our men would only be separated from the Yankees by the embankment. McPherson was reported by persons killed. A large number of prisoners were captured. I am satisfied that not more than our Corps engaged. A fight was not expected and the men broke down from loss of sleep and hard work straggled. I was relieved and got up in time to move a short distance to the left with the Brigade where we were to build more works.

Private Oldham mistakenly wrote the Battle of Atlanta occurred on the 21st when in actuality it was on the 22nd. The 6th and 9th Tennessee would suffer one-fifth of its regimental fighting force during the failed assault. Union General James B. McPherson died while attempting to reach his command on the afternoon of July 22nd.

Monday, July 25

We remained off the line until dark when we moved up and fortified during the night. During the day, in company with Knox and Collier, I went some two miles to the rear and got a mess of potatoes, cabbage, squashes that we cooked in coffeepots and frying pans. General Hood had issued a congratulatory order to our corps. It is reported that General Lee, from Department messengers, is coming with reinforcements. Since Walker has been killed, his division is broken up. One Brigade comes to our Division. Gist's and the other goes to Cleburne and Bate. It is the opinion that we will move out of our works on the Yankees again.

Reports to send reinforcements were false as Lee was using every man possible to hold Grant at Petersburg.

Tuesday, July 26

Cheatham's whole division gave to the indigent families of Atlanta our day's rations in consequence of which we own no rations last night. The reach of the fight is not yet known by the soldiers. Twenty-two guns were captured. Our loss was heavy. Everything very quiet on the line. In passing to the picket line, I came very near being struck by a chance shot passing near my head. We have to move a little to the left for Gist's Brigade to come in. They are fortifying for us.

Wednesday, July 27

This morning we were waked by one of our batteries which opened on the enemy works. No reply. A slight shower in the forenoon. Then came intelligence that the enemy had withdrawn from our front. We were soon scattered over the ground looking at their works and the effects of the battle. They had buried our dead in some rifle trenches which they landed. Several bodies were recognized and re-buried by their friends. We then moved to a position on the line in front of the city. General Strahl's Brigade to picket here and act as a corps of observation. We have good breastworks here but exposed to crossfire from the artillery in which the Yankees have the advantage. Issac Stanley and Martin Ogara have come in from the hospital. Thought the latter had deserted. Bob Davis I understand came as near as the Division Headquarters but is not well and will go south again.

Thursday, July 28

I was put on picket last night. The line is about four hundred yards in front of the works and our position exposed. During the night and all of today the yanks have kept up a warm fire on us which we returned. The picket line was charged in our right and left and demonstration was made in our front but the enemy did not come more than 200 yards when we poured in too hot a fire for them. We were reinforced by a company from the regiment. I shot over a 100 rounds of cartridges. In the evening I choked my gun but had taken Milner's who was sick. I soon choked his and had taken one from a little boy of the regiment who I sent back to the line. Heavy fighting on our left.

After Hood's assault on the 22nd, Sherman sought to surround Atlanta by advancing westward. Confederate troops met the entrenched Union troops at Ezra Church, Georgia on the 28th. General Hood ordered another major assault upon the Federal lines but after repeated attacks the assault failed. The losses for the attackers were over 4,000 as the Federals lost around 600 men. Private Oldham's regiment did not serve as part of General Hood's offensive at Ezra Church but were positioned in fortifications north of Atlanta. The conflict he mentions were skirmishes designed to test the defenses of Atlanta during the attack.

Friday, July 29

I was relieved last night and returned to the line and slept in the ditch. We have the strongest works I have seen, yet our position is much exposed. The pickets have kept up a continual fire and have sent to the line several times after cartridges. We can get no particulars of yesterdays fight. I learn that the enemy first charged our works and we responded then and charged theirs but could not hold but a small part of their line that was taken. Our loss was heavy. The plan General Hood has adopted of charging breastworks against superior numbers will soon leave him without an army if continued as heretofore. It is really disagreeable here for we can not go anywhere outside the trenches for we are exposed to shells and minnies. I think we will leave soon however. Eight men from our company for picket.

Saturday, July 30

Nothing of interest transpired today. Raiders have captured some of our wagons and succeeded in cutting the Macon and Western Roads. It has no bridges and the damages can soon be repaired. I am detailed to picket tonight. I wrote by the flag mast to Kentucky.

I was posted last night on picket. We have not shot so much during the day but been more exposed than usual. It looks foolish to see men shooting when they can see nothing to shoot at, but it is necessary to keep the enemy from crawling up. Besides, guess work is as good as any when it hits right. Vaughan had one man killed and two wounded on our left. It has rained and being unwell I spent the day very uncomfortable.

Monday, August 1

I came in last night before being relieved having permission from the officer of the Guard. The Brigade was ready to move. I lay down and went to sleep and did not awake until daylight this morning. Vaughan's Brigade moved back to the second line trenches. We remained in our position. Militia relieved Vaughan.

Private Van Buren Oldham's diary ends on the 1st of August and its the remaining pages forever lost to the ages.

The struggle to save Atlanta would continue for four more weeks until the morning of September 2nd when Federal troops entered the city after General Hood ordered its evacuation the evening before. On October 17, 1864, the war would come to an end for Private Oldham as he took the "Oath of Allegiance" to the United States in Nashville. What events led to his signing of the oath is only conjecture but in all likelihood Union forces captured him either at Utoy Creek on August 6th or soon after the Battle of Jonesboro on September 1st. The years of frustration, hardship and defeat had finally broken his spirit as it did an entire Southern nation a year later. Upon the oath it would list his residence as Montgomery County, his complexion fair, his hair light, his eyes blue and his height 5' 10".

His regiment would carry on for the rest of the war serving with distinction. Before the year ended, the regiment would march and fight in the Battles of Franklin and Nashville. By early 1865, the rag-tag remnants of the regiment were in North Carolina under the command of General Joseph E. Johnston. On April 9, 1865, the 6th and 9th Tennessee were reorganized with six other regiments to form the 1st Tennessee Consolidated Infantry Regiment which served until May 1, 1865 when it was paroled in Greensboro, North Carolina. Of the two thousand men that were mustered into both the 6th and 9th Tennessee only around one hundred would be paroled on that day.

After the war, Van Buren attended the Louisville Medical School and attained his degree as a doctor. He returned to Weakley County where he practiced medicine and managed his family farm. He would marry twice, first to Mary F. White in 1869 and then to Judith F. Chambers following the former's death in 1872. He was the father of three daughters and two sons. Van Buren Oldham died on August 15, 1884 at the age of 44. His remains are buried on the old family plot near Sandy Branch Church though his grave marker has yet to be identified.

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