

BENJAMIN F. PEARSON'S WAR DIARY

[This diary, beginning July 22, 1862, and extending to February 9, 1864, was published in the three preceding numbers of the ANNALS. The present installment extends from February 10, 1864, to April 6 of the same year.—Editor.]

Feb. 10. I was on business in the city of Little Rock called to see Rev Brother Krowl he has been quite poorly with aricipilus I also called at Capt Vances, Miss Virginia E Vance has been quite poorly with phnewmonia is better but salivated severely., I had the Co on dress Parade, I gave five dollars to help make up to Co H. money stolen from some of their men a few days since in day. I also gave \$5.00 towards buying a sword for the present to our Col evening I attended our Brigade Chapple & our Chaplain gave us a short good discourse, Chap Williams 43 Ind followed & I & others after him we had a pleasant time.

Feb. 11. At 6 Oc A. M, I accompanied our Orderly to our Lieut Cols tent, to see them & Lieut Birnbaum Our sargent Maj, & Corp Bailey of Co K start for Iowa on their mission, for to bring down recruits This day there was a squad of 125 deserters from Prices Rebble Army came in to this city of Little Rock & 106 of them at once joined the Federal service they say that the rebs persued them & killed several & wounded a number some of which came in with them; The centance against Scott T Crow of our Co for collecting taxes from blacks under false pretence, was read on dress parade this P.M. he is centenced to imprisonment in the penitentiary at this place Little Rock Ark for one year Evening I acompanyed the Chaplain to the resedance of Mrs Ann Carolina Harberry & the Rev Drury Stevens a private of the 33 Iowa Infy recently discharged honorably & he & Mrs Harbery were joined in marriage by our good chaplain at ½ past 6 Oc evening we had a plesant time.

Feb. 12. I was out & we drilled in the bayonet exercise in the forenoon the first drill in the bayonet exercise for me since last April quite a number of deserters from Price's Rebble army came in this day Evening I attended a kind of farewell speakeing meeting in the 18th Ill Infy, many of them have enlisted in the veteran cervise & are going to start hom in the morning, & truly we had a time of interest & of power the Lord was in the camps of Israel

Feb. 13. At guard Mount I went on duty as Regimental Officer of the day, I got a detail of men & 1 Corp & a team & had our Parade grounds cleaned off I recd a letter from Amandus Dated the 3rd urging me to let him volunteer & I answered it

Sunday, Feb. 14. At guard mount this A M, I was relieved from duty as Officer of the day, & at 10 Oc A M Capt Mahan & I went to the M E Church Coulored & John Payton black man preached a funeral of a Child its little corps was before us & his text was Luke 18th 16th

& 17th verses & he preached with power & in demonstration of the spirit & the Lord was with us, I went from Church to Capt Vances & at 2 Oc P M. I went back to the Church & tryed to preach from Rev 6th 17th, it was a crowded house & I had great liberty & truly God was in our midst, 4½ Oc I took the Co out on dress Parade. Capt is Brigade Officer of the day Evening I attended our Brigade Chapple & Capt Mahan preached from Jeremiah 8th 22nd & Brother Hare followed & opened a Speaking meeting & we had a good time I wrote to Emma consenting for my son to volunteer

Feb. 15. I spent part of the day in the city & took dinner with Rev E. W. Crowl a loyal man of the M E Church South he was a guide to our army when we took Little Rock & is now in the M E C. after dinner he & I walked to the citizen grave yard & spent some 2 hours in it among the tombs & we saw the graves of C F Jackson the traitor Governor as he was of Mo. & the grave of the Reb Genl L M Walker who was killed here in a dewel with the Reb Genl Marmaduke & died Sept 7th 1863. & we looked at the burrying place of Miss A F Wassel who was killed by the Cow ketcher on the R R between this & Duvalls Bluff, as they ware on a cind of excurtion to meet a wounded rebble who was coming home, before we took this Little Rock, She got on the Cow Cetcher & fell off & was so mangled that she died

Feb. 16. Variable Cold wtih high wind & freezeing in the Shade, the most disagreeable day we have had for weeks. 9 Oc A M we ware on battallian inspection Lieut Swigget was the inspector Evening I attended the Prisbeterian Church in the City, there was only 24 of us at meeting the Chaplain of the 13 Ill Cav preached from the words, let us lay aside every weight & the sin that doth so easly beset us &c it was decidedly the dryest meeting I have ever attended in Little Rock

Feb. 17. Cloudy & cold with high wind the ponds around, are frozen over; forenoon I got a pass of the Provo Marshal & took with me Wm Fisk & Si Hodge of my Co we visited the Penitentiary & I took some religeous books, & papers out to the inmates, & I also took some letter paper, & envelops to Scott T Crow a boy of my Co. who is in there. I had the Co. out on Dress Parade & at 5 Oc P.M. I took Command of a detail of 50 men. & went to the wharf & unloaded a boat & I got back to our Brigade Chapple just before meeting dismissed at noon I called into the school at the M E Church, Colored, just in time to see it dismissed there ware over one hundred in attendance, varying in age from 7 to 45 years & varying in Color from African black to the Color of a white person, but the great majority are part white

Feb. 18. The men of the 1st Mo Battery are all packed up & ready to start home to recruit up they have gone in as veterans. I got quite a number of nice books of them, chares & Sundara articles not a fiew.

Feb. 19. I got some nice books of the Batery men; Out of 92 men in the 1st Mo Batery 84 of them have gone into the veterans, & this day they left this Little Rock for home to visit & recruit their co full.

Feb. 20. I was presented with a horse pistle & Sundary articles by Capt Fish of the 1st Mo Batery, & I got from the camps of the batery men two loads of lumber, to fix up for our own men,

Sunday, Feb. 21. At 8 Oc A M, I was on Guard mount & took charge of the picket Guard & relieved the old pickets at Fouche Bridge on the Pine Bluff Road Afternoon Major John A Turner of the 3rd Mo Cav came in from Pine Bluff in command of an escort, with about 500 recruits, some 50 was for our Regt & there were a number of labourers along from the north to work on the Rail Road from Little Rock to Memphis Tenn. & there was between 12 & 20 Deserters from Johnson an Brags Old Army also along. At 7 Oc night Col Clayton of the 5th Cansis Cav & Commander of the Post of Pine Bluff arived with an Escort, left the Bluff at 9 Oc A. M, Came some 50 miles. George A Williams the army Grave diger was with me a short time this day & he reports that from the Occupation of Little Rock by our army until last night the number of deaths of Federal Soldiers here ware 324, & he was also the grave diger for the Rebs here & he reports that he burryed between 22 & 23 hundred from January 1862 until we took Little Rock

Feb. 22. At 9 Oc A. M. I was relieved from Picket.

Feb. 23. At Guard Mount I went on as Regt Officer of the day & performed the usual duty of that position

Feb. 24. Forenoon I went out on Company drill, I took the Co out on Dress Parade, I sent some things home in care of Geo. P. Clark of the 3rd Iowa Cav I have been quite poorly all day was to unwell to drill afternoon have ate nothing all day, & am verry poorly now 8 Oc night, but I have the compforts of religeon & the presance of God to cheer me, & I hear the Sweet songs of zion now as they are worshipping at our log chapple.

Feb. 25. I went out in Co. drill & was on Dress parade in the evening but was to unwell to drill afternoon

Feb. 26. Forenoon we ware on battallian drill, afternoon I was assisting to make out the Muster Roll, evening we ware on Dress Parade night the line Officers of us ware at the Adjts, tent, & a kind of lotery arangement was proposed & adopted to, get each a female correspondance, each proposeing the names & address of two & putting all into a hat & shakeing them up together, each one being on a seperate slip of paper, & each officer drew out two names, & must write a letter inside of 10 days or pay a forfeight I am much better this day than I have been for the past 2 days

Feb. 27. High wind & dust blowing in clouds, the day warm forenoon we ware on battallian drill; afternoon I was assisting to make out our muster rolls, a part of the time at 2 Oc I was at a funeral at our log Chapple, & John Williams Chaplain of the 43 Indiana Inftry preached it was one of their boys, they say he prefessed 2 days before his death there was about a dozen refugec women at the funeral & they went to the grave yard, I have felt feeble & have some teeth that have been

acheing some since midnight last night, & I have had but little appetite for several days. There was an additional picket guard called for & sent out this evening 10 men 1 sergt & 3 Corporals from our Regiment

Sunday, Feb. 28. At about 12 Oc last night it Commenced raining & blowing & seemed as if it would blow down our tents & the raine has poured down almost incessant ever since & the wind has been high & since dark there has been some hail mixed with the raine & now 11 Oc night the raine is pouring out in torrents & some hail & a perfect Storm of wind At 2 Oc P M I attended our log Chapple Brother Hare preached The house was uncomfortable but there was a good feeling with the people & at Candlelighting we had a kind of speaking or ex-periance meeting & the Lord was in our midst

Feb. 29. A continuous storm of wind with Cold raine sleet hail & snow all mingling & falling constantly the intire 24 hours of the day, it has been puliarly severe, & now midnight the ice scicles are more than two feet long hanging from our tents & barracks & the sleet hail & snow is more than 2 inches deep over the ground & the storm rageing furiously I am on duty as Regimental Officer of the day,

March 1. Hail & sleet melted fast half the ground is bare again, river rising fast I was relieved as Officer of the day at 8 Oc A M, went to the city, called on Capt Vances family & brother Stephens & Rev brother Crowl found brother Crowl quite poorly but on the mend had rheumatism, evening Rev M H Hare, & I called on Rev John Payton in the city he is a Coloured M E Preacher, candlelighting we attended Class meeting at our church in the City, but flew out but we had a good time,

March 2. A fleet that has been in the Ark. River for some weeks arrived at Little Rock this day the river is yet rising fast. Capt Thos M Fee & I settled up our mess acts, & also settled up with billy our Colored man & cook Evening I attended meeting at our log Chapple, John Williams Chap of the 43rd Indiana Opened the meeting it was a prayer & speaking meeting & we had a pleasant meeting.

March 3. At 8 Oc Guard mount I took Charge of the Picket Guards, & marched them to Bayou Fouché Bridge on the Pine Bluff road & relieved 1st Lieut J W May Co F 36 Iowa, We had a quite interesting time & Chatted with a number of the Southern women as they passed our lines they are great lovers of yankeys

March 4. At 9 Oc A. M. Lieut Wright relieved me from Picket post at the Fouché Bridge afternoon I drilled the Company, evening Chaplain Hare & I went over to the Camps of the 77th Ohio where there are a number of Refugees Staid a short time & returned the male arrived the Chaplain got a letter stateing his family & my Children are well, I got the Keosauqua Republican of the 19th Feb. I have suffered with Neuralgy in my face severly. We had 2 recruits come this evening.

March 5. Forenoon I went in the city, had two teeth in upper jaw on right side plugged by Doct Bywater, I called on Rev Brother Crowl,

and Capt Vance at their homes in the city & Col Commings at his Office I finished letter No 20 & started it to my Children & inclosed the likeness of Wm Fisk private of our Company

Sunday, March 6. 8 Oc A M I attended to Co Inspection At 9 Oc A M Chaplain Hare & I started on horsback & went out on the Pine Bluff Road some 7 or 8 miles to the saw mills to an appointment at 11 Oc A M he preached & I followed & Closed text John 6th 63 v we had a crowded house, of citizens & soldiers over a dozen women, & we found a number of Methodist anxious to get into the old M E Church we had a pleasant time, & took dinner with ——— We returned by the same road & saw nothing to make a favorable impression as to the country, we crossed the Fouche Mountain, it has a gradual ascent, & descent is nothing but a hill but is literaly a ridge of stone & rock & but little earth to support the small timber scattered over it beyond the mountain the land is flat & quick sand some fine pitch pine timber & some good oak we passed through one beautifull grove of small pines, passed no improvements until we got to the mill & then but shabby buildings Evening I attended our church in the city Chaplain Hedges of the 106 Ills preached text Hebrew 1st ch & 3 verse.

March 7. We received our new guns the Springfield Rifled Musket they came yesterday to the Reg & ware distributed this day to the companys, At 2 Oc P M. I attended by invitation, the Chaplains association & took part with them we had a pleasant interview

March 8. At 8 Oc A M Guard Mount I went on as Officer of the day things moved smoothly on, In the evening Genl Gantt²⁸ Spoke in one of the theaters of this city Little Rock & all the field & Staff & most of the Line Officers of our Regt went to hear him & I was put in Command of the Reg by the Col until his return

March 9. At 8 Oc A M, I was relieved as Officer of the day, evening I attended & took part in the prayer & Speaking meeting in our Chapple & we had a good time

March 10. Forenoon I went & telegraphed to Lt Col Caldwell of the 3rd Iowa Cav to Keokuk & Keosauqua, in whos regt my son had volunteered, to send or bring him to my Company as I will not consent for him to go in any other Reg or Company, & the letter I recd last night from my son he informs me he had not yet at his writeing Feb 24th recd my consent & it kept me from sleeping last night This afternoon I took a gun & drilled in the ranks, was on Dress Parade, & Evening the Chaplain & I went to prayer meeting at our Church in the City, rather a dry time Rev Lieut Mosher of the 18th Ill Infy opened & Conducted the meeting

March 11. We drilled fore & afternoon in Co & ware on Dress Parade at which time we ware instructed to be out on inspection at 9 Oc A M tomorrow in heavy marching Order, & our men who wish gum

²⁸Thought to be Hon. Edward W. Gantt, colonel of the Twelfth Arkansas Infantry (Confederate), captured at Fort Donelson February 16, 1862.

blankets are ordered to draw them tomorrow & the indications are that we will move soon I slept but little if any last night again from anxiety about my son, & I had considerable fever this P. M. tonight the Chaplain & I visited the post Hospital & spent some time among the sick Some of Our soldiers & citizens had a fuss in the city & our boys cleared the streets of butternuts in quick time

March 12. Thinking every hour we would get orders to march at 9 Oc. A M our Regt was out on inspection in heavy marching order Knapsacks packed Haversacks & canteens on armed & equipped, afternoon Maj White inspected our Old guns & accoutrements which we first drew the Ostran Rifle which we now turn over About 3 Oc P M I was down town & several soldiers of the 3rd Ills battery was drowned, in crossing the river on a ferry boat the wind being high dashed the boat full of water & they got scared & jumped off & were drowned. Evening, I attended a political meeting in the theater building on Markum St & heard M A C Rogers & Dr Balote opponents for Congress each speak & Truman Warren of this city of Little Rock for the Senate he is decidedly the best speaker of the three but he is only a moderate one 2 Candidates for Sheriff & one for Constable spoke poor speakers all of them

Sunday, March 13. We Recd orders to be ready to march by 7 Oc A M tomorrow, only taking a change of shirts the cloths we wear & our blankets with two days rations in our haversacks, ordered not to take carpet sacks nor hand trunks & no company books except our morning report, & only one wagon to haul the Officers blankets is allowed to the Regt & all hands were in a bustle all day preparing to tramp in the morning but just before night an Order came for all the troops to be out on review in marching Order at 9 Oc morning this quieted the camps some & at evening I went to the M E Church Colored people & preached to them from John 5th Ch & 39 verse Mulato closed after me we had a most glorious time, & after I went to camp Chaplain Hare Maj Hamilton & Capt Fee came into my tent, & I opened a can of oysters had some crackers lite bread & some plumb Butter I brought from home & we had a good social chat

March 14. At Guard Mount I went on as Officer of the day, at 9 Oc A M nine Regts of Infantry & three batteries were out on Review in heavy marching Order & were Reviewed by Genl Solomon after which all returned to their camps, with the impression that we will get Orders to march in the morning.

March 15. Verry disagreeable, & froze some in the day & froze considerable last night, I was relieved as Officer of the day at 8 Oc A. M & went out on drill forenoon but was quite well evening we were out on dress Parade, & no orders yet to move,

March 16. Two steamers arrived at Little Rock having on board the Sick of the 77th Ohio Regt they are marching by land here from Pine Bluff

March 17. At 9 Oc A M we ware out on inspection in heavy marching orders, after which we formed in line on our parade ground in lite marching order & marched out & the 43rd Indian & our Regt formed fascing each other on the Pine Bluff Road & received the 77 Ohio Regt back to our Brigade with a Present arms & three hearty cheers, they have been home as veterans & come back 800 strong I had the Co out on drill P M & we ware on Dress Parade. tonight the Chaplain & I spent a short time at Rev John Patons he is a black M E Preacher At night we attended our church in the city the Chaplain preached & I exorted text Paul 2nd letter to Timothy 2nd Ch & last clause of the 9th verse we had a good meeting

March 18. We had Co drill fore & afternoon, we ware on Dress Parade after which we had a short Battallion drill. At noon I went out to the Penitentiary & witnessed the execution of two gurrillas who had taken the oath & afterwards ware taken prisoners while gurillering ——— Earnest was a gurrilar Capt & said he was 52 yrs old he has a son here in the 4th Ark Cav our army. Miller has been a school teacher & an exorter in the M E Church South unfortunately most of them are Rebbels, he was quite gray & is he sais 47 years old our Chaplain by their request visited them in the morning & just before they went out on the scaff I was in the outer prison & heard the Chaplain talk to them they bore up well our Chaplain sang Rock of Ages Cleft &c after they were blinfolded & the rope around their necks & chaplain ——— when the prayer closed Col Chandler gave the signal & the drop fell, & they hung 15 minutes & ware taken down dead

March 19. Our Lieut Col F M Drake & our Orderly Sargeant A I Boston & a number of recruits for our Regt arived this evening they saw my son at Davenport one week ago he is mustered in for Our Reg & my Co, & I feel rejoiced that he will if all goes well soon be with me

Sunday, March 20. I had company inspection morning & at 10 Oc A M attended our church in the city Our Chaplain Preached a good sermon from Isaiah 62nd & 1st verse we took dinner with Rev Crowl after noon I walked with the family & some other ladys to the River & at 2½ Oc Brother Blalock a Methodist refugee immersed a soldier of the 4th Ark Cavelry, after we walked back to Crowls & spent a pleasant hour, I went & took supper with Rev Blalock after which we went to the Church of the Colored Methodist & I preached from Jobe 14th & 14th We had a most excellent meeting & before the services commenced Rev John Payton Colored Preacher married a couple of Colored people in the church & after I closed he took up a collection of \$10.00 & sent it by me as a present to our ———

March 21. I am Officer of the day, but as Capt is not well I took down my Red tape long enough to take the company on Dress Parade. Genl Kimble is to be left in command at Little Rock in Steeles absence.

March 22. This day we have recd orders to be in rediness to march

at 10 Oc A M tomorrow & we have had a buisey & a merry day, & after our Dress Parade we ware formed in hollow square & Lt Col Drake in behalf of the officers of the 36th Iowa Infy presented a fine sword to Col C W Kittredge & also a fine album to the Col as a present to Mrs Col Kittredge Col Drake made a short but appropriate presentation speach & the Col made a short & verry appropriate respond in presence of Genl Rice & his staff one lady was presant on horse back in the square

March 23. Early in the morning we packed up & prepared for our march at 9 Oc A M we formed on our parade ground & marched out on our Drill ground by the St John Hospital & formed the brigade & at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 Oc A M we started & marched out on the Benton Road some 12 miles through a poor stoney desolate country & camped at 4 Oc on Fouch Bayou on the Howard plantation it is desolate & ruined we passed through Genl Fagans plantation the land, stone, gravel & some of the timber is there but all the buildings fences bricks that ware in his residence all like himself are absent from home The rebs made a dash on our Pickets at this place last night killed 2 & took 2 or 3 prisoners & some 12 or 15 horses, we do not know what damage they received.

March 24. At 8 Oc A M we started from camp on Fouch Bayou & marched through a poor sandy & gravelly country, passed through Benton the County Seat of Saline County & halted for the night on Saline river about 2 miles south west of Benton & some 32 miles from Little Rock, we are camped on grounds where the Rebs have been camped from the signs; the First Iowa Cav captured a Reb Scout & male carrier at Benton, he was dressed in Federal uniform there was a small Reb force at Benton but they fled on the approach of our men, we stoped about 5 Oc clock evening, & one of our Pickets was shot & killed by the Rebs before dark Benton is a small delapadated looking place, there is a small fortification there throughed up by our folks & then abandoned it from appearance has been a town of 4 or 5 hundred inhabitants, but now perhaps 100 & not more the Court House is a 2 story brick about 40 ft square & roofed from each side up to the center & then a ball-coney, there are some 3 or 4 small one story brick houses in the place & some 3 two story frames the other buildings are one story frame & log. Some of the riges over which we came today are red sand almost as red as good brick.

March 25. At 8 Oc A. M. we started from our bivouack on Saline River & marched through the swamps & mud on the bottom, after crossing the river, on a tree that the Pioneers fell across the river it was about 40 or 45 ft wide where we crossed it & the teams all & artillery forded it was some wider where they forded & was about two feet deep the river is verry low, it is about 75 yds between its second banks, the land over which we marched is poor, after we got off ove the bottom the land was a stickey yellow clay & verry hard traveling in We Bivyacked in a thicket of pines & jack Oaks at $3\frac{1}{2}$ Oc P M hung

out our blankets to dry & enjoyed ourselves finely the advance were fired on by a Co of Rebs about noon but no one was hurt, they captured 2 of the Rebs & killed three of them & burnt the cotton gin & buildings where the Rebs ware the country is literally deserted

March 26. At 8 Oc A. M we formed in line on our sleeping ground & started on our march from Brush Creek a small branch on which we Bivouacked & we arrived at Rock port, on the Ouachita River at 3½ Oc this river is about one hundred yds wide & at times navigable for small boats to this place it is now fordable here, a natural curiosity here from which this place takes its name, is a large white & gray flint Rock, through which to all appearance the river has cut a channel some 30 or 35 yds wide from this side the Rock extends out half way across the river & it extends in a short distance from the opposite side, & they run back in the main land & are nearly if not quite high enough for abutments for a bridge & the citizens say there was once a bridge built across on them, on this side a house stands on the rock, this is the county Seat of Hot Springs Co & about 22 miles South of them & has perhaps had a population of some three hundred, but is now almost intirely deserted, & is truly a rickety desolate looking place, with perhaps not to excede four to six familys now in it & they are too poor to get away, there is a two story Brick Court house 40 ft square roofed from each side & a belfry on the center. The storys are, lower one about 9 feet & upper one about 10 feet & there are four fire places above & four below. The houses of the town are of frame & log small & with the exception of 2 or 3 are one story & I think none of them have been painted the town is on a high sand & gravel ridge & surrounded with timber & we are bivouacked in a pine groove at its edge. The road over which we came this day is mostly sand & gravel & the Country verry poor & almost intirely deserted; our advance were fired on across the River when they came into this place by a band of Rebs but no harm done them they took four Rebs here.

Sunday, March 27. The army commenced to move early the teams all & artillery forded the Ouachita about one mile below Rock Port the watter in the deepest place there came only to the bottom of the hind axletrees the river there was about 150 yds wide & the Inftry crossed on our Pontoon bridge it was noon by the time our Regt got to start & soon as we crossed the river the 4 companys on the left ware detained as a rear guard, & it was some time after dark when the Pontoon was loaded up & started, & it was after 10 Oc night when we got into camp we got our supper & spread our blankets before 11 Oc, it was then perfectly clear & by midnight it was poring down raine thundering & lightning, we had to get up take our gum blankets from the ground & spread them on the top of our other blankets, but soon the watter was raising under us & we had to get up out of it, this ended a Sabbath in which many solmn thoughts & deep sighs have prevaded my brest. It was five years ago this afternoon & it too was the Sabbath when the best temporal gift of God to me took to himself the wife of my boosom

fell asleep in Jesus & never can I forget her triumphant death. Oh how sad the years have been to me. I have also suffered verily severely the last 48 hours with newralgy in my face & teeth. Our advance had a little skirmish this day but suffered no loss. they killed one Reb Capt & took some 4 prisoners, there was three Rebs came into Rock Port & gave themselves up.

March 28. At about 1 Oc morning we had to get up out of the water that arose about & under us; built large rail fires & dried our cloths some; One of the men of the 2nd Mo Battery was found dead with his throught cut the wind pipe cut off, he was near the head of our Regt & it is believed he killed himself, a raisor with blood on was found in his pocket. At 6 Oc A M our Regt started our march in the mud again & marched through a poor sandy gravely broken pine country & bivacked on George Greens place on Bayou Debeal & Ouachita junction at 4 Oc P M the advance had a little skirmishing with no loss on our side they killed 2 Rebs & took 3 or 4 Prisoners. About 3 Oc we passed the plantation of — Morrison it is a nice place & the only one I have seen this side Little Rock that I could be induced to live on he has run to Texas with his family & Negrows & two widows live on the place

March 29. At 7 Oc A M we started from our camp at the junction of Bayou Debeal & Ouachita River & arived at Arkadelphia County Seat of Clark Co. on the Ouachita River at 3 Oc P M this is a pleasant village; here we captured some 50 kegs of powder & four rifled 6 pound guns, but they ware spiked & plugged, the advance had a little skirmish with the Rebs but I believe none was hurt on either side we captured some Rebs & among them one a bearer of dispatches from Genl Fagan. The Country as we see it is distressed in appearance the most of the places deserted we crossed, about 10 Oc a rocky stream called Bayou Derouch & about 12½ Oc we crossed a good mill stream called Cadow from that to this city the Country has some better appearance than any we have seen in Ark in this City there was a Reb Arsinel & quite a place for the manufactor of Powder but they have all been destroyed, there are Salt works on the opposite bank of the river here This City they say contained some fifteen hundred inhabitants before the war & they say now the population is about two hundred & fifty & not to exceed 20 men & they mostly inviledes or old women & children constitute the present population, with a few slave women

March 30. We remained at Arkadelphia this day, & I took a ramble through the place there are 3 churches one a verry nice one storey brick belonging to the Presbeterians the Baptist & M E Church South each frame & the Staple for Methodist Church is makeing an effort to secede from the main building the roof haveing parted most of the way, the residence of the Reb Governor Flanigan is here, & now Occupied as the blind asylum with only one blind person a man perhaps 22 years old his mother is with him, the Governors house is a one storey frame with two small rooms he has found it convenient to leave home with his family, as most of the other nobility have, & there is not one article of

goods, tea, coffee, sugar tobacco, or anything else in the city to sell; & the remaining inhabitants say that starvation stares them now full in the face. the store rooms are all open & vacated, some of them nicely finished rooms, there are some nicely finished store rooms but they are empty others owners gone

March 31. At 3 Oc P. M. I took charge of the Picket Guards of Our Reg & marched out to the line, & relieved a Lieut of the 43 Indiana Infy, I Stationed my centinals & reconitered the line which was on the bluffs of the Ouachita just above the City of Arkadelphia those hills are gravel & sand, of the appearance of a sea shore, one Reb Soldier came to the line & gave himself up I delivered him to Swarts assistant Provo martial.

April 1. At 6 Oc A M Capt Hale Officer of the day came out to my Picket line & Ordered me to have my men get ready & at 7 Oc A M to leave the line & report my Pickets to the Regt to march, & at 9 Oc Our Regt was in motion we ware distributed among the Supply traine as guards at 10 Oc we ware halted & orders to load our guns the day passed without us seeing any Rebs that we knew to be such & at 6 Oc P M we Bivouacked at Spoonville some 12 miles from Arkadelphia this village contains two houses & at present one family; the Country we passed in the forenoon is verry poor sand & gravel land afternoon the land was of a much better quality & but little pine timber to be seen we passed a fiew good plantations & one large field of cotton not picked.

April 2. We left our camp at Spoonville at 6 Oc A M our Brigade in the advance & we marched some 20 odd miles over the best country by far that we have seen since we left Little Rock & we arived at the Little Mo River & crossed at Elkinford & Bivouacked on the South bank of the river; the main body of the Army remained on the west side in the heaviest grove of Holly timber that I have even seen, & a rich bottom on both sides but no house within a mile of the ford, there has not been any pine timber in sight this day except an ocasional tree & we have passed some fine plantations but no signs of taste or enterprise about the residences, there was an attack in front on our Cavelry on the Washington Road near Antwine a village some 10 or 12 miles from Spoonville on the Washington road but we took the Camden road about $\frac{1}{2}$ way between these places & came by the way of Okolona a village of some 5 houses & 1 blacksmith shop some 5 or 6 miles from this ford. The attack above referred to was made by Cabell Commanding the Rebs & our loss was one killed 2 wounded & 1 missing of the 1st Iowa Cav. & in our rear Genl Shelby attacked our train with a heavy force & the 29th Iowa lost in killed 2 wounded & missing about 20 but the traine was all saved

Sunday, April 3. At 7 Oc was ordered to go in charge with other Officers of men from the 43rd Indiana & the 36th Iowa a forageing we got some Baken & about 30 small hogs & returned to camp by 1 Oc P. M. & there was then some skirmishing in front & we ware at once or-

dered in line & companies A. D & G marched out but the cavelry drove the rebs back & at 4 Oc we ware Ordered back to camp & about 5 Oc a few more guns ware fired & we three Companies ware ordered again to the front Our Capt being Officer of the day I was in command of our Co, but we found no enemy we ware posted by Lieut Col F M Drake & we spread our blankets & laid on our arms for the night. This day one of Co E who died yesterday in the Ambulance on the road,³¹ & one of Co D that died this morning³² both ware buried in one lonesome grave on the South bank of the Little Mo river, just above Elkin ford, they ware both Recruits, & died of Measels

April 4. At 3½ Oc I was up & had the men up folded their blankets, & packed knapsacks, at day lite I let the men make fires & cook & make coffee, they hurried expecting an early attack & before all was done breckfast the firing commenced on our pickets & they fell back to us & the cavelry went over to the right & by ½ past 5 Oc A. M. we ware exchanging shots with the rebs, & about the third fire from them Corp Wm O Garl was shot through the knee by my side I helped him up Capt Fee now arived to us & led him back we held the Rebs about ½ hour when we fell back, & finding many of our men had left their knapsacks we advanced got our things & again fell back, just then a Lieut on Marmadukes Staff rode forward & before he was aware was close on Co D & Capt Hale ordered him to halt & surrender, which he saw was his only hope of life, he was with his fine horse sent back to head qrs there was at this time a few moments of rest but only to be renewed with double energy the rebs advanced & fought bravely & we three Companys spread out & took trees stumps & dirt banks & fought against fearfull odds, Lt Col F M Drake commanding us, we fought & fell back & continued untill after 10 Oc when we ware back, to our Battery the 2nd Mo when the 7 companies of our reg rose up from behind a little ridge in a little field & opened on the rebs by volleys when they retired in double quick time our battery playing on them fearfully this closed up the rebble fireing with small arms for this day & this was the first relief that us 3 Companys got this day except just a few moments at the time we took the Lieut above named, & strange to tell no men in either of the companys ware killed Co A had 5 wounded Co D had 2 wounded & we had Corp Garl Corp Silas Moreland & Private Abraham Humble he was shot through the loins & Private N F Mottoo shot through the left thigh the bone badly shatered Corp Wm O Garl through the left knee leg amputated Corp Moreland left shin slight wound & right foot badly shot some other cloths & books cut by balls, & it was only the protecting care of God that prevented the rest of us from being killed or wounded the shell canister & grape & bullets whistling & bursting

³¹John Smith, Company E, Thirty-sixth Iowa Infantry, residence, Wapello County, died of disease April 2, 1864, at Okolona, Arkansas.—See "Roster Iowa Soldiers," Vol. V, p. 718.

³²Samuel Hughes, Company D, Thirty-sixth Iowa Infantry, residence, Monroe County, died of disease April 3, 1864, at Little Missouri River, Arkansas.—See "Roster Iowa Soldiers," Vol. V, p. 668.

amongst us constantly & the trees & brush give evidence of a hotly contested battle

April 5. At 4 Oc we ware up & ready for to go into action if need be but we had the pleasure of a pleasant rest this day as the rebs chose to keep at a proper distance from us one of Co A George Miles that was wounded yesterday in the fight died this morning & was buried by the side of those two that ware buried on the 3rd, we bivouacked last night on the South Side of Howard Creek over which our Battery played some of the time at the Rebs yesterday.

April 6. At 4 Oc A M we received orders to prepare to march by 6 Oc, & it was about 7 Oc before the part of the army that marches in advance this day got past & by 7 Oc we ware in the march & we could now hear skirmishing in the advance we passed through the timber where on the 4th we had braved the storm for five hours & the timber is perfectly ridled & it is only a mericle that so few of us ware hurt in that fight. There was some skirmishing in the advance but I believe no one on our side hurt the Rebs had logs piled on the hills as a kind of brest work but they fled from them, the bottom land is low & marshy & here we saw for the first on this march the palm of which the fans are made, they are quite numerous on black Bayou a small Stream over which we crossed in this bottom, our march was very slow as the artillery & traines could not move fast, & at 1 Oc P M. we Bivouacked on the farm of the widow a Malinda Cornelias three & a half miles from Elkin ford, this was a short tedious march in which we encountered thousands of large & small ticks, Mrs Cornelias & her son-in-law told us that Marmaduke, Cable, Green & Shelby, ware all here with their forces, & we saw here the graves of 6 Rebs that fell in our fight on monday, they are Lieut Wm Keith 4 Mo Cav T. S Vaughan 4 Mo Cav A Y Warren 4th Mo Cav A H Whittenburg 4 Mo Cav — Dyson 4 Mo Cav & Wm McCulough 4th Mo Cav & Mrs Cornelias told us that there ware 23 Rebs that ware very seriously wounded many of them mortal & also we ware told here that some 20 had been buried a short distance from this place, this place we call Spring hill from the Springs on it. At 4 Oc I was ordered to report with other officers to go in command of some 150 men as guards to a forageing train, but after we had got out beyond the lines the wagon master found he was deficient several wagons & we ware returned to camp this is poor high gravelly land & we are again among the pine timber

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