

DOCUMENTS

THE CIVIL WAR DIARY OF C. F. BOYD, FIFTEENTH IOWA INFANTRY

PART I

Edited by Mildred Throne

Recently the State Historical Society of Iowa has come into possession of an unusual Civil War diary. Because of its length, this document will be published in several issues of the *JOURNAL*, contrary to our practice of publishing only complete documents in each issue. The present installment covers the experiences of the author, Cyrus F. Boyd, from his enlistment at Indianola in October, 1861, through the terrible carnage of the Battle of Shiloh in April, 1862.

This is not a camp and battlefield diary of the usual order, with brief entries of only the high lights of the day. Instead, the author kept his notes, and after the war, in the peace and quiet of home, wrote them up in full. One of his closest friends was Daniel Embree, also of Indianola in Warren County. In 1896, when a resident of Ainsworth, Nebraska, Boyd sent a copy of his diary to his friend, Dan, with the note: "The enclosed copy from my Journal may be of interest to you as the years go by. I only give you in detail that part relating to the 15th and a brief [summary] of the 34th which contains just *one half* of all my daily notes." This diary remained in possession of the Embree family until 1951, when, on the death of Daniel's daughter, Bertha Embree Dodds, in California, it came into the hands of her attorney, Kuno Doerr of South Pasadena, California. At the suggestion of Mr. Doerr's nephew, Edward Doerr of Davenport, the diary was presented to the State Historical Society for preservation.

Cyrus F. Boyd was twenty-four years old at the time of his enlistment in Company G, Fifteenth Iowa Infantry; his friend, Daniel Embree, was twenty-one. Boyd served as First Sergeant in Company G of the Fifteenth Iowa until March 1, 1863, when he was discharged to accept a commission as First Lieutenant in Company B of the 34th Iowa Infantry. He was mustered out of service November 12, 1864. Embree served throughout his

term of enlistment in Company G of the 15th Iowa, being mustered in as Sixth Corporal; after successive promotions he was commissioned Second Lieutenant on March 7, 1863, First Lieutenant on August 27, 1864, and was mustered out on December 20, 1864.¹

This diary is an extremely full account of soldiering in the Civil War, written from the point of view of an outspoken "citizen soldier" who did not hesitate to express his opinion of his comrades and officers, who described with frankness and many touches of humor the conditions of camp life and camp living, and who wrote, in simple, often startling language, descriptions of battles and their terrible aftermath that remind the reader of modern "realistic" writing. Much of the diary is not pleasant reading, but it is an honest, simple account of one man's experiences in a bloody civil conflict, and as such as worthy of preservation.

DAILY JOURNAL

This book is compiled from the notes of several small memorandum carried in the pocket and which were kept from the date of my enlistment in the Army that was raised to put down the Great Rebellion of 1861.

The design being to keep a record of what was seen and experienced by myself during the trials of those bloody years which followed Very little in this Journal will be known to History as it shall be written here — as one's own province is quite limited in War, confined to the narrow bounds of a few companions and the little orbit in which he moves, Like a spoke in a great wheel moved by the motion of some great invisible power and not permitted to know why or wherefore he is expected to perform his part in the great work.

This will also aim to record the doings and the fate of many of my companions Having escaped the uncertain fates of War and lived to record my own part in the great struggle is sufficient satisfaction to warrant me in spending the time in consolidating the notes and memoranda which throughout the term of three years and four months was a *daily* duty I scarcely ever omitted even in the most unfavorable circumstances of making a note of all of interest that occurred [*sic*] around me along our tedious and perilous pathway

¹*Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion . . .* (6 vols., Des Moines, 1908-1911), 2:911, 936; 5:271. (Hereafter listed as *Roster Iowa Soldiers*.)

A note book in my side pocket was like a pocket knife always at command on the march and a larger book in camp or in the baggage was written up at the first opportunity

During the Presidential campaign of 1860 several of us boys around Palmyra in Warren County Iowa, organized a company of young men just young and strong enough to do some tall yelling. We were mounted on horses. Our uniforms consisted of a pair of blue overalls — a white waist and a chip hat. The total cost of a uniform was about 85 cents. We each had a horse or rather a *colt*. We not only had to break and drill ourselves but had to break the *colts* also and at the same time. We were supposed to be assisting Abraham Lincoln to be elected President and everybody now knows that he was elected. We did not do him harm enough to prevent his election over Breckenridge and Douglas

Our Company was composed of about thirty boys all on farms in the immediate neighborhood. At the organization of the Company I was elected Captain. We carried a banner and on it was inscribed the following

“Lincoln Hamlin”

and

“Victory”

Above the banner and inserted in the flag staff were several little mauls and wedges. We attended all the Rallies in that County and some outside and when our man Lincoln called for men to suppress the insurrection we did not respond the first time but at the next call we left the *colts* at home and went almost to [a] *boy*.²

Indianola Iowa

Oct 15th, 1861. To-day I took my little squad of boys who are left of the Lincoln campaign to Indianola. We have made up our minds to enlist for the War. Times are dull at home and many have gone at the call of the President and joined the different Regiments from the State

A long and lonesome Winter is coming on and the War may be over by spring and we should feel as if we had lost a great deal by not going and if

² Lincoln's first call for troops was on April 15, 1861; Iowa was requested to furnish one regiment, to serve for 100 days. Further calls for troops, for three-year enlistments, came on May 3 (answered by the 2nd through the 7th Iowa regiments), July 23 (8th through 13th Iowa regiments), and in October (14th through 17th Iowa regiments). Thus, it would appear that Boyd and his “boys” did not answer the *second*, but rather the *fourth* call of the President. Jacob A. Swisher, *Iowa in Times of War* (Iowa City, 1943), 77, 80-81.

the war should last longer we will have the credit of not waiting until we were pushed out Every one seems to be actuated by the purest and most patriotic motives and those who are going seem to be moved by a sense of duty.

I had a long talk with Dr Fisk.³ He talks very strongly of enlisting, and thinks he can raise a Company if I will turn my squad in with him Lewis Todhunter saw me with Fisk and called me into his office and warned me to be careful about forming any alliance with Fisk. Said he that man Fisk was raised a "democrat" and he may betray you somewhere when you are in a tight place But few men have any confidence in him said Mr Todhunter and you had better keep your men well in hand as I am going to raise a company of *artillery* "they use cannon" and you can join my company and be 1st Lieutenant Right here my patience with Mr Todhunter oozed out and I plainly told him that of the two men I should choose Dr Fisk in preference — I told him I did not believe he intended to enlist and that I believed his only object was to discourage us from going so that he would have more company at home⁴

Fisk thinks if we cannot raise a Company here we can join some other squad to make out the number and has heard of a part of a company at Knoxville that is unable to complete its number of men He will go to Knoxville tonight on the stage to see about it

Oct 17th Fisk has returned and reports about 50 men at Knoxville who are anxious to have us join them We will go to-morrow in wagons

Knoxville Iowa

Oct 18th Bid the folks *good-bye* at Palmyra last eve and came to Indianola To-day we started in wagons for Knoxville some twenty of us Had a long hard days drive and arrived at the Judkins House late and got our suppers Bundy of Indianola came with us He is an intimate friend of Dr Fisk and is a jolly fat man to be with Have oysters after supper and Bundy

³ Hezekiah Fisk was thirty-six years old in 1861; he was elected First Lieutenant of Company G, 15th Iowa; received various promotions; was captured at Shiloh; appointed Assistant Surgeon, March 7, 1863; died August 19, 1864, of wounds received at Atlanta. *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:942.

⁴ Cyrus Boyd was a man of very strong likes and dislikes, as will be shown in this diary. Lewis Todhunter was a prominent attorney of Indianola and had served in the constitutional convention of 1857 which re-wrote Iowa's constitution. During the Civil War he was an Assistant Quartermaster with the rank of Captain. Following Lee's surrender, he served as Post Quartermaster at Richmond, Virginia, until September, 1865. *History of Warren County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1879), 605-606.

stands the treat I was born too far from the sea shore so I do not take oysters Retired at 12 M

Oct 19th Got acquainted with several Knoxville men this morning Was introduced to a man named Wm T Cunningham⁵ who they say will be Captain of the new Company I like his appearance very much He is a fine looking man and all speak well of him He is full of anecdotes and jokes and of very easy manners Is about 5 feet 10 in in height — sandy complexion and weighs about 175 lbs.

Was introduced to a man by the name of Hanks⁶ who was in the Mexican War and who will probably be 1st Lieut. He is a thin wiry man with a prominent nose and of a very *confidential* turn He flattered me quite lively by saying that he had made a good deal of enquiry about me among the Indianola boys and also among their own men who had seen me and they all seemed anxious that I should be one of the commissioned officers of the new company He further said that Fisk wanted the place but that the Knoxville boys "did not like his ways" My reply was that I cared nothing about the Commission Was not going for honor or pay but would be willing to give way to any good man

A man by the name of Ethridge is talked of for one of the officers Met at the Court House after dinner — A large crowd was there with drums and music The crowd filed into the Court House and the meeting was called to order Proceeded to ballot for officers Wm T Cunningham was elected Captain without opposition R. L. Hanks and Dr Fisk were candidates for 1st Lieut Hanks was elected Fisk was elected 2d Lieut and all our squad were glad Now came the election of 1st or Orderly Sergeant David Myers⁷ of Knoxville was mentioned and my name also It looked as if there would be a division about equal between the two sections of the two counties Myers having been a candidate for 2d Lieut and defeated came to me and proposed that we cast lots as to which of us should be the

⁵ William T. Cunningham, born in Virginia, was thirty-six when appointed Captain, Company G, 15th Iowa. He was promoted to Major, Aug. 1, 1862; wounded at Corinth, Oct. 3, 1862; resigned at Memphis, Jan. 16, 1863. *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:923.

⁶ Romulus L. Hanks of Knoxville, a native of Kentucky, was thirty-nine years old at the time of his enlistment as First Lieutenant. He was promoted Captain Aug. 1, 1862, wounded slightly at Corinth on Oct. 3, 1862, and resigned Aug. 26, 1864. *Ibid.*, 2:958.

⁷ David Myers, of Knoxville, native of Kentucky, age twenty-eight, transferred to Co. K, 15th Iowa, Feb. 18, 1862. *Ibid.*, 2:991.

Candidate while the other withdrew. Having consented Myers proposed to throw up a *silver half dollar*. He gave me choice and I said "tails" — as tails it would probably be. *Tails* came up and here commenced my military troubles. Was unanimously elected. The captain congratulated me and also many of the men. I think we have a good company.

Oct 20th This is Sunday. Am staying at a Mr French's house with two or three of the boys. All the people seem very kind and every house is open to us. Attended church at the Presbyterian.

Oct 21st Started in wagons for Eddyville this morning. The day was wet and cold and the roads quite muddy. The people of Knoxville cheered us and waved flags rags and handkerchiefs to us as we went out of town.

Oct 22d We stoped at the Amos House in Eddyville last night or rather this morning having got lodging at Bellefontaine⁸ some miles back on the Des Moines river. The proprietor of the Amos is said to be a violent old "copper head". I am sure he must hate a Union soldier from quality of the fare he set out to us this morning.

Keokuk Iowa

Oct 23d This evening we arrived at Keokuk via the Des Moines Valley Railroad.⁹ It was dark when we arrived at the Depot. We were taken off the cars like a drove of swine: the men yelling and cheering at the top of their voices. We took up a random line of march through the City on and on until we are upon a high bluff outside the limits of the town and among some old board shanties or Barracks where we are told that we can lodge for the night. Who brought us here I can not tell. The wind howls fearfully and the air is frosty and bitter cold. We call this a little tough to commence

⁸ Bellefontaine, in Scott Township, Mahaska County, was laid out in 1846; when the railroad built through the county in the 1870's it built a station at Tracy, in Marion County, about three-quarters of a mile away, thus ending the existence of Bellefontaine. *History of Mahaska County, Iowa . . .* (Des Moines, 1878), 533; John W. Wright and W. A. Young (eds.), *History of Marion County, Iowa . . .* (2 vols., Chicago, 1915), 1:181.

⁹ The Des Moines Valley R. R., originally the Keokuk, Des Moines & Minnesota R. R., had been completed from Keokuk to Eddyville by 1860. The president of this railroad, Hugh T. Reid, was shortly to be appointed Colonel of the 15th Iowa, and, as such, would incur a good deal of Boyd's wrath—a not unusual dislike of the soldier for his commanding officer. For an account of the Des Moines Valley R. R., see Tacitus Hussey, "How the Des Moines Valley Railroad Came to Des Moines," *Annals of Iowa* (third series), 8:125-34 (July, 1907). For Reid's part in the Civil War, see *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:895; A. A. Stuart, *Iowa Colonels and Regiments . . .* (Des Moines, 1865), 281-8.

on We are told that this comfortable spot is a military Camp and named "Camp Halleck." I do not think much of Mr Halleck if this is a specimen of his Camp I do not wish any farther acquaintance with Mr Halleck

During the night some one brought us some blankets and with some old quilts and a Blanket apiece we got through until morning With husky voices and sore throats we looked around at dawn for something indicating a *change* The only change we met was a breakfast of Bakers bread a little fat bacon and some coffee made in some old rusty kettles The quenchless spirit of liberty which is supposed to exist in limited quantities in volunteers here began to develop and some of the boys began to think of their *mothers* and to talk of returning to their comfortable homes in the western counties This set the officers to working and they went down in the City and when they came back they informed us that we were to be moved to more comfortable quarters Here came in a great *cheer* and we left the Halleck Hotel for down town We marched down Main street by the "Estes House" the largest building I ever saw and take up our abode in a brick building on [the] opposite side of the street from the Estes House and on a corner diagonally across. The building has several large store rooms in it and under the Sign of Stannus and Co we commence to do business. I think we shall like Stannus and Co better than Mr Halleck. I suppose and hope that Halleck has nothing more to do with us. Our Room is 100 feet long and 25 feet wide The building is full of soldiers and two other companies are in the same room

Our Company is assigned to the 15th Iowa Regiment Volunteers and our Company will be Known as "G" Company Here we commence to have a name But what troubles us most is who shall feed us and wherewith shall we be clothed

Oct 24th Our fears are quieted as regards clothes. We have been required to throw away, give away or otherwise dispose of our citizens dress and we to-day drew from a Quarter-Master down on Johnston street a complete suit of Army blue The clothes we think are very nice and we are as proud as peacocks of our apperance [sic] How we pity those poor miserable fellows at home No new clothes because they will not go soldiering Here we are having lots of fun and glory

To-day we were *sworn* in the service of the United States for three years or during the war Almost every one thinks we will scarcely have a chance to see the enemy as the war will soon end But I guess the government

50. McClure Robert M	“	64. Saunders John W	“
51. Metcalf Warren	“	65. Smith Samuel C	“
52. Mullen John	“	66. Stone Truman	“
53. Mayers John	“	67. Swaggart David [Daniel]	“
54. Mote William	“	68. Sanders Richard	“
55. McGilvery Alexander	“	69. Sherwood William T	“
56. Netherow David	“	70. Shoemaker Enos	“
57. Nichol[ls] Charles	“	71. Stalcop Mathias	“
58. Owen Henry	“	72. Webb Charles	“
59. Parker William	“	73. Webb John A	“
60. Rid[d]len Timothy	“	74. Welch James L	“
61. Reid Harvey M	“	75. Walker Charles	“
62. Shank Lewis W	“	76. Wyatt H. B.	“
63. Spencer Darwin	“		

Thus we stood at the time we were organized 31 of the Company came from Warren County and the balance from Marion County.

Dec. 12th The interval between dates herein has been occupied in company drill and the duties of Camp life which are monotonous enough Taken off the farms as the most of us have been and shut up in a pen as we are is enough to kill the best of us Measles and other diseases have reduced our numbers for drill almost one half and many of the men are sick¹¹

We were *sworn* in again to-day by Captain Brown a United States Mustering Officer and now I guess we are *fast* enough We have no arms except a few old muskets which we use in the Manual of Arms up in a hall where the officers drill about three hours every forenoon The orderly sergts are permitted to drill with the Commissioned officers Capt Belknap of the City Guards drill[s] us He is a West Point Graduate and a splendid drill master, and a gentleman in every sense of the word.¹²

¹¹ Because of lack of adequate medical supplies, often simple diseases caused many deaths among the Union soldiers. Annie Turner Wittenmyer reported on the 15th Iowa in her report of Jan. 13, 1862: "The 15th regiment, now quartered in Keokuk, is suffering severely from measles. The Medical College has been fitted up for hospital purposes, and is pretty well arranged for the accommodation of the sick. There are now 73 in hospital, but most of them are convalescent. The supplies provided by Government being altogether too limited to meet the demands of the sick, the citizens and the Aid Society of this place have generously made up the deficiency. The hospital is visited daily by the ladies, with food and delicacies for the sick. . . ." Keokuk *Weekly Gate City*, Jan. 13, 1862.

¹² William W. Belknap of Keokuk, thirty-two at this time, was a native of New York. He rose rapidly in the service to the rank of Brigadier General in 1864 and

Jan'y 15th, 1862 I have been up home and to Indianola Had a good time The girls all treated me well Brought back with me some recruits as follows:

Boyd Luther S	Cozad John W
Cozad John J	Kerr Thomas
Nichol[ls] William	Mote William
Posegate William [Posegate Francis]	Reid Elias
Safford Thomas	Roberts Samuel

Some of these boys will stand the service and some of them will not. All have to pass through a medical examination But the surgeons are not all particular as the government wants men and these Boys who want to go to war hide all the defects they can There seems to be a great surplus of men now offering and it looks like all that are mustered in now will be all that will be wanted

Brother Scott is determined to go and all I can say to him will not keep him at home Father, Mother, Mary and Jennie left at Home How lonesome it looks there Brother Matt enlisted in April in the 3d Regiment and he is South now The farm at home deserted by every boy in the family and no one but father to look after the stock and other cares Nearly all the boys in the neighborhood are gone All in fact who have any ambition in them The towns are almost deserted Every one is talking about the war and crowds throng the Post offices to get the last news.

Feb'y 22d The space between this and the last date has been passed without any particular change in quarters Many of the men are sick and there are too many of us crowded together in such a small space We were promised a Holiday upon this anniversary provided we appeared respectably at 10 O'clock in Dress Parade Before repairing to the Parade ground we formed in front of our quarters and marched to a nice piece of street on Main and Johnson The Regiment was broken into platoons and the Chap-

was brevetted Major General in 1865. Boyd's statement that he was a graduate of West Point is an error; Belknap had attended Princeton University and had studied law. In Keokuk, where he settled in 1853, he went into partnership with Ralph P. Lowe, future governor of Iowa. After the war Belknap served in Grant's cabinet as Secretary of War for seven years; in 1876 he resigned that post in disgrace, under accusations of official misconduct. He died in Washington in 1890 and is buried in the National Cemetery at Arlington. Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* . . . (4 vols., New York, 1903), 4:17-18. For Belknap's Civil War record, see *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:895; Stuart, *Iowa Colonels and Regiments* . . ., 289-94.

lain Mr Estabrook¹³ an Episcopalian and Lieut Colonel Wm Dewey¹⁴ got upon a stand prepared for the purpose. The attention of the Regiment was asked and the Chaplain said the farewell address of Washington would be read. The men were called to a "rest" and the Chaplain offered a prayer — or rather read one — Then followed the reading of the address. After this Lieut Col Dewey introduced Hugh T Reid by saying "Boys behold your Colonel" and we *beheld* him. The announcement was followed by deafening cheers. In a brief speech the Col addressed the Regiment and complimented the men upon their appearance and highly eulogized their conduct since they have been in Keokuk and urged all to follow the noble conduct of the Iowa Regiments that have gone before us. Three cheers were given for Major Belknap who seems to be a favorite — and for the Country. Then we marched back to our quarters. . . .

Took dinner and went to the Hospital and saw our sick men. Mote and Hooten are very sick and the former will have a hard time to get well. The Hospital looks bad for want of proper care. The sick are mostly of old and chronic cases of disease. I shall not get sick if it can be avoided as I have a holy horror of a Hospital. As I came back met some young ladies of recent acquaintance and also saw two drunk men who seemed a little too patriotic for the good of the service. They have imbibed too much of the *spirit* of 76 which seems to be kept in any quantities in the numerous saloons.

Corp David Myers and myself went out shooting awhile. Attended Dress Parade at 5 o'clock. Had 56 men out. Every man has to go who can walk. It is my duty as Orderly Sergt to know whether he can walk or not. I have

¹³ William W. Estabrook served as Chaplain of the 15th Iowa until 1863 when he resigned. In May of 1864 he was appointed Surgeon of the 45th Iowa, a "one hundred days" regiment, and was mustered out September 16, 1864. *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:896; 5:1289.

¹⁴ William Dewey of Sidney, Iowa, a native of Massachusetts, was fifty at the time of his appointment as Lt. Col. of the 15th Iowa. He proved extremely unpopular with the men of the regiment, as will be shown by Boyd's criticisms, and in August, 1862, was transferred to the 23rd Iowa as Colonel; he died in November of that year at Patterson, Mo. Dewey had attended West Point, although he had not been graduated from that institution, and had also studied law and medicine. Captain James G. Day of Co. I, 15th Iowa, later said of him: "He was . . . too irascible and excitable to command respect, or to become a successful leader"; while A. A. Stuart wrote: "He was strict and exacting in his discipline, which did not accord with the democratic notions of his men." James G. Day, "The Fifteenth Iowa at Shiloh," *War Sketches and Incidents . . . Iowa Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (2 vols., Des Moines, 1893), 2:176; Stuart, *Iowa Colonels and Regiments . . .*, 382. See also *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:895; 3:685.

to call the Roll at breakfast, at dinner and at 8 o'clock P M Have to take every man who complains of sickness to Surgeons Call at 9 AM and if excused by the Surgeon he is "off duty" for that day only unless sent to the hospital

Mud deep and growing deeper Uniforms in bad plight — feet wet and cold and patriotism down to zero. After dusk I took a walk up town in the immediate neighborhood of the Catholic Church and stayed until 12 o'clock M As I came back met a drunk soldier on the high side walk near the Church He made a mis-slip and rolled off and down the clay bank clear to the bottom of the gutter I did not stop to enquire if he got his clothes soiled or not. I think the next morning will show that they were not only soiled but *subsoiled* I heard a grave voice at the bottom swearing that it would be "a brick house and forty dollars in money" whatever that may mean Arrived safely at Camp and with the Pass word passed the guard and fell into my bunk

Feb 23d Sunday — The weather is quite warm and damp and the Miss River is beginning to thaw some. Had men in line at 10 AM for Company Inspection This is ordered by Army Regulations Every man must have on his complete uniform except overcoat We have no Arms yet. Only a dozen old muskets for guard duty Company is formed — we open ranks Front rank about faces and at the word of command every man deposits his knapsack on the ground in front of him and opens it for the Inspection of the Captain If a mans clothes are dirty and the articles not properly packed he is reprimanded publicly and told how not to do so next time

The men mostly attended church to-day. I attended Congregational and heard the Rev Mr Thatcher. Attended Sunday School at the Exchange M. E. Church and had an interesting time The congregation looked well and I like the place The people are very sociable — especially the young ladies who seem to take a great interest in the soldiers Went to the Hospital in afternoon and visited our sick men Mote and Overton are very sick

Feb 24th Weather cold and disagreeable This forenoon attended officers drill in the large Hall in the Estes House Major Belknap drilled us. All the commissioned officers and the sargts are required to be there promptly Major Belknap is a large lusty and fine looking man and seems to know what he is doing as he puts us through without any resting for about one hour and one half Had Battalion drill in the afternoon Had Dress Parade

and thence to supper Sergt Tom Hedrick and I went out calling this eve Called on the Miss Graham's and Miss Lizzie Wiggins and then went up to the Rev Mr Hardeys the ME Minister and spent a pleasant hour

Feb 25th It has been warm enough to-day to leave an overcoat most any place and forget where you put it. Called Roll at Reveille 6 A M Two or three men were in their bunks and did not come out They were slapped on *Extra* duty Went to Post office and detailed guard 1 man on guard, 1 on Police, 1 sergt and 1 man on general guard and 3 men on local police Had Company drill with 64 men out. Our Company now numbers 99 men

Was at Hospital this after noon The sick are getting along as well as we can expect There are many cases of suffering there Some with the Rheumatism seem to be the worst off — for they are completely helpless and suffer great pain Some are used up by the measles and are very low — A young boy who came from Warren County and who enlisted in Co "K" died last night, and this eve another man died from effects of measles.

Went over to Mrs Conrads and saw Dan Embree who has the measles. He has a comfortable place and a good Room — a good bed — good music and seems to enjoy having the measles more than any other one whom I have seen with that disease I almost wish I had postponed having the measles when quite small

Last night the men had high old times running from the Patrol guard Some of them were caught and are now in the "guard house" for several hours or days as the case may be Some of them are getting pretty old at the business of running the guard The Patrol has to do some good running to overtake these night fellows The patrol sometimes find men away from Camp two miles in saloons and disreputable houses There are some bad men in Co's "A & H"

Our Regimental officers are as follows

Hugh T Reid	Colonel
William Dewey	Lieut Colonel
William W. Belknap	Major
George Pomutz	Adjutant
Mortimer A Higley	Qr Master
Jesse Penniman	Sergt Major
William W. Estabrook	Chaplain

Feb 26th Weather mild Have been busy all day. We spend a good deal of time drilling This evening attended a social at a Mr Vails. Waited

on Miss Lizzie Sullivan home Fell down *twice* going back to camp The streets are terribly rough

Feb 27th Snow storm this morning Took tea at Mrs Conrad's and heard some good music Dan Embree still lingers there His supply of measles is holding out well Helped Tom Safford and Cummins to the Hospital to-day Tom is the clown of the Company He will not die as long as there is any show for *fun* above ground but is not worth a cent for any other purpose

Feb 28th Weather cool and streets muddy Had Company drill in forenoon and Battalion drill in the afternoon The officers have boarded with the Company ever since we came here in our quarters until of late They now board out in town on 3d street. Hanks wants me to go up to his boarding place and see the *girls* there He says they are about *right*

Brother Scott has been very sick all day. Spent the evening in quarters A rumor came to-day that 3000 rebels are in the vicinity of Athens a little town up the Des Moines river and some men came down from there to get a cannon for the defence of the place — but I have learned that Camp is no place for *facts* The River still remains closed and no prospect of its opening We are watching the ice with no little anxiety as we expect to leave here [as] soon as boats can run The Spring will open with a vigorous prosecution of the war and we shall be shoved to the front

March 1st To-day the weather has been drizzling and the sky clouded Have not been so busy as usual Ten men sick in Company to-day Found men all improving at hospital Called on the Miss Johnstons¹⁵ this evening Had a good social time This is w[h]ere Capt and Lieut Hanks board To night was awful dark I knew because I was out

March 2d Sunday. We had rain, snow and a general amalgamation of the elements. Attended Church at the Exchange and Sunday School in afternoon

March 3d Weather extremely cold and windy. More snow to-day This afternoon have been writing out Discharges for several men who will be sent home They are sick and already played out The well one's have been dancing about all day to the music of two or three violins Got up at midnight last night and let a sick man have my bunk in the little back room where Capt and Lieut sleep

¹⁵ In 1865 Boyd, then a resident of Des Moines, married Miss Maggie Johnston of Keokuk. *Indianola Weekly Banner*, March 16, 1865.

March 4th Weather cold and windy. We tried bat[talion] drill this afternoon but it was so cold we did not remain out long. Went to a social this evening with Miss Maggie Johnston at a Mr Pattersons on Bank and 7th streets. We had a good time and came back about 12 M.

March 5th Did not drill any to-day too cold and windy. 14 men off duty to-day in our Company and 2 not expected to live. A member of the Company by the name of Locker was arrested for letting things stick to his fingers. Capt found a revolver upon him which he lost some time ago. Locker was sent to the Guard House.

March 6th Very Muddy. Went down to the shooting gallery with Lieuts Hanks and Fisk and beat them both shooting at a target 30 yards. Have dress parade as usual every evening. At Parade this eve there was presented to the view of the Reg't the flag of the 2d Iowa which was carried over the defences of Fort Donelson which place was captured a few days ago with a great number of prisoners. The flag was held up by a wounded soldier of the 2d. The sight called forth a great cheer from all the men. There was a large quantity of the arms captured at Donelson sent here for exhibition — such as old muskets, Arkansas "tooth-picks" &c. Also some fragments of a shell which exploded in the gun boat Essex and killed 30 men. . . .¹⁸

March 8th The River is thawing and there is a good prospect of its opening soon. Called at the Johnston residence this evening and spent an hour very pleasantly — also visited an hour at Mrs Hanfords in same way.

March 9th Sunday — I attended Unitarian Church to-day and heard Rev Mr Whitney preach. His subject was the War and its Cause. It was a good sermon. He said that human slavery was the Cause and we should have no lasting peace until the Curse was wiped out. Took dinner at Mr Johnstons and had a pleasant stay afterwards. Remained in quarters this eve and wrote some letters.

March 10th Weather beautiful. Had Bat. drill. Major Belknap commanded the left wing to which our Co belongs. Tie Shephard and me self went up to see the Sullivan family (only a part of it) this evening. Lizzies family are full blooded Irish and the old gent[']s nose turns up just like a

¹⁸ For an account of the part played by the 2nd Iowa at Fort Donelson, see Mildred Throne (ed.), "The Civil War Diary of John Mackley," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 48:163-4 (April, 1950). An "Arkansas toothpick" was a knife similar to a bowie knife. Mitford M. Matthews (ed.), *A Dictionary of Americanisms* . . . (2 vols., Chicago, 1951), 1:42.

true son of Cork The old lady is a clever sly little woman and very shy Lizzie is a fast talker and her eyes are sparkling black and as sharp as any Irish girl She has an independent air which makes her entertaining and she does not seem to care whether School keeps or not In our rambles we did not reach camp until about 12 o'clock We saw the patrol guard chasing some fellow down 5th street and up Johnston and finally [sic] caught him He was taken to the guard house there to suffer the penalty of his crime.

March 11th Fine weather just now and the River thawing rapidly I want this river to thaw out and again I do not We are drilling in foot maneuvers

March 12th Gloriously cold and windy News came to-day that the Rebs have evacuated Manassas. Gen Curtis has whipped the combined forces of Price, Van Dorn and McIntosh at Pea Ridge in Arkansas.¹⁷ Our troops seem to be gaining signal victories every place Almost every one thinks the war will end soon

Dave Myers and I called at Mr Johnstons this eve It looks a little as if I was going to Mr Johnstons rather often Some of the up town girls have made the above remark in my *hearing* lately They may be correct

March 13th Weather cloudy with high wind The River commenced breaking up this afternoon and the ice is piling up in large islands on the bars and shallow places The main guard having been taken off for a few days was again put on duty to-day. There was considerable profane language used about it by the men

This evening *Serjt* Dave Myers (recently promoted from Corporal) took Miss Aggie and I escorted Miss Maggie Johnston to call on a Miss Ella Creel who lives on 7th Street. While we were there it commenced to rain and when we came back the pavements were in a terribly slippery condition When we got back to quarters the guard halted us — and we continued to halt The guard remained silent and we enquired what *next* Not answering we asked him if he wanted the countersign and he said he *believed* he did We advanced and whispered in his *dirty ear* "Pea Ridge" He than had presence of mind enough to tell us to Pass on This fellow was perhaps on guard for the first time But it was not the first time *out* for us

¹⁷ General Samuel Ryan Curtis of Keokuk, first Colonel of the 2nd Iowa, had been placed in command of the District of Southwest Missouri in December, 1861. For an account of the battle of Pea Ridge, which cleared Arkansas of Confederate troops, see Stuart, *Iowa Colonels and Regiments* . . . , 38-44.

March 14th Weather cool Ice almost all gone out of the River at this place, and the water is rising fast Last night a hard rain fell Rumor says that we shall leave soon for the South. I hope we will for it is getting too muddy and many of the men are getting sick Our quarters are crowded and damp. 14 men off duty today in Co

March 15th Weather cloudy and damp. The ice is gathering in large drifts below town The gorge rests at Alexandria Have been busy all day getting Company concerns ready to leave. We are drawing clothing and complete equipments except arms Took supper with Tie Shepard at the "Wiggins House" by special invitation of Miss Lizzie W.

March 16th Sunday Weather beautiful Went to Exchange to Church and [heard] "Uncle" John Cozad preach He is past 50 years of age. Is a full blooded "democrat" and came with me from Indianola He had to resort to strategy to get in the service He had his hair colored black — held his head up and looked like a boy under age — and ran the gauntlet of Inspection and was sworn in Company "G" as a private soldier¹⁸ He wants to go principally [sic] because his son John has enlisted in our Company at the age of 17 and he is an only child and the poor old man cannot bear to have him go alone so he goes along to look after him Went to Sunday School in the afternoon and saw several of the young ladies In the evening attended church at the O. S. P. with Miss Maggie J.

March 17th Everybody is excited We received orders to prepare to leave Keokuk To draw three days rations and to be ready at a moments notice to embark. Destination unknown Extra Cooks were detailed and things are being hurried on This afternoon some of us went around and bid good-bye to some of our lady friends Perhaps we will have to do this over again as the prospect this evening is that we shall not go for some days yet But then if we should remain awhile it will not hurt us much to — as we should just as soon see some of them again as not Went to a Concert this eve and took a lady friend

March 18th Weather cloudy and wet. If certain boats come up tonight we shall leave to-morrow Have been very busy all day This afternoon we

¹⁸ According to the army records, John J. Cozad of Indianola was forty-four years old at the time of his enlistment, but he had been born in Ohio in 1812, which indicates that the age he gave the mustering officer was incorrect by some six years. He had been rejected by the 10th Iowa, but had succeeded in being accepted by the 15th. He served until Feb., 1863, when he was discharged for "general disability." *Roster Iowa Soldiers*, 2:175, 922; *History of Warren County* . . . , 620.

marched with Knapsacks on We find that we shall have a mules load to carry — 2 blankets, extra clothing and a big overcoat, haversack &c saying nothing about a gun and ammunition

Tie Shepard and I took tea with Miss Lizzie Sullivan Miss Hart was there and we had a good time Never were men treated so well as we have been by the good people of Keokuk They have all seemed to study the interests and the happiness of the soldiers and have provided every comfort that can be imagined They have used us too well and we will suffer for it when we leave here Came past the Miss Grahams and bid them *good-bye* The Johnston girls gave us some ginger snaps and I have my haversack full of provisions

Miss River — on board the "Jennie Deans"

March 19th This morning our quarters presented a busy scene Many of the men were up at 3 o'clock getting ready to fly from this old Nest The boat "Jennie Deans" came up and we were to leave at 3 PM Two or three of us took dinner with the Johnston girls Maggie and Aggie We had a good dinner and a pleasant time not unmarred however by the ever present thought that this might be the *last* time we should meet these kind people With many kind wishes for our safety and welfare we bid them *good-bye* When we returned to Quarters we found the men ready to march to the landing and with one last lingering look at the old bunks we bid them a final and last farewell

The rain was falling in torrents as we marched down Main street But notwithstanding this all the side walks were crowded with people All the windows were full of women and children waving flags and handkerchiefs The sick boys at the Hospital looked out from their bunks to cast a glance at the long line of blue with its glistening knapsacks with its steady march to the music by the bands of "Dixies Land" 1000 strong we marched that afternoon in the pride and glory of youthful soldiers The sound of the music — the cheering shouts of the people robbed [us] of all regrets and we marched proudly away. I saw some of our good friends on the side walks — but it would not do to look back We were marched on board the "Jennie Deans" and crowded like cattle into every conceivable corner No man unless he wears shoulder straps can enter the cabin When the boat left shore thousands of people stood upon the wharf and cheer after cheer arose as we turned to the South and glided into the stream

The whole face of the River was covered with cakes of ice As darkness

came on many of the men went below and found room to lie down I found a sheltered place near one of the chimnies on the upper deck and spread my blanket and slept soundly for about two hours when the cold wind awakened me and I got up and not seeing any guard at the cabin door I crept in and laid down on the floor

"Benton Barracks" St Louis

March 20th Got up at 5 oclock this morning Soon after daylight we passed Alton Ills and by 9 AM we were at the landing in St Louis among a perfect mass of steam boats which lay along the shore as far as the eye could reach We were ordered to land and soon were on the march to Benton Barracks, which is four or five miles out. The streets were muddy and slippery and many weak men gave out on this our first march We were kept on the double quick most of the time and most of us were gone up when we got to the Barracks. After two hours standing and stumbling around our officers apportioned each Company its place in the barracks. The quarters are comfortable and convenient and the boys have so far recovered as to have a *dance* to-night The people cheered us from almost every house as we came out and waved flags and rags Now we shall learn something of the Art of War

March 21st Snowed about all day and melted as fast as it fell making it awful muddy A battery of art[illery] arrived to-day from Camp Denison Ohio consisting of six field pieces and 136 men Capt P Gad Bryan of the 1st Iowa Cav arrived here to-day on his way to his Regiment.

March 22d This has been a cool and windy day until evening when the sun came out and dried some of the mud. Many of the troops located here were out drilling this afternoon But the 15th did nothing in that line 17th Wisconsin came in to-day all armed and equiped [*sic*] — they march well and looked splendidly The 16th Iowa came in from Dubuque last night, 1000 strong

I took a ramble around the barracks to-day to see some of the preparations making for the organization of the Western Army The Headquarters of this encampment consists of a large three story building — frame and built square and a large flag floats over the house The soldiers barracks extend on either side in compact one story frame buildings and string out about one mile in length on either side of the drill grounds leaving a beautiful piece of ground half a mile in width All the quarters front on this parade ground Back of these buildings are the kitchens and out houses.

Water is conducted through pipes and can be drawn in any of the Kitchens Underground drains carry off all the refuse water The water for the supply comes from the Miss river Long lines of stables extend back of the Kitchens These are occupied by the Cavalry Here we can begin to see — and to have some idea of the preparations being made to prosecute this War

Saw the 14th Wis Infantry encamped on the Fair grounds in bell — or Sibley tents¹⁹ — They are a fine collection of Men They are packing up this eve preparatory to leaving as also the 23 Mo I saw 33 pieces of Art. to-day Rumor says we shall be sent to New Mexico It takes 136 men for camp guard around the Barracks The who[le] thing is surrounded by a high board fence and Cavalry outside of that

March 23d Sunday Weather cool and some snow fell. There was some movements of troops to-day. Another battery came in last night. There was preaching at the fair grounds to-day but I did not find it out in time to go. There was a great parade of troops There seems to be no Sunday here There seems to be no God here but more than the average amount of Devil Saw a Cavalryman thrown from his horse and badly hurt. One man had his neck broken yesterday

March 24th This has been a fine day and we have improved it by drilling A number of the 17th Wis got drunk to-day and the officers had a great time to manage them News comes of a severe battle at Winchester Va in which our side was victorious

Men selling "bullet proof" vests were in camp to-day The boys say our Capt purchased one They submitted some for trial about one half of them were bored through by musket balls They sold for \$8.00 to \$16.00 If the bullet did not go through it would knock a man into the middle of next week so that he might as well be killed first as last

March 25th Weather clear and fine Have been busy all day drilling Lieut Fisk has been appointed Asst Surgeon of the Reg't and will be away from the Co most of the time We just begin to like him. His eyes are very

¹⁹ The Sibley tent, named for its inventor, "was a cone sixteen feet in diameter at the base, supported by a center pole with an iron tripod foot. The top of the pole supported an iron ring one foot in diameter over which was draped a conical cape which was raised for ventilation and to let out the smoke. Sixteen men occupied each of these tents and slept as radii of the circle with their feet toward the center, where a fire could be built when necessary. . . ." Fred Albert Shannon, *The Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861-1865* (2 vols., Cleveland, 1928), 1:200.

sore and he can scarcely see anything. Our officers all seem very kind. The 65th Ills Infantry went down the River to-day — also one troop of Cavalry.

March 26th Weather clear warm and fine. I have to travel one mile to deliver my morning Report and half a mile to Surgeons Call with all the sick who are able to walk and same distance to Post Office. This afternoon we drew our Arms — they are Springfield Rifle Muskets and are a most beautiful weapon — they are bright and in fine condition. We brought them with all the accouterments to camp and distributed them and every man will be held responsible for everything he drew. These guns are effective at from 500 to 800 yards and load with cartridge minnie ball. Received to-day by each Company one wagon and six mules to haul Company baggage.

March 27th Weather warmest of the season. Have all been attacked with spring-fever or symptoms to that effect. Have drilled in the manual of Arms to-day and here we show our greenness [sic]. Received a letter from Home. The scenes around these old barracks are becoming so common that we want another change.

March 28th Weather warm and we had a fine little thunder shower this afternoon — 11th Ills Cav left to-day for some unknown destination. We received *Marching orders* this evening. On hearing this the men cheered for about half an hour so anxious are they to go. The order was announced on dress parade.

March 29th A good day for spring fever and it took hold of a good many. Have been busy all day preparing to leave for the South. This eve the 15th Mich came in tired, dirty and used up. The Regt numbers about 900 and are armed with Austrian muskets a very clumsy looking Gun.

March 30th Sunday The air to-day has been refreshingly cool and the sky clear and the sun shone out brightly. There is Sunday in the almanac but in military affairs there seems to be no sacred day. All is work. The men are playing cards swearing and dancing just as on other days. This I do not enjoy. How uncomfortable it makes me to be thus surrounded on Sunday. Through the week I can get along very well. Men that four months ago would not use a profane word can now outswear many others and those who would even shun a checker board now play cards for profit. The descent looks gradual from the top but how fast they seem to go as everything seems to hurry on the downward grade. If the war should last a year or two how degraded some of these men will become. How eager they seem to abandon all their early teachings and to catch up with everything which

tends to debase To-day each Company has been cooking rations for the trip ahead Officers have been making Muster Rolls

March 31st Have been very busy all day Expect to start to-morrow morning

"Toward Dixies Land" Steamer Minnehaha

April 1st We arose at 4 O'clock and expected to leave at 7 O'clock — but we did not get off until 11 A M Our Regiment with the 16th Iowa, 23d Missouri and 15th Mich came down together to the landing — all armed and equipped with the bands all playing They looked fine and gay indeed We went aboard the steamboat "Minnehaha" and after two hours of tedious waiting started down the stream toward "Dixies" land The other boats did not start when we did We had aboard also two Batteries and all the horses belonging thereto and our Regimental wagons

The "Minnehaha" is an old shaky tub and is very large Every available place and corner is crowded — Around the boilers the men are packed like swine We ran aground this evening and the shock brought everything up *standing* and frightened many of the men for a moment After the boat got off she ran a short distance and threw out her anchor close to an Island I shall sleep just in the rear of one of the wheel houses in a little spot marked out by my knapsack and gun &c

April 2d This morning about 4 O'clock the steamer again started and kept bravely on her course down the river We have made our first attack upon "*hard tack*" this morning and think we shall like it We have bid farewell to Bakers bread, cows milk and such soft things. Had a piece of meat and a hard tack for breakfast — we are gradually breaking in The scenery along the river is very picturesque and beautiful especially on the Ills side High rocky cliffs covered with Cedar in many places There is always a contrast when one side is rough and hilly the other side will be flat and swampy

This afternoon we stop[p]ed at Cape Girardeau on the Mo side The town is situated on steep and high hills On the summit of the highest hill in the town is a large fort made of earth from which a piece of artillery was fired as we came almost opposite and then our boat rounded to and came to landing We remained only a few minutes Saw a few soldiers on shore. There seems to be quite a number of pieces of artillery here The town is built mostly of brick The wind being high the waves splashed upon the deck and frightened the mules and horses

This afternoon one of the rudder ropes broke and we drifted for some time with the current. At 5 o'clock PM we came in sight of Cairo lying at the mouth of the Ohio river. On the West side of the Miss is Birds Point a somewhat noted place of late. It is a low flat piece of land and seems to be covered with timber. Cairo lies in a low muddy piece of ground just at the junction of the Ohio and Miss rivers and is a most forbidding looking place. The levee hides from river view the most of the town. Some of the houses stand in water to the first windows — the inmates living in the upper stories. They have small Canoes and paddle from one house to the other. No "swinging on the gates" allowed here. A long line of Boats lie along the Ohio wharf. I think the principal productions of Cairo are tad-poles and ague. "Fort Holt" lies on the Kentucky side among the heavy timber which hides from view the adjacent country — Distance from St Louis 180 miles. Sixteenth Iowa came down this eve. Weather clear & warm.

April 3d Went on shore and made some coffee this morning — which never tasted so good — and it cheered us up. Left Cairo at 8 O'clock. Kept up the Ohio and most of the time close to the Kentucky shore. Passed a beautiful little village almost hid among the newly budding trees and green blue grass. The people cheered loudly as we passed. On the North or Ills side the country is rough and on the other side the opposite while the high water is flooding the low lands.

At 5 O'clock we came to Paducah Kentucky — a mean dirty looking town with its low black brick walls and old smoky buildings — lying just at the junction of the Tennessee river and on the west bank. Here are plenty of soldiers and several boat loads of old muskets and spoils of war brought down from Donelson and Henry²⁰. The river bank is lined with soldiers and dirty greasy negroes. We have tied up at the shore and will remain here until morning. Paducah is a *secession* town and came near being taken by General Simon Buckner at one time but the vigilance of Gen. Grant seemed the point which is of great importance. About 8000 troops are here.

April 4th To-day we have been at anchor expecting every moment to leave but did not get away until 4 PM. We left with other boats and all the bands playing "Dixies" Land. Here we enter the dark land of secession and the enemies home. Kentucky professes to be *neutral* which means that she leans heavily toward secession. She takes this ground only to save her own

²⁰ The battles of Forts Henry and Donelson had taken place on February 6 and 15, 1862.

bide — but she will strike us a blow soon as she thinks we cannot strike back Met the Gunboat "Cairo" a formidable looking vessel — she carries 12 heavy guns — some of them 68 pounders

April 5th Last night we traveled until 11 o'clock and a storm coming on we hauled into shore and remained until 4 o'clock this morning The rain drove the men below and we were desperately crowded for room. Passed Fort Henry about 4 o'clock The fort is occupied by a small garrison Fort Donelson is a short distance away on the Cumberland river — Henry seems to have been a strong place for Riflemen but could not stand the fire of heavy art. from the gunboats which produced such a panic among the "secesh" that they retired to Fort Donelson where they were all taken in by Genl Grant

*Battle of Shiloh or Pittsburgh Landing*²¹

April 6th Sunday — At 6 o'clock we arrived at a point known as "Pittsburgh Landing" on the West bank of the Tenn river where seems to be concentrated all the western troops that are destined to invade the Confederacy by way of the Mississippi Valley This place is 240 miles from the mouth of the Tennessee river At 7 o'clock we ate breakfast on board the

²¹ In the Battle of Shiloh, or Pittsburg Landing, the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th Iowa Regiments took part. Colonel Wm. T. Shaw of the 14th called it "Iowa's great battle of the Rebellion." See Wm. T. Shaw, "The Battle of Shiloh," *War Sketches and Incidents* . . . , 1:183-4. Much has been written about the battle of Shiloh; endless controversy resulted as to whether Grant was caught napping when the Confederate army, under the command of General Albert Sidney Johnston, moved out of Corinth and attacked suddenly on the morning of April 6. For Grant's own account, see *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (2 vols., New York, 1885), 1:330-70. Some other accounts are: Joseph W. Rich, *The Battle of Shiloh* (Iowa City, 1911); Henry Stone, "The Battle of Shiloh," and Ephraim C. Dawes, "The Battle of Shiloh," in *Campaigns in Kentucky and Tennessee* . . . (Vol. VII of *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts*, Boston, 1908), 33-202; D. C. Buell, "Shiloh Reviewed," *Century Magazine*, 31:749-81 (March, 1886); S. H. M. Byers, *Iowa in War Times* (Des Moines, 1888), 122-45; S. D. Thompson, *Recollections with the Third Iowa Regiment* (Cincinnati, 1864), 206-256; Clinton Parkhurst, "A Few Martial Memories [of the 16th Iowa at Shiloh]," *The Palimpsest*, 1:111-28 (October, 1920); Henry Steele Commager (ed.), *The Blue and the Gray* . . . (2 vols., Indianapolis, 1950), 1:351-5; Otto Eisenschiml and Ralph Newman, *The American Iliad* . . . (Indianapolis, 1947), 168-203; *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* . . . , Series I, Vol. X, Parts I and II, *passim*. (Hereafter referred to as *Official Records*). Pittsburg was a steamboat landing on the Tennessee River in southern Tennessee near the Mississippi border. The battle fought there became known later as "Shiloh" because of Shiloh Church, two miles southwest of the Landing, where General W. T. Sherman's headquarters were located.

Minnehaha at which time we could hear the noise of *cannon*²² About 9 O'clock brother Matt of the 3d Iowa came in. I of course was glad to see him His regiment has been out on the front some days. He looks hearty and well

About this time rumor came that the Rebel General Beauregard²³ with a large force has attacked our Pickets who are being driven back. The men of the 3d say it does not mean anything as the firing is of daily occurrence and is only the pickets At 9 o'clock the wounded began to come in and there begins to be a great stir on the shore Officers and cavalry riding in all directions The roar of the cannon can be distinctly heard some miles to the South

At 10 o'clock we are ordered ashore with all our equipments including 40 rounds of ammunition²⁴ With our knapsacks haversacks canteen (and almost every one had an extra suit of clothes) and our overcoats — haversacks filled to the top with hard tack and last but not least each of us had a big high hat with a large brass "eagle" on the side. If we were not a choice looking lot of fighting cocks as we stood in line that morning then I am no guesser We formed in line on the Bluff overlooking the river — We were in great confusion as Col Reid and Dewey galloped back and forth without seeming to know exactly what they were doing Col Dewey did a consider-

²² The battle had been joined in earnest between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning against the Sixth Division, under command of General B. M. Prentiss. Colonel Reid of the 15th, in his report later, wrote: ". . . the Fifteenth Regiment of Iowa Volunteer Infantry from Benton Barracks arrived at Pittsburg on Sunday morning, with orders from General Grant's headquarters to report to General Prentiss. Finding that his headquarters were some 4 miles from the Landing, I proceeded at once to report to him in person, and found a heavy fire of artillery and musketry already commenced along his lines. Orders were received from his aide to bring up my command as soon as possible, and I returned to the river for that purpose." *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 278, 288.

²³ General A. S. Johnston, in command of the Confederate forces, was killed in the early afternoon of April 6 and his place taken by General P. G. T. Beauregard. For descriptions of Johnston's death, see Eisenschiml and Newman, *American Iliad* . . ., 186; William Preston Johnson, "Albert Sidney Johnston and the Shiloh Campaign," *Century Magazine*, 29:621 (February, 1885); Joseph W. Rich, "The Death of General Albert Sidney Johnston on the Battlefield of Shiloh," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS*, 16:275-81 (April, 1918).

²⁴ "The regiment was rapidly disembarked, ammunition was distributed, and the men for the first time loaded their guns," reported Colonel Reid. Thus, green troops who had only received their rifles some ten days before (March 26) were thrown into one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War. *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 288.

able amount of hard *swearing* and I had time to notice him wheel his horse around and take some *consolation* through the neck of a pint bottle. This seemed to give him a stronger flow of swear language than before. When we had got into something like a line we were presented with several boxes of ammunition and each man ordered to fill up to the extent of 100 rounds. By this time we were loaded down to the "guards"

The wounded men were by this time coming in freely and were being carried right through our ranks. And we could see hundreds of soldiers running through the woods. Col Reid got us started. Who gave the order I know not. Who our guide was I knew not. We started on the double quick in the direction of the heavy firing which was mostly of musketry. The field officers were mounted on horses and we tried to keep up with them and to do it we had to *run* and then the front (for the Regt was marching by the right flank) would halt and the rear would telescope into them. Thus we kept on for at least three miles meeting hundreds — yes thousands of men on the retreat who had thrown away their arms and were rushing toward the Landing — most of these were *batless* and had nothing on them except their clothes. Some of them were wounded and covered with blood from head to foot. Some of the wounded were being carried on stretchers. The woods were full of Infantry, cavalry, Artillery and all arms of the service were flying toward the River in countless numbers. Men yelled as they passed us "Don't go out there" "You'll catch hell" "We are all cut to pieces" "We are whipped" Some declared they were the only one's left out of a whole Regiment or a Battery as the case may be.

There was also Infantry officers with swords drawn and trying to head off the flying troops and make them halt. There was Cavalrymen galloping after men and threatening to shoot them if they did not *stop*. But I saw no one stop — But on we went facing all these discouraging circumstances to take our turn at failure to stop the Rebel tide which was coming in like a wave of the sea unresisted and irresistible.

Here we were a new Regt which had never until this morning heard an enemies gun fire thrown into this *hell* of battle — without warning. The hot sun and the dreadful load we had carried through three miles of dust and battle smoke had so exhausted us that there was no strength left in the men. On the bluff we have put the first cartridges into our guns and [that] added to the scenes through which we had just passed was enough to unnerve the best troops in the world. But we were *green* and went in and not a man was

seen to halt or to falter Lieut Fisk had been in a dark state room all the trip on account of his eyes — but when we formed at the landing he came off the boat and in full uniform insisted on going into the fight. He wanted to take his place as Lieut. Several of us earnestly tried to persuade him to stay out but he would not listen to us and go he did. He was almost blind and followed us to the field

The roar of the artillery and the crash of the musketry was close at hand We came to the edge of a large field and as we crossed a little Ravine the bullets and a few shells passed over us making some of us dodge Here we deployed by the right flank to come into line of battle but did not get that accomplished until we were out in the open field and in fair view of the enemy. A heavy shower of bullets riddled the ranks and threw us into some *more* confusion and being jamed into masses we were in poor shape to return the fire — some were wounded and a few killed before we could come to a front. Here I noticed the first man shot. He belonged in Co "K" Capt Hedricks Co [John M. Hedrick, of Ottumwa] He was close to us and sprang high in the air and gave one groan and fell *dead* Our Company had to pass over him and each man as he came up seemed to hesitate and some made a motion to pick him up — but the officers sternly ordered them "forward" The men all gave a cheer and rushed on in line of battle with bayonets fixed

The enemy lay in ambush at the farther side of the field We at first could not see them only the puffs of white smoke came from the thickets and brush and every log and tree. We reached some scattering trees and [as] if by common consent we made for those and it was fun to see two or three fellows running for the same tree. In the smoke and confusion I saw the flag advancing on our right and running across an open space I made for a small sapling not more than six or eight inches through. When I got there two other fellows were there too and Jeff Hockett was one of them Jeff gave me a tremendous *butt* and sent me out of shelter and displaced me so that the tree was of no use to me We all three laughed and the other fellow and I started for another tree and kept shooting toward the enemy I found a very good place behind a good sized log just to the left with Co "B" and had some good shots from there in the direction of the enemy but could not see them for the smoke There was a little Ravine where Co "B" was working and this protected us from grape and cannister which was being opened in the Regiment from the timber in our front It was every man for himself

We knew nothing about orders or officers. Indeed the Companies now became all mixed up and without organization²⁵

Col Reid was wounded and fell from his horse with a bullet wound in the neck — Lieut Col Dewey I notice sitting behind a tree holding the halter to his horse which seemed to be badly wounded. Major Belknap was wounded and also Adjt Pomutz. Sergt Major Penniman had been killed. The wounded and the dead lay thickly on the ground.

Lieut Rogers of Co "E" had the flag and bore it manfully ahead of all. He made one stand behind the upturned roots of an old tree. A heavy fire seemed to be concentrated on the flag and men fell thick all around that spot. The enemy opened on us with artillery at close range using grape, canister and shell and all manner of deadly missiles. Above the roar of the guns could be heard the cheers of our men as they gained new ground. At last we could see the enemy and they were advancing around our left flank and the woods seemed alive with *gray coats* and their victorious cheer and unearthly *yells* and the concentrated fire which they had upon us caused somebody to give the order for *retreat*. The word was passed along — and we went off that bloody ground in great confusion and had to fall back over the same open ground by which we came²⁶

As we started down the Ravine a wounded rebel caught me by the leg as I was passing and looking up at me said My friend for God's sake give me a *drink* of water. He had been shot about the head and was covered with blood to his feet. I at once thought of that command "If thine enemy thirst give him drink" and I halted and tried to get my canteen from under my accouterments — but I could not and pulled away from him and said "I

²⁵ Andrew Hickenlooper, an Ohio officer, wrote: "There were no battle plans, no strategy, no tactical maneuvers and but few commands—certainly none that had any important bearing upon the final results. It was under such conditions that these men—many of whom had never before heard a hostile gun fired—were suddenly aroused and hastily formed in line, without food, without water or even without an adequate supply of ammunition, and were moved forward until suddenly confronted by the regiments of a vigorously pressing and determined foe." Eisenschiml and Newman, *American Iliad* . . . , 203.

²⁶ "While I admit that after fighting nearly two hours in a regiment 'as green as a gourd,' and losing on the field nearly two hundred gallant men, killed and wounded, I with all others in sight left with some celerity for a more healthy spot; yet we had plenty of company from other regiments and commands, and as far as I saw, the fact that officers of rank were separated from their commands was the rule and not exception. . . ." William W. Belknap, "The Obedience and Courage of the Private Soldier . . ." *War Sketches and Incidents* . . . , 1:160.

have not time to help you" (I had business other places just about that time as the Regt was ahead of me) And on we went making as good time as we ever made over that old field

The bullets seemed to fill the air and to be clipping every little weed and bush and blade of grass around us Many men lost their *bats* and their guns — The tall gov't hats with the glorious old "eagle" lay thick on the ground and the knapsacks and haversacks and last winters overcoats were too numerous to mention

In the meantime (and just about as *mean a time* as I have ever met) the enemies Cavalry came dashing around on our right flank (as we retreated) and followed us almost to the ravine where we made a temporary stand and with a few shots the Cav fell back Here Jeff Hocket ran to me and said that my brother Scott had given out and was lying upon the ground some distance back. I ran to him and tried to get him upon his feet But he said I should go on as he never could go any farther and that I had better save myself and let him go. I told him the enemy were almost upon him and that he would be taken prisoner or killed No words of mine seemed to have any effect I now took him by the *nap of the neck* and jerked him upon his feet and told him to *come* or I should help him with my *boot* At this he stood up and I managed to work him along down the ravine and left him to rally on the hill. The men kept on to the rear and were fast filling up the great stream of *fugitives* from the battle field

Cavalrymen were riding in all directions with drawn sabers and revolvers threatening to shoot and "Cut mens heads off" if they did not stop and rally Officers were coaxing praying and exhorting men for "God's sake" to stop and all make a stand together But in most cases their orders and appeals were not heard by these demoralized men who kept going like a flock of sheep All the terrors of hell would not have stoped them until they got to the River Hundreds lay in the woods on the ground completely overcome with the heat smoke and dust and fatigue The heat seemed intense The air was filled with dense smoke and fumes from burning powder took all the moisture from the mouth and a *burning dryness* extended to the throat

Riderless horses came thundering through the woods with empty saddles and artillery horses with caisons [*sic*] attached ran through the squads of men and striking trees caused the percussion shells to explode blowing horses caisons and everything around to atoms Cannon balls were flying in

all directions cutting off great limbs of trees and many men were killed and injured in this way as the heavy limbs fell on them. Every indication seemed to point to a great and *terrible defeat*. There seemed to be only a few who thought we were not *whipped*.

At this time about 2 o'clock in the afternoon the remains of several Regiments concentrated with our squad under command of Capt Kittle Co "A" with some Ohio Wis and Indiana troops we went forward again toward the line of battle which seemed to have advanced some distance. Our Reg flag was carried by Sergt Rogers. We kept advancing and falling back as the enemy pressed forward or gave way under heavy fire from troops on our left. Our men dragged some heavy guns back of us and the whole line of Infantry fell back and massed around the Artillery.

About this time some prisoners brought in say that Albert Sidney Johnston commanding the Rebel army was killed this afternoon and that Beauregard is now in command and has sworn to "water his horse in the Tennessee River or in *hell* before night"

About 5 o'clock the enemy came on in solid masses for the final *charge*. At this time there was a calm. The artillery and the musketry almost ceased and the calmness was *oppressive*. But it was the calm before the terrible *storm* which was preparing. We were massed upon the surrounding bluffs about the landing. General Grant and Genl Buell rode along the line and urged every man to stand *firm* as we should have thousands of reinforcements in a short time and pointed to the opposite side of the river where we could see a long line of blue coats far as the eye could reach — and that was *Buell's Army*. *This sight was all that saved Grants Army*²⁷. No prom-

²⁷ Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell, in command of the Army of the Ohio, had been ordered from Columbia, Tenn., to join Grant at Savannah, a few miles up the river from Pittsburg Landing. He had arrived there with his first division on the evening of April 5, the other divisions following at 6-mile intervals. By the evening of April 6 his Army had been moved up to Pittsburg Landing. *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 291-2; Buell, "Shiloh Reviewed," 751-2. Jesse Bowen Young, a Union soldier, also drew inspiration from the sight of Buell's army: "Late in the afternoon I noticed a commotion on the other side of the river. Transports were there waiting for something or somebody. As I watched the spot, I saw a squad of men appear in sight on that side of the river. Then came a general and staff, and then on a run a regiment with its battle flags floating gaily in the air. They quickly embarked on transports and in a short time were on the Pittsburg Landing shore. I could hardly believe my eyes as I saw the advance guard and realized that Buell's troops had come to the rescue of the Army of the Tennessee. The arriving troops cheered and were cheered in return. . . ." Eisenschiml and Newman, *American Iliad* . . ., 191.

ises or words could have inspired men on this desperate occasion. Every man who stood in that crumbling wall felt the great responsibility. To give way then would be *destruction* to the whole Army.

There is some talk now that the enemy having lost their leader is retreating and that the battle is over for to-day which is the reason for the silence. But this delusion is soon dissipated as the smoke clears away we can see the enemy coming on in long dark lines and seem to spring out of the ground in countless thousands. This is to be the grand and final charge by which they hope to sweep us from the face of the earth or capture the entire army. This *death like stillness* is worse than *murder*. Our Artillery opens with about 40 pieces (all we have left) then nothing more can be seen.

The very earth trembles with the fearful explosions. The enemy charged to the very mouth of our cannon and hundreds of them fell — filled with whiskey and gun powder. The battle raged for the possession of this hill which we held. If we would have lost this *all would have been lost*. Every man seemed nerved beyond human strength to do his utmost and he *did*. Acres of dead and wounded told the fearful tale of sacrifice.

At this time two gunboats moved up the River and opened on the flank of the enemy such terrific noises were never before heard in these dismal woods.²⁸ The rapidity of the discharges and the roar of the guns seemed to mow the very forest to the ground. This so demoralized the Rebels that they fell back about dark. At this time a grand stampede took place at the Landing.

Thousands of men who had fled from the field tried to get aboard the steamboats which lay at the bank. The Boats were ordered to leave and fall over to the other bank of the River. The crazy fugitives from behind crowded those in front and hundreds were pushed into the River and scores

²⁸ "At a late hour in the afternoon a desperate effort was made by the enemy to turn our left and get possession of the Landing, transports, &c. This point was guarded by the gunboats Tyler and Lexington, Captains Gwin and Shirk, U. S. Navy, commanding, four 20-pounder Parrott guns and a battery of rifled guns. As there is a deep and impassable ravine for artillery or cavalry, and very difficult for infantry, at this point, no troops were stationed here, except the necessary artillerists and a small infantry force for their support. Just at this moment the advance of Major-General Buell's column (a part of the division under General Nelson) arrived, the two generals named both being present. An advance was immediately made upon the point of attack and the enemy soon driven back. In this repulse much is due to the presence of the gunboats Tyler and Lexington, and their able commanders, Captains Gwin and Shirk." Report of U. S. Grant, April 9, 1862, *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 109.

drowned The cannon balls from the enemies batteries now passed over our heads and clear across the River, so close were they to us Darkness and the gunboats determined our persistent foe to fall back and thus at dark we found ourselves crowded like a flock of sheep on the bluffs around the Landing just able to keep the Wolf at bay while the favoring night that settled down on friend and foe put an end to the fearful slaughter for the day a parallel to which this Continent had never before witnessed

Battle of Shilob or Pittsburgh Landing Second Day's Battle

April 7th No pen can tell, no hand can paint no words can utter the horrors of last night. Such a doleful pressure of misery and woe and suffering as rested on this field of *death* Unable to succor or help the poor wounded men that fell in yesterdays battle the living cared only for themselves Scarcely able to endure the great fatigue of the day each one cared only for himself

The enemy held undisputed possession of the greater portion of the field where lay the badly wounded About 10 o'clock at night the thick smoke in the air gathered in thunder clouds lit up by flashes of lightning and rolling thunder — and soon the rain began to come down in torrents drenching both man and beast²⁹ There was no shelter any place Piles of provisions and ammunition lay uncovered. The darkness was impenetrable except when the lightning flashed

The groans of the *wounded* and *dying* could be heard in the din of the tempest The struggles of the wounded horses as they floundered upon the ground and came running through the darkness made the situation one of almost as much danger as during the day in the battle. Signal lights were flashing on the river all night as the boats kept constantly running back and forth bringing Buells Army across which yesterday marched thirty miles to

²⁹ Grant himself wrote of this night: "During the night rain fell in torrents and our troops were exposed to the storm without shelter. I made my headquarters under a tree a few hundred yards back from the river bank. My ankle was so much swollen from the fall of my horse the Friday night preceding, and the bruise was so painful, that I could get no rest. The drenching rain would have precluded the possibility of sleep without this additional cause. Some time after midnight, growing restive under the storm and the continuous pain, I moved back to the log-house under the bank. This had been taken as a hospital, and all night wounded men were being brought in, their wounds dressed, a leg or an arm amputated as the case might require, and everything being done to save life or alleviate suffering. The sight was more unendurable than encountering the enemy's fire, and I returned to my tree in the rain." Grant, *Personal Memoirs*, 1:349.

be here at the fight which was impending. As the poor tired fellows came up from the landing they gave a *shout* and a *cheer* and yelled "Never mind boys We'll lick hell out of them to-morrow" Such a welcome shout made us feel new again. But [we] thought of the fearful morrow and would it be possible to redeem the terrible losses of to-day.

It took all night to get that army of 30,000 men across the Tennessee. Before dawn this mighty Army of reinforcements was in line of battle. Before the darkness had lifted from the deep forest we heard the roll of musketry and the shouts of Buells men far to the front — at first the scattering shots of the pickets then the increasing crash of the small arms followed by the roar of the cannon and the cheers of the contending hosts as they grappled in the death struggle for the old field of yesterday. About 10 o'clock our scattered Regiment got together about 400 men and we marched out toward the front and took our place in the reserve in line of battle near where we fought on yesterday. Here we lay more as a Reserve than anything else.

Buells Army to-day is doing the *fighting*. The cannonading at this time was *terrific* and on until in the afternoon. Batteries were *taken* and *retaken*. Sometimes one side held the ground then the other would rally and recapture it, and the roll of the musketry from 60,000 guns intermixed with the noise of the cannon and the bursting shells made the earth tremble with the concussion — as the two giants grappled in the final struggle for the victory. This desperate fighting lasted about 4 hours. Acres and acres of timber such as small saplings and large underbrush were mowed down and trees one foot in diameter were cut down as if a mowing machine had gone through the field and limbs fell like autumn leaves in the leaden and iron storm. Men and horses were piled in death over hundreds of acres on the fatal field³⁰

At last! At last! About 3 o'clock there was precipitate haste to the front and the fire seemed to slacken and the volleys of musketry were getting more distant toward the South. Soon the glad news came that the enemy was *retreating*. No shipwrecked sailors on a desert island famished and ready to die ever hailed a passing vessel with more delight and joy than every one on the Union side hailed that glad news. Men mortally wounded

³⁰ For Buell's own account of this day's battle, see Buell, "Shiloh Reviewed," 775-9; *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, 293-5.

jumped upon their feet and shouted for *Victory*. Every coward who had slunk under the river bank was out of his hole. There had not been so many men *wanting* to go to the front since the battle began. The woods were full of Cavalry hunting the *front*. They had heard that the enemy was "retreating" and they wanted to give him some of their ammunition.

Two or three of us took a little ramble out on the field and we perhaps went one mile or more from the Regt. We took a look at the ghastly sights. By this time we had become accustomed to seeing *dead* men and the *shock* had passed. We soon came to where the dead lay thick. The first dead rebel I came to lay on his back with his hands raised above his head and had died in great agony. I took a *button* from his coat. Here was the camp of the 52d Ills. Federal and Confederate lay alternately scattered over the ground some of them wounded and so near dead from exposure that they were mostly insane.

Farther on the dead and wounded became more numerous. Some had died in a quiet and peaceful manner and had passed away with no visible sign of pain or suffering. Others wore the most fearful signs of agony as they had struggled with death. Some fell with their muskets tightly gripped in both hands so that they could scarcely be separated. I saw five *dead* Confederates all killed by one six pound solid shot — no doubt from one of our cannon. They had been behind a log and all in a row. The ball had raked them as they crouched behind the log (no doubt firing at our men). One of them had his *head* taken off. One had been struck at the right shoulder and his chest lay open. One had been cut in two at the bowels and nothing held the carcass together but the spine. One had been hit at the thighs and the legs were torn from the body. The fifth and last one was piled up into a mass of skull, arms, some toes and the remains of a butternut suit. Just a few feet from where they lay the cannon ball had struck a large tree and lodged. I took it out and carried it some distance but finally threw it down as it became too heavy a relic to carry.

I saw one Union man leaning against a tree with a violin tightly grasped in his left hand. He had been dead some time and had no doubt been instantly killed. Another close by was leaning against a tree with his hat pulled down over his eyes and his hands crossed in front of him. I thought him asleep but when I took his hat off I found him cold and *dead*. This was in the camp of Genl Prentiss who was on the extreme front and where our men were first surprised yesterday morning. I saw where the 3d Iowa

and some other regiments fought yesterday there has been the most terrible destruction I counted 26 dead battery horses on a few square rods of ground and the men were lying almost in heaps Blue and gray sleep together³¹ Oh my God! Can there be anything in the *future* that *compensates* for this slaughter Only Thou knowest

Around these batteries men have died at their posts beside the guns Some are torn all to pieces leaving nothing but their heads or their boots Pieces of clothing and *strings of flesh* hang on the limbs of the trees around them — and the faithful horses have died *in the harness* right by the cannon. Some of them torn to quarters by the bursting shells and their swollen bodies are already filling the air with a deadly odor.

While here some cavalry came dashing back and yelled that the enemy was coming on us again in force The way we climbed toward the Regiment was not very *slow* But we lost our course and the sky being clouded we could not tell directions The woods were full of men running in all directions and we were in the flood of a *great panic* Some said the River was in one direction and others said it was the *opposite* We crawled into a *thicket* and waited until we got a little better settled in our minds about the *direction* Finally we got the course and went on until we [saw] some of our Regiment³²

The enemy has retreated and left all his dead and wounded on the field We have whipped him but at an awful *sacrifice* The two armies are like two tenacious *bull dogs*. They have grappled and fought until both are exhausted and worn out. One has crawled away to *lie down* and the other

³¹ Grant visited the battlefield on this day, also. "Shiloh was the severest battle fought at the West during the war, and but few in the East equalled it for hard, determined fighting. I saw an open field, in our possession on the second day, over which the Confederates had made repeated charges the day before, so covered with dead that it would have been possible to walk across the clearing, in any direction, stepping on dead bodies, without a foot touching the ground." Grant, *Personal Memoirs*, 1:355-6.

³² Lt. S. D. Thompson of the 3rd Iowa reported that this was a ruse to get the soldiers off the field: ". . . whole regiments scattered into squads and scattered over the field in search of their dead and wounded; and it was not long before the entire field was covered with stragglers and plunderers of the dead. To put a stop to this, the Cavalry was ordered to get up a panic among them. They rode frantically over the field, circulating the report that the enemy's cavalry was upon them. The effect was admirable. In a few minutes the panic communicated itself to all parts of the field, and stragglers without number poured through the woods toward the river like a herd of frightened brutes. No one could tell what he was running from. . . ." Thompson, *Recollections with the Third Iowa*, 241.

one cannot follow. This is our condition We are quite glad to hold the ground and let him retreat

Ambulances and men are hurrying over the field and gathering up the wounded The surgeons are cutting off the arms and legs Burying parties and details are out burying the dead this evening who have been dead now since Sunday Morning The air is already filled with the stench of decaying bodies. The battle field is one vast forest with here and there an old field The soil is poor and clayey and some of the ground swampy and some rolling covered with briars and thick underbrush

The terrible rain of last night has filled the ground with water and washed the gullies out The trees are just bursting into leaf and the little flowers are covering the ground — but their fragrance is lost in the pall of death which has settled down on this bloody field

"This is the valley and the shadow of death"

(To be continued)