The Civil War Journal of William B. Fletcher

Contributed and edited by Loriman S. Brigham*

William B. Fletcher, author of the Civil War journal which follows, was born in Indianapolis, August 18, 1837. His parents, Calvin and Sarah Hill Fletcher, had been among the early settlers of Indianapolis and soon became one of the leading families of the Hoosier capital. William, the seventh of ten children, studied at various educational institutions, including Harvard, where he attended lectures by the noted Louis Agassiz. About 1859 he received a degree in medicine from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York City. When the Civil War began in the spring of 1861, Dr. Fletcher was practicing his profession in Indianapolis.1

Immediately upon the outbreak of the war, Dr. Fletcher enlisted in the Sixth Regiment of Indiana Volunteers, which was mustered into service for ninety days at Indianapolis on April 25, 1861. As indicated in his journal, Fletcher served twenty days as a hospital surgeon, presumably at Camp Morton, before his regiment left for western Virginia (now West Virginia) on May 30. Dr. Fletcher expected a medical appointment from the governor, but it did not materialize, and he was sworn into service as a fife major. A nonmusical fife major, the young physician apparently became a secretary or aide to his colonel. His ability to make rapid drawings, as evidenced by the sketches which accompany his journal, most likely was a factor in his soon being assigned to scouting and spying expeditions in West Virginia.2

* Loriman S. Brigham is assistant treasurer of the National Life Insurance Co., Montpelier, Vermont, and is the owner of the William B. Fletcher Diary.

1 Biographical material in this Introduction, unless otherwise indicated, has followed: B. R. Sulgrove, History of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana (Philadelphia, 1884), 285-286; Dictionary of American Biography (22 vols., New York, 1928-1958), VI, 469-470; R. French Stone (ed.), Biography of Eminent American Physicians and Surgeons (Indianapolis, 1894), 162-163; R. H. Ritter, "Doctor William B. Fletcher," Transactions of the Indiana State Medical Association, 1907 (Indianapolis, 1907), 496-499. Unfortunately these and other sources are not in agreement on some details of William B. Fletcher's life; however, the information included in this Introduction is thought to be accurate.

2 Fletcher's volunteering for military service is mentioned in his journal which follows (see pp. 51-52; see also note 7 on p. 51. Additional information about his volunteering is included in the diary of his father, Calvin Fletcher, which is preserved in the William Henry
Western Virginia was in a state of chaos in June of 1861. Virginia had seceded from the Union, but most of the state's western part preferred to remain with the Union and was attempting to "secede" from Virginia to form a new state. The prompt mobilization and dispatch of federal troops helped crystallize western Virginia sentiment in favor of the Union. The Sixth Regiment arrived on the outskirts of Marietta, Ohio, on June 1. Fletcher accompanied a detachment on a foray up the Ohio River to counter a rebel show of strength at St. Marys, but most of the regiment plunged ahead and participated in the Battle of Philippi, June 3, often regarded as the first battle of the Civil War. Though the action at Philippi was minor, this Union victory helped to keep western Virginia loyal to the Union, contributed to the establishment of West Virginia as a new state, and helped safeguard the important Baltimore and Ohio Railroad for use by Union forces. The Sixth Regiment spent the remainder of its time skirmishing in the rugged mountainous area surrounding Philippi and left West Virginia about July 25, arriving in Indianapolis later that month. The regiment was mustered out on August 2, 1861.

Although Fletcher missed the engagement at Philippi because he was among those who were sent on the foray against St. Marys, he soon had opportunity to exhibit great courage and daring. After helping care for the wounded at Philippi, he became a "scout" or spy. On June 27 he volunteered to serve as a scout in an attempt to sketch rebel fortifications at Laurel Hill. The journal published here ends abruptly at the time Fletcher was on this mission. He successfully completed the spying expedition to Laurel Hill, however, and presented his findings and sketches to General George B. McClellan.

---

Spurning the opportunity to return home with his regiment, Fletcher volunteered to continue under the command of General Joseph J. Reynolds and serve in the secret service. On July 30 he was captured by the Confederates near Big Spring, West Virginia, while on another spying mission. He was placed in irons, his life threatened, and he underwent misery and illness. Fletcher made two efforts to escape and was wounded during the second attempt. He was then confined in a local jail at Huntersville, where he suffered much. In early October he arrived at Richmond, Virginia, and through connivance with fellow officers, he was placed at Libby Prison with them. Fletcher was in prison at Richmond about four months, though during much of this period he performed medical services for fellow Union prisoners at a nearby hospital. During these months at Richmond his circumstances were greatly improved over what they had been while he was at Huntersville in August and September of 1861. After various efforts had been made to obtain his release, Fletcher was exchanged and arrived in Indianapolis for a reunion with members of his family on Sunday morning, February 2, 1862.  

Though offered an appointment by the governor as an assistant surgeon of the Ninth Regiment in March of 1862, Dr. Fletcher never re-entered military service. In 1862 he resumed his medical practice at Indianapolis and married a Miss Agnes O'Brien. During the war he went to various southern battlefields to help care for sick and wounded Union soldiers, served as a medical examiner for draftees, and for a while had charge of one of the hospitals at Camp Morton which ministered to Confederate prisoners.

Following the Civil War William B. Fletcher established himself as one of the leading physicians of Indianapolis. His postwar medical career included visits to European hospitals, teaching in medical schools, service as superintendent of the Indiana Hospital for the Insane, participation in establishing the Fletcher Sanitarium, election to the Indiana State Senate, where he helped secure the law that created the State Board of Health, and writing of a number of articles and books in his field. In his writings, Dr. Fletcher expressed ideas which were advanced for his day. In fact, he merits special study by a competent medical historian. Dr. Fletcher died at Orlando, Florida, April 25, 1907.  

The journal published here is a fragmentary document. Presumably, however, it was written prior to Fletcher’s capture at Big Spring, West Virginia, and therefore has the value of being a kind of “on the spot” account. This journal indicates Indiana’s response to the outbreak of the Civil War, gives information about the fighting in western Virginia during the early days of the war, and offers information about Union spying, a neglected facet of the Civil War. Fletcher’s sketches of persons and places add interest and value to his journal.

Chap I

For years treason had [been] growing in the Slave holding States of our union. Treason had been secretly nourished and fed ‘til finally it became such a giant that it...

---

8 Fletcher’s decision to remain in West Virginia and continue as a spy is described in his account of further spying, his capture near Big Spring, his imprisonment, etc. as found in ibid., I, 105-184. The Calvin Fletcher Diary for the period from June, 1861, to February, 1862, is an invaluable source of information about the same events.

9 Published sources generally indicate that Dr. Fletcher was exchanged and returned to Indianapolis in March of 1862. His father’s diary, however, tells of the joyful family reunion which occurred on Sunday morning, February 2, 1862, whereas he and two of his brothers arrived at the family home. One of the brothers was Stephen Keyes Fletcher, then home for a brief leave from military service, whose Civil War journal was published in the Indiana Magazine of History, LIV (June, 1958), 141-190.

7 Indiana, Report of the Adjutant General, II, 58.
began to speak out among the men who ruled our country—and at last certain traitors seized public arms and money and raised troops—and declared the State of S.C. out of the Union—and an independant State—this was in Nov of 60.* it was at the time Abraham Lincon [sic] was declared Pres of the U.S. this was the excuse for seceding from the Union, Because Prea Lincon was a man whose party (and Moral) principles were opposed to slavery.

At the City of Charleston S.C. the Southern forces were concentrated, and the Soldiers occupying the forts of the U.S. in that harbor were ordered to evacuate the stronghold. At this time there were two forts one small, and in a bad position for resistance from the land side. And the other (Ft Sumpter) [Sumter] was large but unfinished. Maj [Robert] Anderson—who at this time [was] commander—moved in the night from the smaller (fort Moultrie) to Ft Sumpter—this enraged the Southern army—and their commander ordered them to evacuate the fort, which Maj Anderson refused to do—until he received orders from Prs Lincon. hereupon followed a siege of several months—until the 13th day of Apr 1861—when the Southern rebel grew impatient—and fired upon Ft Sumpter,† and then followed two days hard fighting—and history will keep in mind the details of the combat and of the manner in which the Southern rebellion grew and how State after State went out of the Union, and how property of the U.S. was stolen and union men persecuted whipt burned & hung.

Chap II

In the City of Indianapolis—as well as over this whole North—the telegrams announcing the attack on fort Sumpter—caused the most profound feeling of indignation. Men closed their shops—and thousands of old men walked solemnly

*Although South Carolina took steps toward secession following Lincoln's election in November, its formal act of secession was not approved until late December of 1860.
†The Confederate attack on Fort Sumter began early on the morning of Friday, April 12, not on April 13, as indicated here and in the second paragraph of Fletcher's "Chap II." News of the attack reached Indianapolis via telegraph on the twelfth, and confirmation of the fall of Fort Sumter arrived, also by telegraph, on Sunday, April 14. Fletcher's inaccurate chronology as well as various comments in his journal indicate that he did not normally make entries day by day as events actually occurred.

with faces pale—and tear wet cheeks—. And young men felt proud blood of freedom trampled, mounting to their heads and throbbing in their hearts.

Friday the 13th [12th] the news came of the attack, people heald their breath.

Saturday the telegram said—firing is still going on at Sumpter—her walls are breached—her magazine on fire—and people walked hurriedly to and fro—some doubting—some believing, some praying—some swearing.

Saturday night a meeting was called—and thousands of men came out—the Court House would not hold them—no building was large enough—and the crowd divided—filling two of the largest Halls in the City—here speeches were made by men of all political shades—and strong resolutions made for maintaining this union Men Money and horses were freely offered.

Sunday morning found the principle streets full of pale faced [men?] few had slept that night.

The news paper entered every few hours—but nothing but sad news came—"Ft Sumpter is on fire" Maj Anderson prisoner no body killed."

Men who had talked treason the day before—became silent—some from pure confusion and many from intimations of rape—and powder—few attended Church that day—and those that did attend did nothing save think and talk of war.

Sunday night the office of the Journal was crowded by 8 P.M. [with people] waiting for the next despatches.

The crowd grew large and more compact—and the st was full of men patiently waiting for the news—you might have seen thin faced clerks—and white cravat'd ministers of the gospel who after evening Service had come to hear the next despatch Many a fat Dutchman with his long pipe—was jammed into the crowd like a [a] ham sandwich—Erins broth of a boy was there—ready to use his Schalala there was a two thousand upturned faces. At ten P.M. the first despatch of the evening came—and as the crowd could not wait, it was announced by the little fat spectecled editor of the Journal—that Ft Sumpter had been abandoned by the

*The Indianapolis Journal was the leading Republican newspaper in Indiana at this time. Berry R. Sulgrove was its editor, 1861-1864, County, Indiana (Philadelphia, 1884), 240-244. Presumably Sulgrove is the "spectecled editor" Fletcher mentions in the following paragraph.
United States forces but that Anderson and his men were on board the U.S. War Steamer,” and that Pres Lincoln would order out 75,000 Volunteers tomorrow (Monday).” At this the crowd raised three hearty and loud cheers. Sunday was forgotten by all—or at least Sabbath hour could not restrain the bursting hearts of Union loving men.

The following week drums and fifes were playing war notes—and in six days Camp Morton contained over 6,000 men—the quota from Indiana. Camp Morton named in honor of Gov [Oliver P.] Morton is the State fare ground—the men were quartered in the Stalls built for Horses and Cattle. These stalls were made more convenient by a deck—built in the center—in which 6 men—or a unit were quartered. Fires were built in front of these sheds for cooking. The first ten days of camp life every thing was disorder. Some men could never be satisfied some wanted to march on Washington without arms drill or uniform—others were more moderate and willing to wait.

The good people of Ind, sent their blankets and comforts to the soldiers—thousands were received.

Chap III.

Ye Writer—skiepeth 20 days in which he served as hospital Surgeon—under the promise of an appointment from ye Gov—which he did not get—and was thus taught the folly of putting his trust in Gov’s—Ye Writer is sworn into the 6th Regiment as Fife Major—that being the only available place in this Regiment—and becomes a Non Com Staff-Officer and liveth close to Ye Col. Ye Fife Major describeth Ye Col. Crittenden.

T. T. Crittenden is a little man as to hight—but a large man in width—he looks like Falstaff—his hair dark inclined to a little grey on the under edge—he has a heavy mustache and beard his lips well formed—his head round

5 Hattie Lou Winslow and Joseph R. H. Moore, Camp Morton, 1861-1865: Indianapolis Prison Camp (Indiana Historical Society Publications, Vol. 12, No. 3; Indianapolis, 1930), 237-239, indicate that Camp Morton was located in the section of Indianapolis now circumscribed by Nineteenth Street, Talbott Avenue, Twenty-second Street, and Central Avenue. Winslow and Moore also indicate that this area was the site for the state fair during the late 1860’s. It was variously known as Henderson’s Grove, Ota’s Grove, and Morton Place. Ibid., 238, 239. Conditions at Camp Morton during the early months of the Civil War are described in ibid., 237-239.

In a few weeks the Camp was under good order—Col [Lewis] Wallace had worked long enough in the office of Adjutant General—to pick out the best drilled companies in the state—and formed the 11th Reg. then became Col of the same—and marched off to Evansville. Col [Ebenezer] Dumont became Col of the 7th Col [Robert H.] Milroy of the 9th Col [William P.] Benton of the 8th Col [Mahlon D.] Manson of the 10th and Col [Thomas T.] Crittenden of the 6th.

These were the Regiments first call[ed] into service from the State of Indiana.
and well made — his voice clear — and his dark eye always has a merry twinkle he speaks kindly to all — his men know him — as a kind firm man. he is about 37 years old — he roughed it in Texas when he was 15 — served as Lieut — in the U.S.A. — in Mexico and was most noted for his "bush whack fighting" of which he was very fond — he is a man of wealth and education — lives at Madison Ind. * The Fife Major becomes a non com Staff Officer and lives in the 6th Regt head quarters — from his lack of musical knowledge and inclination he assumes the duties of private sactary to the Colonel and the Colonel having no private work for his sactary the fife major spends his time learning the sword and musket exercise — and smokes his pipe — and is no longer called Fife Major but "Pipe Major" The staff mess is composed of the Col — and Lieut Col Major and Adjutant Sargent Maj Q. M. Sarg. and Pipe Major and the drum Major sometimes.

* Ibid. I, 24-25. gives a biographical sketch of Colonel Crittenden.


Interestingly enough neither Surgeon Charles Schüssler nor Assistant Surgeon John W. Davis are included in Fletcher's list of officers of the Sixth Regiment, nor does he mention either of them in his journal. Both, however, are listed in ibid. II, 2. Some clue about the reason for Fletcher's not being appointed a medical officer may be in the fact that he was an Indianapolis man in a southern Indiana regiment. The regiment's officers, therefore, were from either Madison or North Vernon, but especially Madison. Surgeon Schüssler was from Madison. A most favorable estimate of Schüssler appears in J. Grayson, History of the Sixth Indiana Regiment in the Three Months' Campaign in Western Virginia (Madison, Ind., 1875 7), 50.

June 6th Camp Fletcher —

Webster Taylor Co Va.

On the 29th of May — the order came to Col Crittenden — that we should be ready to march at 9 P.M.

The days had been growing longer and hotter at Camp Morton, and the boys were getting restive under their hard drills and strict discipline. At the announcement of "Marching Orders" it seemed as if the [sic] each man was suddenly struck with insane excitement. hats were thrown in air — cheer upon cheer given — officers were carried upon the

* For an interesting sketch on Prather, see ibid. 51. According to Grayson, Prather had seven sons who served with him in the Civil War, and the combined service of father and sons totaled eighteen years.

** The insertion of "June 6th Camp Fletcher — Webster Taylor Co Va." follows immediately by comment about events of May 29 illustrates the observation in footnote 3 that Fletcher did not ordinarily write his journal on a day-by-day basis.
shoulder[s] of the men—even old Col P. was insane enough to attempt an insane speech—and the Adjutant half tight did the same thing.

But things soon changed, men were packing up their extra clothing to send home—and cooking extra rations—cleaning guns &c.

At 9 P.M. we were informed that we would not go till 6 A.M. (of the 30th) but we were at work all night—getting our baggage ready to send to the depot by the wagons.

At 2 P.M. we were called into line—the night was beautiful—and star-packed, and our camp fires were dying into the last few flickering flames—20 rounds of cartridge were distributed to each man and at 3 A.M. we were ready to march—while the band played a part of the plaintive march in the “Gentle Shepherd” the F Major—took a stroll along the now vacant sheds where we had camped so long—the old cow stalls—were silent—here and there an old hat was throw[n] or a pair of breeches hung.

The F Major cast his eyes over the whole camp—moon lit—but hushed in sleep except the sentinels who marched slowly by:

It was almost 4 A.M. May 30th before the command—March! was given—and day was blooming in the east. We marched down towards the sleeping city.

Marching down Meridian St the F. Maj felt almost sad—the band was playing “Then You’ll remember me”—when he past his fathers house; no one was moving—the shutters were shut—and the F. Maj. could see no kind face or eyes suffused with tears; a few persons were called from their beds—by the tramp of the soldiers—or the music—these persons looked quietly at us, and on we past. At the Depot a few persons were gathered—by curiosity to “see the soldiers go” it was yet early, not 6 o’clock—and the F. Maj. looked around for a resting place—and a breakfast—

The breakfast was good—and not forgotten—for it was eaten with a brother—in the very room where he first remembered to have [eaten].

We were soon on the cars—a few more people had collected—and some handed a few little flowers—to the F Maj for which they received his hearts blessing. The cars moved—and old scenes and loved faces and dear memories vanished.

The cars were moving slowly all day—through the flat lands of Indiana—the fields were green the woods deep and dark—but flat flat flat farmers looked at us as we flu past—little boys cheered, women looked cross—(some sad.) all through flat Ind. except at two places—where some poor women had sent a son to the army—and some sweet faced girl a lover—here we saw tears.

As ye Pipe Major—came Eastward he saw finer farms—and pleasant villages—

At Lawrenceburg, we rooled into a beautiful scene—where the Ohio winds between green hills and the fine little city on its banks. Here two steamboats came too and gave a salute—the boys cheered hugely at sight of the Ohio River—where many of them had homes.

At Cincinnati we arrived at 4 P.M. where a company of mounted men met us—the band played while we marched thro the crowded sts. Never did soldiers feel more proud than did the Hoosier boys of the 6th Reg Ind Vol when Ohio gives such hearty welcome—thousands of people waved their hats and handkerchiefs.

Some ladies smiled—and waved the delicate hand galey others buried their faces in their hands—or wished us God Speed—with faces pale.

Through Cincinnati—we were marched to Camp Dennison Hamilton Co. where we arrived at 7 [6?] PM amid the cheers of the Ohio troops—We continually heard—the words—“Bully boys” “fine fellows” What big men

We were lead by the Qr Master to the valley of the little Miami—when grumbling and tired the men found supper and beds as best they might.

Ye P.M. (or FM) was very weary as the long march and fatigue of the day before—would make any one.

So he threw down his knapsack and pulld off his dusty uniform and made a plunge into the cool waters of the little Miami—then came out smoked his pipe and thought
of—various matters then wrapt his blanket around him—a silk blanket—upon an India rubber cover—and was soon fast asleep.

May 31st. We started from Camp Dennison over the Marietta R.R. the days journey was one continual ovation—the ladies brought flowers—and more practise gifts of edibles—the girls didn't complain if you chanced to kiss them. Every body wished us success—and bade us tearful good bye particularly were we received at Chilicothie—and at night in the little town of Athens—where each man had all he could eat—and enough for one day—over—

Journeying on—we found ourselves on a rainy morning June 1st at the little town of Harmer—which is connected with Marietta by a bridge. here we were furnished with bread, milk, ham—eggs &c by the good people.

At 9 AM we [have?] to start for Parkersburg Va. Just as the train was ready to move the F.M. received orders to remain with Companies H & K—as there was a little job for them to do—up the river.

H and K—The detachment were under the command of Major [John] Gerber.— Sargent Maj Holstein [Charles L. Holstein?]—was also to go with us. Comp. H. was quartered in a Hall over the old Market House.

The Committee was to furnish us a transport to St. Marys—before 12 M. in the mean time—the Citizens the ladies particularly entertained us with a sumptious dinner.

One gentleman proposed that as we had no "fille de Regement" we could chose one at Harmer—Ye F.M. was detailed to make the selection when he chose Miss Stratton—who he knew must be a Yankee—and a school teacher with Miss S he was quite taken—She was beautiful and intelligent. At 4 PM our transport through the neglig[e]nce of the Committee had not arrived and our Maj chartered the Silver Heels a little steamer to take us up.

The Committee was to furnish us a transport to St. Marys—before 12 M. in the mean time—the Citizens the ladies particularly entertained us with a sumptious dinner.

One gentleman proposed that as we had no "fille de Regement" we could chose one at Harmer—Ye F.M. was detailed to make the selection when he chose Miss Stratton—who he knew must be a Yankee—and a school teacher with Miss S he was quite taken—She was beautiful and intelligent. At 4 PM our transport through the neglig[e]nce of the Committee had not arrived and our Maj chartered the Silver Heels a little steamer to take us up.

At five P.M. all the little village turned out to see us off—the canon fired—the ladies waved their handkiesche—and the men cheered till our little steamer was out of sight—the most beautiful ride the F.M. ever had was up that beautiful river—that quiet evening the 1st day of June.

The banks of the Ohio were lovely. Ohio on one side—and the Old Dominion on the other. Our men had loaded their guns and were waiting for the town of St Mary's—We arrived within a mile of the place—and quietly lay to the Ohio shor—while our spy wen[t] in a skiff to the Va side—While we were waiting here—for the return of our spy some Union men of St Mary's came on board—and informed us that it was too late—the birds—150 had flown—and no arms were at St M. at about 10 our spy returned, and informed us the same. We landed at the town however—quietly—

the F.M. was the first on the landing—and ran up the hill—where he met 3 drunken sesessionists—who when they saw 150 bayonets gleaming in the starlight—took heels and run.
The men were disappointed at having no fight—so after a march through the town—and warning disloyal citizens we came back to the Silver Heels. The Pipe Major roold up in his blanket on the flat boat which was attached to the Steamer—was soon asleep—and when his eyes opened—the sun was shining full in his face—at Parkersburg Va. here orders had been left by our Col, to go into camp—with Co A.

Parkersburg was a dead little city at the Mouth of the little Kanawa [Kanawha] two miles above Blanerhasses island.

Camp Baldwin was at the top of a high hill which over looked the town. Nothing of importance occurred at Camp Baldwin.

June 3rd. On Monday we heard that our Reg had had a fight at Phillipi which made us feel bad that we were not ther[e].

June 4 Tuesday night we received orders to leave Parkersburg and on Wednesday morning June 5th we took the cars for Grafton.

Our ride to Grafton. It had been raining for two or three nights and the streets were muddy, and the river rushing on madly. At 10 we were all in the box cars—tumbled in like cattle except we had straw to lie on.

As we were about getting on the cars a lady was brought down—who wished very much to go with us as far as Grafton—She was the wife of Judge Thompson of Wheeling—who is a good Union man—who had two sons in the secession army—it is the mothers desire[e] to go to the rebel camp and induce them to return. The father wrote to Col Kelly—if my sons are taken “Shoot them—pray don’t hang them.”

On the platform of the depot one of the men in Co A—Sang the “Star Spangled Banner” with much feeling and the whole Company filled the Chorus—the train at last started the usual cheers were given—and we were rooling along among the Green hills of Va.

We had gone about 10 miles when the whistle sounded—and the train began to back—and we learned that the hand car men had brought word that a bridge over “goose Creek” had broken down during the night and that we must return to Parkersburg for timber and carpenters—to rebuild the

13 Grayson, History of the Sixth Indiana Regiment, 19, describes the foray against St. Marys: “Company H, Capt. Jones, and Company K, Capt. Bachman, under command of Major John Gerber, assisted by Sergeant Major G. L. Holstein and First-Major W. B. Fletcher, were detached from the regiment, while we remained near Marietta, for the purpose of looking after a reported gathering of rebels at the town of St. Marys, W. Va., on the Ohio River, 16 miles above Marietta. The detachment went up to that place, but the rebels had received information of their approach and evacuated, moving off into the interior, and our soldiers were very much disappointed in not getting a shot at them before they got away.”

14 Blanerhasses Island was used by Aaron Burr as a base of operations for his expedition of 1806 down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, an action which resulted in his trial for treason.
bridge. We of course were much disappointed at this delay for we had hoped to be in Grafton that night—We had an idea that our detachment would not have an opportunity to fight—and the news of the battle at Philippi had whetted our appetites for that article.

While the bridge builders were getting their timbers—a man brought word to Capt. [Philemon P.] Baldwin that he had discovered a shop down by the river—which had the doors and windows nailed down and bared—and it was reported that Guns—and other Sesession implements were ther[e] hid—

With much excitement three brave men were selected to charge upon the house—lead by Capt B. One of the braves was the Pipe Major—one a professional circus actor—lock picker gambler &c who could boast of many like accomplishments. the other was a strong man of no marked peculiarties. After examining the out side—we came to the conclusion that something was “wrong about that house.” “Something rotten” remarked the P.M. “Yes ill [I'll] be darned if there aint” said the Capt—the Stairs were mounted and the boards nailed across the windows soon removed—the window drawn out with much excitement—for we could now see mysterious boxes piled within.

The Capt and the Professional Gent were much excited and both determined to be in first—so a tussel ensued which resulted in both tumbling in—on a greasy floor—and soon wer[e] followed by the P.M. and the other man. The mysterious looking boxes turn out to be boxes of soap and candles the innocent articles of Christianity the air was tainted with the odor of murren tallow. So after a thorough search each pocketed a cake of soap to wash away this memory of the Soap factory charge—and left for the cars—which were now ready to start—All day we rooled through a picturesque land—beautiful for flocks and heards—hills full of milk—and vallies rich with honey—we plunged through deep cuts and round graceful curves and under deep mountain tunnels—at last we came just at sun set to the broken bridge at Goose Creek. Where we found two Companies of O.V.M. in camp—it was a beautiful place the mountains rose on either side covered with brave old trees and gigantic ledg[e]s—before them a deep valley where[e] Goose Creek winds its way in the most crooked [manor?]—crooked and curving away along the line of the rail road till it is spaned by 23 bridges—


17 Presumably Ohio Volunteer Militia.
The Ohio Buckeyes and Ind Hoos’ers were mutually glad to meet—some found friends—all were curious to know where we were from—what kind of guns we had—how long we were "in"—for a half hour the boys would talk and the officers were planning to get us over. The Pipe Major felt very weary—and hungry—asking a Buckeye for something to eat he handed the F.M. a loaf of bread and a handful of sugar—and the[n] invited him—one side to ask a blessing from his canteen—means to drink adulterated alcohol from an india rubber bag. It was now quite dark—the whipper—will—could be heard from the valley and along the mountain side—

There was but one way to cross or rather to get to the train of cars which were on the other side, and that was by marching 1/2 mile round the side of the mountain by a little by path. The F.M. started round with his knapsack—the mountain path was rough and the night dark—he first alighted down in the mud—next stumbled over the side of the path and rooled some 20 ft down among the bushes—which protected him from going on down the precipice into the foaming creek below—next he lost his way and gave up almost, feeling too extremely weary to step further—after resting an hour

...
he straggled on—falling into a little branch and getting thoroughly wet and at last making the train on the other side—and was soon sound asleep. Next morning we found that the men had succeeded through the night in bringing over all the tents, stores, horses &c—and that we were ready to move—away we flew—under more tunnels—and through deeper cuts—at last we were drawing near Grafton. At every little town the boys were kindly treated—bread and butter—milk &c were freely given by the Union ladies.

Through the quiet old town of Clarksburg—we received lively demonstration of joy from the people.

At Flemington many pretty girls came down to the cars—dressed in white and wearing very neat Union colored aprons—they gave bouquets of flowers to the soldiers—and seemed quite free and cordial in their good wishes. Just as the cars were about leaving the F.M. asked a black-eyed pretty girl—for her Union apron—which she at once pulled off and handed him—the design was original—and very tastefully made up—Ye F.M. keeps the apron as a memento—the name written very nicely in one corner is “Abbie Fleming”

“Flemington”
“Taylor Co Va”

The apron has one large star [star] in the center of the field which is a Union shield the star is divided and upon one part of the star is written “Eastern Va”—the other detached part—“Western Va”

6th June At four P.M. we arrived at Webster—where we found some of our regiment—and learned that Co C. [Crittenden] had just gone on to Grafton—having just returned from Philippi—At 5 PM we came to the little town of Grafton—the crossing of the B & O RR with the Wheeling & Parkersburg road. Here we fou[n]d Co C. and Gen [Thomas A.] Morris and Staff. We were all glad to meet once more—and learn the adventures of each since our detachment at Harmer.

The same night 3 companies were ordered back to Philippi—while the remainder took possession of an old house—at Fetterman near the river.

7th June. We went into camp on a most beautiful plain on the top of a ridge overlooking Grafton—this was the prettiest camp ground yet occupied by our troops—Nothing of interest occurred taking a few sessonists now and then swearing the[m] in—scouting &c occupied the time.

[June] 8 The Ohio artillery encamp beside us—Capt Baldwin is detached to Webster—Lieut Col Prather is in command of that place.

[June] 9th Sundy We went with Capt [Hagerman] Tripp on a scout—over by Prunty town. We (20 of us)—road hard well armed through a beautiful country—we scared the natives—and got a good supper—advised two sessonists to come to head quarters and take the oath of allegiance to U.S. and then road back to camp.

[June] 10th Drilling goes on in camp—the natives come in and bring[ing] eggs milk butter chickens &c. We are not well and finally go to Webster with Capt Baldwin.

[June] 12 Webster is a dull little place on the Parkersburg R.R.—it was built of little frame houses—and a few stables—where a few women and children now live. Husband[s] gone to the Sesession army—Plenty of good apple brandy to drink.

[June] 18th We received a despatch from Gen. Morris—saying Look out for a man calling himself Arnit[supposed to be going to Richmond with dispatches—Col Crittenden

---

18 The Sixth through the Eleventh regiments, as explained in note 6, comprised Indiana’s quota of three-month men at the beginning of the Civil War. These six regiments constituted the First Brigade, Indiana Volunteers, under the command of Brigadier General Thomas A. Morris. Indiana, Report of the Adjutant General, I, 9.

19 Captain of Company G, Sixth Regiment. Ibid., II, 5.
Capt Baldwin Capt [Alois O.] Bachman20 Ye Pipe Major and two privates (After we had stationed men at various points) took car and went to Bridgeport— Here we sent out our two privates—to look for Arnett while Bachman went to the Bar room. Capt Baldwin and Ye Pipe Major went down to a mill—where Cap[e] Chapin lived—who was a noted Sesessionest. as we walked up to the hill we saw him talking with another man—who walked away as we approached.— Capt Chapin turned pale when he learned that we came to arrest him—but wished to argue the matter—which he was not allowed—

When we returned to Bridgeport we found our two men had arrested Mr Arnett—and were just bring[g]ing him in. he drove up to the door of the little Tavern—in a new covered buggy—and a fine horse—he is a large man with red hair—freckled face usually red—but now rather white— he tried to appr[oi]r uncor[n]sed shook hands with the Col—and talked—freely—after dinner—we took him to a private room an[d] searched him from head to foot but found no papers except business letters to Richmond. We sent him on to Clarksburg—in care of Orderly Sergt Williams21—to telegraph Gen Morris the result of the Capture.

We heard that Ex Gov [Joseph] Jo[h]nson22 had arrived home the night before—and as he is a Col of the rebel army it was very desirable to capture him.

Col C. orderd twelve men stationed round the field—and Capt B. & B. and Fife Major—under ordr of Col C. approached the fine old Count[r]y Mans[i]on of the Ex Gov

20 Captain of Company K, Sixth Regiment. Ibid., II, 6.
21 Probably First Sergeant William H. Williams, Company A, Sixth Regiment. Ibid., IV, 2.
22 Presumably Joseph Johnson, who was governor of Virginia in the 1850's.
Col C. was in the parlor—Capt Bachman—and the F.M. stood back looking at the gallant Capt Baldwin who in his confusion was bowing and blushing a retreat. We did not find Col Jonson and returned to the town. the Fife Major swearing for one, never to go hunting through peoples houses when the ladies are at home. No wonder Miss Jonson was so insulted—for the man we arrested in the morning was her lover—(Capt. Chapin)

We took the cars and landed at Clarksburg—where we found orders to keep Arnett—and bring him to Grafton.

We arrived at the Old fashioned Tavern at 5 P.M. Glad to throw off our swords and revolvers—Coats and boots—refresh our selves with an old Va Mint Julip—and were carefully attended by "Samson" the biggest blackest and politest of niggers—here we made ourselves comfortable—by a good

Carefully attended by "Samson" the biggest blackest and politest of niggers—here we made ourselves comfortable—by a good

supper—and the[n] took a stroll round the beautiful old town—in the evening we were called upon by some of the Union men who sat a long time talked dryly and at last drank a great deal of whiskey and went to bed. The next day we went back to Grafton.

June 16. The Fife Major was at Webster. Col C. came over—with Lieut [Josiah H.] Andrews and Senitor Shanks\(^\text{23}\)—of the eleventh district Ind (now on his way to Washington.) and were going over to Philippi—The Senitor found it hard work to find a horse. Never was man better named

\(^{23}\) John Peter Cleaver Shanks was born a Virginian but practiced law in Indiana. He was elected to Congress as Republican representative from Indiana, 1861-1863, and 1867-1875. Shanks also served the Union army as an officer during the Civil War. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1946* (Washington, 1946), 1799.
a soldier was sitting by the road side—with a sore foot—the
Senator Shanks pulld a fine pocket handkerchief from his
brest and magnanimously threw it down to the tired fellow
saying "tie it up with this"

We arrived at Philippi at 2 P.M., where all the boys of
our detachment were glad to see us—The Senator and I
dined with Capt [Thomas J.] Harrison.4

We found the Ohio boys throwing up barricades—
The Col—and F.M. paid off the men of the detachment
5 dollar each—an advance—on their pay—At night Col C
and F.M. slept together at Nighkirks and in the morning
we found the bridges and roads had been barricaded in the
night

[June] 17th The Fife Major is detached for medical
duties—to the detachment at Philippi—

Philippi.
The town of Philippi is beautifully situated on the vally
river [the Tygart] locked in by hills—the county seat of
Barbour Co. Western Va

The rebels had been driven from Grafton to Webster
five miles distant—and they moved from Webster 12 miles
further to Philippi—here they were in camp about 1500—
when they were attacked by the Federal forces—

It had been a stormy Sunday and night came in—with a
tornado—The 6th Ind Reg had traveld two days in box
barns on short fare—when they arrived at Webster it was
near night—orders came to march on Philippi—although
the men were weary, the prospect of [a] fight stimulated them—
and with gallant Col Crittenden walking before them—they
marched that twelve miles—on that black and stormy night—
and morning—just day brake found them on the top of the
high hill—at the north of and overlooking the town.
The Ohio artily was at their side—at this moment—
an old woman from a neighboring farm house fired a pistol—
which was repeated by the Sentinels of the rebel camp—which
now becomes a lively scene—The gunner sees a man in
the town below enter a stable—which is one and a half miles
off and sights his gun upon him—fires—and a small hole
made by the six pounder tells the accurate sight of the artily
and poor Mr Hanger who had far better have been hung—
loses a leg

4 Captain of Company D, Sixth Regiment. Indiana, Report of the
Adjutant General, II, 3.
June 20th Tuesday night Capt Tripp came with his scouts to Philippi Maj Garber took command and invited the acting asst. Sug’n. [Surgeon] to go with them the night was beautiful. We rode slowly and silently to within two miles of the rebel camp at Belington [Belington], 12 miles south of Philippi—here we drove in the pickets of the enemy and prepared to charge on their camp. We had 60 men. When the order to charge came many of the men trembled there in the pale moonlight on the top of that hill for we supposed the enemy thick on each side of the way. We felt a little chilling—and a dryness of the mouth till we had floundered along among the frightend men and horses a quarter of a mile [mile?]—when the enemy fired upon our advance guard.

Then we felt exhilarated—Hashesh Chloroform or Ether never made us feel more wildly exhilarated—we plunged forward—and soon routed the Enemy—and then slowly returned home. We must say but six men char[ged] for Capt Tripp—though charged afterward by some with cowardice was cool—and would not risk his men further—his alowness was caution—not fear.

Two of our men at the first fire turned toward Philippi and did not stop till they had told to the camp—that we were all slaughtered and none left but them to tell the story.

When we got back every man was waiting on his arms for our return—and a shout went up—when we returned all well—and only two horses wounded slightly.

[June] 21 We were orderd to head qr to report—
[June] 27 On the 27th June a man was wanted to visit the rebel camp to make a reconisance and draw a plan of the fortifications. The F. Major offered his services—and finally it was decided he should go— He left the head qr at 9 P.M. Thursday. With a rough but bright specimen of Virginia country man as a guide—Dehart Wilson by name. Col Crittenden furnished horses for us to ride as far as Buchanon [Buckhannon] bridge—The Guide and Spy were both drest like very ordinary farmers.

At Buchanon bridge we left our horses with the man who came to take them back.

---

We marched on—over a good pike for four miles quick time without talking the moon shining brightly—lighting up the gloomy arches of the forest.

---

We walked carefully lest we should arouse the scouts of the enemy who frequent[ly] come out on this road. We now left the road and took across the farms to the west—the heavy dew on the leaves making us thoroughly wet. Soon we struck a little path in the woods where we found tracks of horses—just made. Every few moments we listened to hear their step but could not. Nothing was said during the march till near morning when the guide showed signs of confusion—and at last confessed that we were out of the course some five miles. We then turned to the east and journeyed [till?] day break when we came to a little farm house and waking up the farmer he gave us the direction to find the path leading to “Coon Carpenters”. We now went South over the most difficult rocky hills—and thick under-brush—till we came to “Middle fork” river—which is a mad dashing roaring stream falling over a bed of huge boulders—with high wooded & rocky bluffs rising on each side—here we washed our faces—eat some parched corn and hard bread—then crossed the river by jumping from stone to stone—after getting over the river and up a high hill we
went on up a hill, along fields and were just crossing a
deadening when we saw a man some 60 yards ahead coming
toward us. He looked very pale and tried to avoid us but we
called him & found him an ignorant Irishman. He advised
us not to go further on that road or we would be taken by
the scouts. We now took the road to a Dutch farmers—
coming around his field we came up to his cabin in the rear—
two half yellow half black half starved long eared baying coon
dogs came out at us—and their barking called Mrs Aurora
bach to the Caben door—where she took up a position which she
seemed inclined to hold. She was six feet high with a long
thin face—the color of putty she had three long front
Teeth—blackened with smoke and calomel—she had two little
flat curls of hair on each tempel which was all she had on
her head. A brown clay pipe up side down with a long cane
stem was held tightly between her snags—her eyes exposed
a large field of white—her frame was only a frame for she
was near skeliton—

She was frighted beyond speaking and finally after
looking hard at us for some time s[ajid] “Who are you”
We did not tell her but asked for the man of the house—
she said “I reckon you don’t mean to hurt him” We didn’t
wish to hurt him. She pointed to a field—where we soon
found him ploughing corn with an old soire mare—a little
boy on the fence to watch—who ran as soon as he saw us—

Old Aurora—was a quiet old Dutchman—as ugly
as his wife—who he sais he married not for looks but for
service. The old man asked us to stay for break fast but
we declined, and put right on—for “Coon Carpenters” We
arrived here about 7 o clock AM. Coon and his son were
setting on the porch—what they had to talk of I cant tell—
they stared at us when we came up—but Wilson was an old
friend—and told them that we were “all right.” Then fol-
lowed the usual questions—as to what was doing at Philippi—
and what would be done—and then laugh over the flight of
the Sesex[sionists] from there—
[With this sketch, Fletcher's diary ends.]