Documents

Corporal Harvey W. Wiley’s Civil War Diary

William L. Fox

With ample justification Stewart Holbrook declared in his book, *Lost Men of American History*, that Harvey W. Wiley was one of the most influential Americans of the twentieth century. This judgment is based upon Wiley’s successful efforts, as chief of the Bureau of Chemistry of the United States Department of Agriculture, to obtain the enactment of the Pure Food and Drugs Act of 1906 and to arouse public consciousness of the importance of honest labeling. “American stomachs and insides generally have been better than they would have been had Wiley not lived and labored.”

Almost half of Wiley’s life was spent in Indiana, where he was born October 18, 1844, on a farm in Jefferson County, about six miles from the Ohio River. When Fort Sumter was attacked in 1861, he was between sixteen and seventeen years old and was therefore too young to enlist unless he falsified his age. In his autobiography, which was published shortly before his death, Wiley related: “I was a big husky youth, and could easily have passed for eighteen, but because of my parental training in truthfulness I would not swear falsely as to my age.” His youth, however, did not prevent him from enrolling, along with his father, in a local cavalry company of the Indiana Legion, a home guard organization. General John Morgan’s raids into Indiana in July, 1863, gave the Legion an opportunity to see some action, and Wiley’s company joined in the pursuit of Morgan, who was able, however, to reach Ohio before the Legion could catch him.

In April, 1863, Wiley informed his father that he wished to go to college. Having received his father’s consent, he went to Hanover, but his career there was interrupted in 1864 when he, along with some other Hanover students, en-
listed in a volunteer regiment for a period of one hundred days.

According to its record, Company I, 137th Regiment, Indiana Volunteer Infantry, in which Corporal Wiley served, was recruited in Jefferson County by Page J. Pickrell, Jonathan T. Summers, Alexander C. Thor, and John W. Verry. On May 14, 1864, it went into Camp Carrington at Indianapolis; and on the following day Pickrell was elected captain, Summers first lieutenant, and Thor second lieutenant. Wiley's company spent almost all of its active service at Tullahoma, Tennessee, an important point on the railroad connecting General William T. Sherman's army with the North. Here was a supply depot which had to be protected.

In his diary Wiley recorded his impressions about Tullahoma, its people, and its military importance. An intelligent observer, he also commented on such topics as the peculiarities of the local weather and terrain, picket duty, camp morals, correspondence with his family, his case of measles, and a joyful Fourth of July picnic. The period covered by the diary begins with the entry for May 30 and concludes with that of September 17, 1864.

After his discharge from military service, Wiley returned to his father's farm and a few months later returned to Hanover, from which he graduated in 1867. He died in Washington, D.C., on June 30, 1930, the twenty-fourth anniversary of the signing into law of the Pure Food and Drugs Act. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. On his coat was pinned his G.A.R. badge and in his casket was placed his old Civil War forage cap.

**Harvey W. Wiley Diary, 1864**

May 30th

On[c]e more I begin my old habit of keeping [a]

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*Harvey W. Wiley Papers (MSS in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.). In the official records of Indiana Wiley's name does not appear on the roster of enlisted men for Company I, although a Harvey Wiley appears in the list for Company B. Furthermore, the officers mentioned in the Wiley papers are those listed in the official records for Company B; they were commissioned on May 14. All members of Company B came from Jefferson County. See Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana (8 vols., Indianapolis, 1865-1869), III (1866), 312, and VII (1867), 392-394, 401-402.*

*Wiley Papers. To make the entries easier to read, punctuation and paragraphing have been changed; the spelling, however, remains unchanged. No entire entry has been omitted, but parts which were thought to be of little interest, such as references to weather, were left out.

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*8 o'clock P.M.

Taps have just sounded for going to bed, and I am laying in my bunk already for the blowing out of the lights which will be in a few minutes.

Elliot's is my roommate, and we have a first-rate bed prepared for the night. Two good rubber blankets, two small
French tents under us and two army blankets over us. We will sleep sounder than any two feather-bed recruits in the land. The soldier’s life is truly desirable. The excitement and expectation fully compensates for all the hardships and a consciousness of doing what we ought to is enough consolation but enough for one day.

Taylor Barracks

May 31

It is nearly dinner time now, and we have not left here yet and more than that we have no orders to go as I know of. The orders are very strict here. Even a Colonel can’t get out without a pass, and it is next to impossible for any one without shoulder straps to get a pass. I am sorry of this; for I wanted to go down to town and get some Photographs struck off before my uniform get soiled, but I guess I can’t succeed.

This is a delightful day neither too hot nor too cold. With a bright sunshine giving life and vigor to everything. The quarters are tastefully arranged. A nice yard thickly set with blue grass too each row of barracks. I was somewhat surprised on coming here at the absence of hills such as I was accustomed to see along the river. The country is apparently level on both sides of the river as far as you can see.

Dinner is now ready. All our rations are cooked for us here by a brigade of darkies. All we have to do is to go after them and then devour as much as possible.

8 P.M.

We have orders to march in one hour, but I haven’t much faith in their being carried out today. It always takes so long to get a Reg’t. started even after the[y] receive the direct order to go. I seen a new part of the ‘Elephant’ today viz. a squad of Negro6 soldiers drilling. They did a great deal better than many white troops I have seen with the same opportunities. Their instructor was also an American citizen of African descent. There is another regiment of Indiana troops here now. The 198 arrived yesterday afternoon. There is also one company of veteran troops in camp and I have

6 Wiley capitalized the word Negro throughout his diary, although it was not customary to do so. Perhaps he was influenced by his father’s abolitionist thinking.

heard some say 400 censcripts, but I haven’t seen the latter named around as yet and am inclined to doubt its existence here.

Wednesday, June 1st

As I expected, the command for us to remove our quarter[s] to some more Southern clime was not carried into execution yesterday; and at ten o’clock A.M., the time of the present writing, we are still here. The day being very warm I have left my bunk and am laying in the shade of the camp fence enjoying myself hugely. We may leave here today, but I think it is rather doubtful. All I hate about being in camp here is that I don’t have any chance of look[jng] around. The fence is built of boards and very high. So you can’t see anything but a few spires of some of the churches or other buildings of the city and a few of the surrounding trees.

The boys have a heap of fun at each other’s expense, perpetrating all manner of jokes on the unsuspecting. There is rarely any ill-will manifested at any kind of a sell, no matter how bad the victim has been fooled.

There are so many troops in camp now that we have a great deal of trouble in getting our ration at the proper time. We had to wait until nearly eight o’clock this morning for our breakfast, and when it did come the coffee was simply a little colored warm water “but sich is life.”

Thursday, June 2

Bowling Green, Ky.

We are on the train on the way to Nashville. We have stopped here for a few minutes. We are just startings[sic]. So I will have to quit. We left Louisville about sundown last night and have had a very pleasant ride so far. We are now just inside of the Tenn. line. Have stopped along side of a train of rebel prisoners going north. They are as hard a looking set as you could find anywhere without uniforms, blankets or anything else. Our boys are now holding a confab with them on matters and things in general.

4½ o’clock P.M. Soldiers’ home, Nashville, Ten[n]. We arrived safely here about half after two and were marched out on the commons where we had intended to have encamped for the night, but a violent rainstorm arose, which our commanders with great strategy suffered us to remain
in untill it was pretty well expended; and then as there was not one of us who knew how to pitch his tent, they wisely concluded to bring us here.

The house was formerly a hotel built and owned by the rebel General Zollicoffer. Our whole Reg’t. is quartered in it and plenty of room for two or three more.

All the way, from a few miles this side of Louisville, to 10 or 11 miles of here the clay was of the deepest red; and the road at a distance gave the appearance of being covered with tan bark. Another uncommon thing was the almost universal prevalence of the sassafras shrub, thousands of acres of improved land being covered with it. I saw many fields planted in corn, in which I could hardly see the ground. I didn’t see a school house on the whole route. Every four or five miles there would be a fine house, the residence of some wealthy planter. In the distance a row of Negro quarters and now and then a low dirty hovel, surrounded by half naked little children and a reg’t. or two of dogs, marked the dwelling place of the “poor white trash.”

At every bridge there is a stockade and a small guard to protect them from being burned by the Rebels. A single company of men in one of these stockades can defend themselves against three times there number with ease.

At different places along the road are groups of refugees, the most dejected and abandoned people that I ever saw. They have made themselves all kinds of shelters. Often the hovels are simply made as big square as clapboards. Contraband are also numerous, and after we get into Tenn. the only happy looking people that I saw.

Nashville has once probably been a pretty town and is yet from a distance. The houses are scattered over a great distance, and the only place that there is any solidity of building is north & west of the state house, which is on a high hill about in the center of the corporation. The hill on which the statehouse is situated along with every other hill in the vicinity of the city is strongly fortified. You may think there is some railroading done at the Union Depot at Indianapolis.

but it is nothing to what is going on here. All the supplies, recruits, reinforcements, etc. for Gen. Sherman’s army are shipped from here. And there are now as many as twenty-five engines in counting distance and more arriving and departing continually.

Nashville is emphatically a military town. Everything bears the marks of the United States. You see nothing but U.S. wagons on the streets, U.S. cars at the depots, U.S. houses made out of all the business houses in town, U.S. horses everywhere and U.S. soldiers everywhere else.

All around the city except a little space to the North are camps or forts. I can’t form any idea, though, how many troops there are here.

Friday, June 3

There was nothing of importance transpired today. Still rainy and muddy with no prospect of clearing up. Two of our companies left this afternoon for the front of some place between here and there. It is reported that our Reg’t. is to be scattered in all directions. Our company is to leave for some point south in the morning. Some say for Tullahoma.

Saturday, June 4

Tullahoma, Ten[n].

We left Nashville this morning about 6 o’clock on the Nashville and Chattanooga R.R. and arrived here 75 miles from Nashville at 3 o’clock P.M.

The first thing of interest after leaving Nashville was the soldiers’ cemetery in the southern suburbs of the city. Here sleep thousand[s] of brave boys laying as close together as possible, each grave marked with a nice white board at the head & foot, marked with the name, Reg’t. and company. This was the first thing that I have seen since I left home that made me feel bad. As one approached the battlefield of Stone River, 31 miles from Nashville, everyone was on the “qui vive” to see everything seeable. Three or 4 miles from the main battlefield the marks of the struggle became evident. Head now and then groups of graves marked where skirmishers

8 Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer (1812-1862), Confederate officer, had been a political power in Tennessee before the war. According to Edd W. Parks, Zollicoffer “as a state-rights Whig... worked steadily for peace and understanding between the sections.” Parks, Felix Kirk Zollicoffer,” Dictionary of American Biography, XX, 659-660.

9 William T. Sherman (1820-1891), at this time a brigadier general in the Union army. He was promoted to major general in August, 1864.

had fallen. As soon, however, as we crossed Stone River, you could easily perceive that the fight had been in earnest. Trees were twisted about in all directions, and the bark was peeled off from the bottom up as high as 20 or 25 feet with musket balls. Long lines of graves show where the Union and Rebel dead are buried. There is a monument between the railroad and pike where the hottest fight was and where the most men were killed. Although I knew very well that the battle of Stone River was fought on the ground, yet I could not realize them, nor cannot yet, that the battle was fought here.

Murffreesborough is considerable a town. The greatest attractions about, however, is the fortifications which are truly formidable. The[y] were begun by Bragg before the battle of Stone River and afterwards completed by Rosecrans. I don't know how strong they are comparatively, but I should hate to be one of those who would have to storm them. Many other traces of battle are visible which it is not necessary to mention.

Sunday, June 5

I am detailed for patrol duty today. All I have to do is every 3d two hours to walk slowly through the town & camp, preserve order, arrest suspicious looking individuals, etc. The duty is light, and all I don't like about it is getting up in the night.

When the sun shines out brightly here, it is easy to realize you are in a southern clime. It is about as hot here now as it ever gets in Indiana. As I get to stay in the shade most of the time, however, I do not feel the full effects of it.

Monday, June 6

This is the first day that I have not been well. Have only an attack, though of the inevitable camp diarrheah, which I can starve out in twenty-four hours. I was relieved from patrol duty at 8 o'clock and will not be on again probably for several days.

Tullahoma consists of some half dozen, plain, dwelling houses and one hotel, now used as a hospital. There is not one male citizen in town and only about half a dozen female


inhabitants except contrabands of which there is a considerable number. All the men are either in the Rebel or Union armies or else bushwhacking around the country. This was formerly considerable of a place, having 1500 inhabitants; but the houses have all been destroyed except the number above stated, and the inhabitants have dwindled down probably to less than 100 Whites and Negroes.

Tuesday, June 7

There was a nice rain beginning about noon today, which materially reduced the temperature of the atmosphere. There are still signs of more rain tonight. It is, however, not to be dreaded as our tents do not leak worth mentioning.

I am well again today, the starving process having proved to be a complete cure. Others that were not as sick are yet invalids, many of them worse. Nevertheless, medicine is still in requisition and taken with a faith that cannot be accounted for.

Tullahoma is said to be built on very high ground, 1700 feet above the state house in Nashville. The only objection I have to the situation is the scarcity of water. The wells are very deep and the continual drawing keeps them muddy. There is only one little creek some half mile away where there is any chance to bathe.

Wednesday, June 8th

Expected to go on duty today but was agreeably disappointed. The Lieut said I was to go on a surveying expedition, but it has not started yet. I hope I will get to go with it if there is one.

We now have four drill per day. Also dress parade at 7 o'clock in the evening. The 23 M's. which has been encamped here for sometime left for the front this morning. The only troops here now besides our Reg't., are the 4th Ky. Battery and one Co. of the 71 O[hio]. If the Rebs want to make an attack on us, now is the time for them to pitch in. I hardly believe, though, that there will ever be an attack here; for there could be several thousand troops here in a few hours.

Quite a sad accident occurred in camp this afternoon. Our second Lieut. accidentally killed the Orderly Sergeant of the Co. quartered next to us with his revolver. Supposing all were out, he playfully pointed it at him, telling him that he intended to shoot him. The remark proved only too true, and
he immediately expired with a ball through his brain. The Lieut. who was the innocent cause of the murder delivered himself up but was released on parole and allowed the privileges of the camp.

Thursday, June 9th

It is considerably cooler too day, wind N.W. with broken clouds obscuring the sun, rendering the atmosphere remarkably pleasant.

If I was to stay in the army long, I would learn to be an early riser; for we have to be up every morning at half past four or else go on extra duty the rest of the day. There are also eight roll calls per day, at every one of which those not on duty must answer to their names. On account of this, the men do not have any opportunity to stroll away from camp.

I was detailed to go to Chattanooga, but owing to the fact that I was previously detailed for the survey which may start any time I was not allowed to go. I think, however, I will yet get to go to Chattanooga. If it is not the case, I will be greatly disappointed.

The companies of the Reg’t., were lettered today. Our Company is I. After we were lettered, we had to move our quarters so that we could take the same position in camp that we would occupy in the Reg’t. No letter from home yet.

Tullahoma, Tenn.
Monday, June 15th

I am on picket duty for the first time yet. No one is allowed to travel here without a pass. Such things appear a little strange at first, but we soon get used to it. But up at home if we had to get a pass every time we went to Madison or Kent, it would be strange indeed.

From passers by this morning I have learned the name of the county that we are in, said name being “Coffee.” I asked several about it so as to be sure, and some of them were so ignorant that they didn’t know.

The inhabitants almost without exception are dressed in the irrepressible “Butternut.” Some few, however, have their “jeans” colored gray in imitation of the Rebel uniform.

A fellow just now came along who wanted to go and take the “oath.” I sent one of the pickets along with him for that purpose. After he takes the “oath” he can get a pass to

go at large, for ten days after that time is out he either has to get it renewed or else stay at home, just as he pleases. I have three men with me; and we will have to stand picket for twenty-four hours, keeping watch alternately.

Received a letter from home day before yesterday, which done me an immense amount of good as I hadn’t heard from the folks for over three weeks. I wouldn’t object too three or four letters a week from home. Wrote a letter home yesterday, which made two for one week.

I was down at the grave yard yesterday and saw two soldiers buried. One from Mo. and one from Ky. Owing to the hardness of the ground, the undertaker said that at the depth of four feet (the regulation depth for burying the dead) a body would never decay. Tis almost like encasing in solid rock.

I must wait now till something “turns up” so that I can continue the writing.

6 P.M.

I had expected that my supper would be sent out to me, but in this I was disappointed. But owing to a fortunate circumstance, I did not suffer. One of the boys hearing a disturbance out in the brush took his gun and went out to see if he could dis[5]cover the cause. In this he was eminently successful, said cause being about twenty pigs, wild and fat. The report of a musket was heard by us who had remained, soon after he had left the camp and then all was still. In dread suspense we awaited the final result, but were not long kept in doubt. In about half an [h]our our hero returned bearing as the fruits of his victory the hind quarters of a good sized [sic] pig. It evidently had no owner, for there was no mark of any kind about it. We immediately sent one of our number to camp for a frying pan and some salt, which being obtained, we immediately proceeded to get and eat our supper.

Tuesday, June 14th

8 o’clock A.M. Our time will soon be out. Now the relief is probably already on its way. During the night we saw “nary [a] Reb” nor no other person. If it just wasn’t for staying awake, I would just about as leave stand picket as not.

The citizens say they scarcely ever knew such cold weather in the summertime as there is here now. I know by sad experience that the nights are extremely chilly and before morning without good covering are really uncomfortable.
Thursday, June 16th
5 o'clock in the morning
I was on picket again last night and yesterday and will be until 9 o'clock today. Am just opposite where I was the other time on the same road. Yesterday morning the picket guard was doubled and very stringent instructions were given them not to let any one pass in the day time without a pass and at night without the countersign. These instructions were rigidly enforced along the ground where I was on duty.

At this post there are 1 Lieut. & 10 men, three men remaining on duty at a time. About the only events of interest transpiring here are the capturing and shooting of "bushwhackers," some being shot nearly every day. The authorities seem to think this the only way of putting a stop to such practices and no doubt it is. Yet it seems like peculiar operations to me when in the evening late I hear a volley of musketry and know that one or more Rebels are no more. Yet these are every day occurrences and have almost ceased to be talked about.

The two Reg’ts. of Tenn. Cav. that are camped here, which bring in these fellows, kill a great many on the spot where they are captured without any form of trial what ever. The most of them are East Tennesseans and have had their property destroyed and their friends slain by the Rebels. If they had their way about it, they would show no quarter; but they are restrained in some degree by their officers.

Friday, June 17
Considerably warmer today, and I am glad of it, not because I would wish the days to be warmer so much as the nights. These have been continuously cool for the last week or two, causing great discomfort among the pickets.

Am on picket again today. Was not very well this morning but feel better now. This is not as nice a place for a picket post as the others I have been on. There is only a single tree for a shade, and it keeps us moving all the time to keep pace with the shadow. The heat now, however, is less intense for the "Bright luminary of day" is sinking in all the magnificence of superabundant levelness in the western horizon, tinging all nature with unutterable beauty sublimity. (N.B. This is poetical.) I think now I had better quit after such an outburst.

Saturday Morn., June 18th
I hear the drums beating at camp for guard mounting. So we have a prospect of being relieved very soon. The greatest objection I have to this post is its proximity to the small pox hospital, the distance being not more than fifty yards. The convalescents are also taking the liberty to run around at large with their polluted clothes. This is another source of anger to the sentinels stationed here.

Monday, June 20
A pleasant evening this, after a sultry day, threatening a storm the time but never executing. And even now a black rain cloud in the east forbodes by its occasional mutterings, a violent storm in some portion of our distracted country. But that does not in the least disturb me; for with my physical system in a good condition, as good at least as could be expected in camp, I can lose myself as it were in my mental being and my mind free from all care of bodily things can soar untrammled in the inexhaustible fields of thought and gather there material for present and future use! Now "ain't that the next thing to the poetical?" Let unprejudiced minds decide.

Well the rain has begun sure enough and with an energy that reminds us of high creeks and orders for children to remain at the house untill further orders and when at last those order[s] came and we were permitted, under an escort of the "Old Folks," to go and see the "raging of the waters" it was after its bulk was considerably reduced, our ardor considerably cooled, and our patience considerably worried; and when we returned, it was only as disappointed, wet, and illhumored progenies. Of [course] there were some few exceptions to this general rule, all of which exceptions will ever be remembered with pleasure.

Yesterday was Sunday. In camp at ten o'clock A.M. there was a general inspection of quarters, arms, accouterments, etc. At half past 3 in the afternoon, the Chaplin preached a first-rate sermon, which was listened too attentively by some two or three hundred of the Reg’t. His talk was practical; and if the soldiers would all take his advice, what a different Reg’t. [we] would have.

Tuesday, June 21
It is now dusk, almost dark. Can hardly see to write. This picket post No. 7 is the most dreary and desolate looking
position I have been on yet, not a road, by-path, or foot print to remind one of civilization, nothing but bushes, briers an[d] long grass to make up the immediate landscape with a dense forest for the remote. Altogether the scenery is decidedly “pleasing.”

Wednesday, June 22

This is the first day of commencement exercises. I wouldn’t object to being there just a little while. But then circumstances forbid.

There is a good deal of wickedness in our Co, but compared with some others in the Reg’t it is saintly. Every time I go on duty, almost without exception, the other men are from other companies; and they are generaly so wicked that the most wicked of our Co. appear good in the comparison. The six men that are with me this time will take the premium for wickedness over all others with whom I have been associated.

. . . . . . .

Tullahoma, June 25

Got a long letter from home yesterday morning from Mocher, Sudie and Zwinge inclusive. It contained any amount of good. The same remarks will still apply to the weather that have been given it; for the last week or two, hot is no name for it, unless qualified by some very expressive adjective; and even that would fail to give an adequate idea of its violence. Experience alone can convey its burning.

My paper gave out yesterday, but I expect a supply from home in a few days as I have written for the folks to send me some, which no doubt they will do.

I went on picket again this morning but fortunately exchanged with a man that wanted to go with some of his comrades. So I took his place on patrol, which is much more pleasant than picket duty. I don’t go on duty now untill 1 o’clock P.M. ’Tis now a little after 9 A.M.

Monday, June 27

It’s very plain that if I don’t curtail my writing in some degree, my book will be full ere my time is half out. In such an emergency it would be necessary for me to “change my base” or else execute a “flank movement” or in case both of these fail, to do something else that will be sure to succeed.

There was something strange happened today, and that something was that I was left off [?] duty. When it had been as it usually has, I would have been placed on, it being the inevitable every other day.

Passed outside the lines today and exchanged coffee for milk. My stomach is in much better condition since I quit drinking coffee, and if I drink any more, it will only be in limited quantities.

. . . . . . .

Tuesday, June 28

I got a rich treat from home last night, a long letter from Father and Mother and a package containing an Independent and [a] Tribune, on which I have been feasting myself all day. The supplement to the Independent contained a rich sermon by the Rev. H. W. Beecher. If the folks would only send me such reading matter every [etc], it would be a great advantage.

I often wish I was a Botanist, for the shrubs and flowers of Coffee Co. as a general thing are entirely new to me. To be sure, we have the inevitable (speaking in common parlance) white blossom, & dog fennel are in great abundance here; but the majority of the wild flowers are unknown to me, both visibly and botanically. Huckleberries, blackberries, dewberries, cherries, etc. are in great abundance in the vicinity; but we have little chance of gathering them.

Friday, July 1st

Wrote a long letter to Father yesterday certuring him on his supposed Fremontism, containing eight pages.

This is really a pleasant day, at least on picket post No. 1 where I am stationed today. The weather has greatly moderated since the heavy rain day before yesterday. I think it must have rained in Indiana for the cloud came from that direction. Contrabands say all thunder storms here come from the North. This has proved to be true in what few I have witnessed.

. . . . . . .

There was a general muster and inspection of arms and accoutrements yesterday. We went on parade with knapsacks packed and every one prepared as if for a march and stood up in the hot sun two hours or more while the Col. inspected our arms.

Sunday, July 3
I could not help thinking of a year ago today when the fierce struggle of Gettysburg was raging in all its fury. With these thoughts working in my imagination and curtailling my common sense, I was incited to give effect to the "following effusive effusion:"

My thoughts recur on this bright day  
To a scene a year ago  
When our brave boys in stern array  
Were battling with the foe.  
The din of battle loud and strong  
Shook Pennsylvania's hills  
And the blood of patriots swept along  
Was reding [sic] many rills.  
A traitorous foe had dared to give  
A blow on freedom's trust  
And although patriots ceased to live  
Yet traitors bit the dust.  
Oh Gettysburg! can we forget  
The deed enacted there  
Nor can we ever cease regret  
The brave men now that were.  
Four thousand patriots brave and true  
For their country that day died  
And where they fell the honored dead  
Lay sleeping side by side.  
A monument now marks the place where  
Freedom fought and won  
Each silent hero 'neath its shade  
His work has nobly done.  
"Requiescat in pace"  
Ye heroes every one  
Another year the end may see  
Of the work so well begun.

Monday, July 4th
All hail the natal day of "The Great Republic." We welcome thee with joyful hearts and grateful feelings. We cannot cease to praise and admire the American Congress of 1776 that had the patriotism and moral courage to stand forth undismayed in the declaration and sustenance of our national independence. Then let "The wild bells ring out to the wild air." Let the cannons roar and boys shout and old men smile and soldiers fight all in honor of the great day rendered doubly dear in these late times by great victories in favor of those sustaining the principle for which the day is celebrated. The Declaration of Independence, the surrender of Vicksburgh, and the retreat of Lee from free territory—may they ever be remembered and commemorated by all good people.

But to particulars. I was wakened in the morning by the sound of cannon firing a national salute. Came off of duty at nine o'clock. Went to Headquarters and addressed by W. F. Fishback Esq., private 138th Reg't., a Dr. Somebody from Ill., Capt. Elliott from someplace else; but the nice part is to come.

During the day a small picnic party had been organized and after the military display, etc. the following named individuals got a pass outside the lines and retired to the "Big Spring" to enjoy themselves as best they might; G.M. Lodge, A.S. Peck, Andrew Aberdeen, A.D. Wilson, S.W. Elliott, H.W. Wiley— all of Hanover, Indiana.

On repairing to the destined spot we found a "Superbus Quercus" which spread its magnificent foliage in luxuriant abundance around its trunk, forming a pleasant shade on a beautiful plot of grass, forming every natural comfort necessary for the enjoyment of our party. Here we spread our table with earth's green canopy for a cloth and began immediately to prepare the military necessities that had been collected beforehand.

The scene which soon presented itself before us, was enough to make any patriot shed tears of gratitude (out of his mouth): pies raspberry, pies blackberry, pies huckleberry in profusion, rusks, butter, canned peaches, fresh berries, cream, white sugar, lemonade, etc. Willingly we undertook the part assigned to us, aye without a murmur; and complete was our victory. After the rich repast came the toasts and replies and volleys of wit and wisdom alternately broke forth from all parts of the circle. At last the time came for adjournment and we all returned to camp with light hearts and heavy...
stomachs. So passed my first 4th of July in a camp, more pleasant than it had ever before.

Friday, July 8th
The drums are beating now for guard mount. The duty comes lighter now on our Reg't, as 4 companies of the 138th are in camp.
A.S. Lee, 18 the man in the hospital from our own Co., died yesterday morning and will be buried at nine o'clock. His father was telegraphed for, several days before his death but has failed to arrive.

Sunday, July 10th
Got a letter from home this morning, which was due Friday but passed here and went on to Chattanooga and returned last night. I wrote a long letter to Lizzie 19 yesterday about military affairs. Wrote another to Mother last night and this morning.

Gen. Milroy 20 is to move his headquarters to Nashville. He and the staff are now waiting at the depot for the next uptrain.
There will be preaching at 3 o'clock this afternoon by a delegate of the Christian commission.

Thursday, July 14th
Our time is half out today, according to the count of the boys; and they are not apt to be wrong about such a matter as that. I returned from an expedition to Duck River yesterday. Went as a guard with a provision wagon. It is about 10 miles from here on a direct line, but some 12 or 14 by the wagon road. I saw some nice field[s] of corn in Duck River bottom, a great deal of it full grown and in silk. I had a good dinner at a house about half way between here and there, which was very acceptable to me and the others.
The 182 City Reg't. arrived here last night and are encamped about half a mile west of us. This arrival revives the rumors about our Reg't. leaving here, but I don't believe anymore of it than usual.

18 Alfred S. Lee, ibid., 398.
19 Lizzie was Wiley's oldest sister, Elizabeth Wiley Corbett.

Tuesday, July 19th
'Tis very near time for my breakfast to come around, but I can't see anyone coming with it yet. The other men on the post have had their breakfast a good while ago.
I have to report one of my men today for neglect of duty, for letting the Officer of the day ride nearly up to him without seeing him. It is the first time I have ever had such a thing to do.

Tuesday, July 26, 1864
The "very pleasant night" that I noticed in my last writing "haunts" me still. 21 It brought on a severe cold and in a few days an attack of measles, which I haven't gotten over yet. The measles broke out on me Sunday afternoon pretty thickly. They are just beginning to go away today, and I am right smart better but not able to go out of my tent yet.
Got a letter from Sadie this morning giving detailed accounts of home affairs. Our folks were just done cutting hay (July 22). Didn't say whether they had put it up or not, probably "or not." Will answer her letter tomorrow if I feel able.
I am indebted to the following of my comrades for special favors and attention during my sickness, S. W. Elliott, S. E. Hampton, Lew Ernst 22 and many others. They have my warmest thanks.

Thursday, July 28, 1864
I am entirely well of the measles but still have considerable cough and am very weak. Have an excellent appetite and get good things to eat. Have secured some potatoes and soda crackers, which together with the berries and other fruit we get, constitutes all an invalid could desire.

The boys are all out now on battalion drill and have left the tent to the flies and me, principally the flies.

21 On the night of July 18-19, Wiley slept on the ground without a blanket. Since he was on duty, he could not leave his post to obtain one.
22 The company roster indicates that there was a Private Lewis Ernst but no "Ernest" as Wiley wrote in his diary. In the official records of Indiana, this name is also listed in Company R, as is Solomon VII, 993.
Sunday Morning, July 31
This is the last day of July. Tomorrow I suppose our folks will go to the Negro Celebration. I was there last year, but had no idea I would be in Tullahoma a twelve month from then. But such is the fact, and I can't help of thinking where I will be a year hence. The chances are that if I am not drafted nor dead I will be in Indiana. But I cannot tell.

Tuesday, August 2
Yesterday was a very busy day in camp. The Surgeon had recommended a removal of our tents to the Parade ground for Sanitary purposes, thinking that they had remained in their former position long enough. Accordingly the movement began about 9 o'clock yesterday morning and is not finished yet. The "Modus operandi" was for as many to get around a shanty as possible and pick it up bodily and carry it to its new position. There was some hard lifting to do; but it is all done now and there is nothing left to do but clean up the new and old quarters, a task as great as carrying the shanties but not such hard work.

I go on duty tomorrow, [the] first time since I have been sick; but I feel "tantamount" to the undertaking.

Wednesday, Aug. 3, 5 P.M.
Headquarters Patrol
This is the first time I have been on duty since I was sick; and I am glad that I got on Patrol, for I can get to sleep in the guardhouse while off duty and thereby keep out of the almost inevitable rain which generally falls night & day.

There was one of the biggest storms today that there has been since we came here. The wind blew almost a hurricane and the rain fell in torrents for nearly an hour, completely drenching everything not well sheltered. Several of the tents were blown over, and most of them got wet inside.

I am getting along nicely with my Anatomy. Recite several pages daily to Sergt. Hampton, one of my most intimate friends and withal a medical student himself.

Sunday, August 7
There has been no big rain yet today, but from indications and precedents there will be. It has rained every day now for a week. Three of them have been very hard rains. The rest, little showers.

Had a peach cobbler for dinner too day. Peaches are becoming plenty but are yet very costly. The peaches we put in the cobbler costing 75 cts. Potatoes are $1.50 per busher [sic]. Apples are various prices according to quality.

I am on picket today. Post No. 5. First picket duty that I have done for a long time. So far, it is a nice day, some rainfall this morning but not enough to wet our clothes.

Wednesday, Aug. 10
I see I am very likely to lose my last writing if great care is not taken as it is torn by some accountable means. I'm at No. 5 again. [This] makes two times in succession on one post. There has already been one shower today and if appearances are not deceitful, the shower will be in the plural before morning.

I do much of my writing and reading on picket because I have nothing else to do then. In camp my other duties occupy a considerable portion of my time, but here I can give my individual attention to literary pursuits.

Had apple dumplings for dinner today, excellent in quality but rather poor in appearance, their apprenticeship in the camp kettle having given them rather a sable appearance.

Another big train of Rebs passed here today. I suppose nearly a thousand.

Monday, Aug. 15
This is the last writing I will do in this journal. I had thought it would be large enough to answer all my purposes for the "Hundred Days," but in this as in many other things in my life I have been mistaken. I can only say with Byron that "what is writ is writ" and shall neither regret nor exult over what is written.

Our sick are all to be sent home tomorrow as they could not well be sent with the Reg't.

There was quite an alarm here last night caused by someone firing his revolver at some other one. The long roll was beaten, and the reg't. turned out double quick.
This is all. Paper and sentimen[t] alike are at an end.

Tullahoma, Tenn.
Friday, Sep[t]. 9

Who would ever have thought that I would have pined an additional few leaves to my diary for the purpose of writing in this town at this late period. But by the kindness of my friend Wheeler we have been permitted to remain here till this late date. Wheeler cut our communications. On the 30 Aug., the day probably we would have started home had it not been for his unpleasant proximity, he tore up a good deal of the track between here and Murfreesboro; but the principal damage he did to the road was between that point and Nashville. Just how much damage he did do, we do not know here yet as communication has not been reestablished and there is no telling when it will be. This Wheeler raid has been considerable of a bore on us, for we are shut off from all the world except Sherman's army, which by the way we have good news from.

. . . . . . . .

I have not been well for a fortnight past. My stomach out of order some way. Am better now than I have been.

Tullahoma, Sep[t]. 10

There was great joy in camp yesterday caused by the arrival of the mail from Nashville, the first news we had had from christen-dom for a long time. The mail was hauled down from Nashville to Murfreesboro in wagons and thence here by rail. I got one letter from Sudie Morgan, written from Pine Prowe, but where that is I don't pretend to know. I had expected a letter from home by the first mail that came through, but in this I was disappointed. Today, however, the road is opened through to Nashville and there has already two trains gone up; and there will be a train going south at six o'clock this afternoon and very likely there will be another mail and a letter from home, at least I hope so.

I have not written any letters yet since the raid because there has been no chance to send them out, but I believe the mails will go out regular after today. So I have a notion to write home either today or tomorrow to let the folks know I am still in the land of the living. There is no telling when we will start home. There are no signs of moving yet although there is a Reg't here (the 59 Ind.) that does part of our duty. We may leave by the 15th but not sooner.

Tullahoma, Sep[t]. 14

It is just four months today since we went into camp. The Hundred Day service is fast running into "for three years unless sooner discharged" and the boys are grumbling about it considerably. They think now that the road is opened and their time out, they should be sent home; and all the red tape from Gen. Milroy down to the Lieuts. of the companies receive a full share of blame for our detention. But Col. Robinson gets a double portion of anathemas. It is reported, with I don't know how much truth, that he offered the services of the Reg't for another month. If the boys find out certainly that he did do [this], they will love him a great deal better than they do now, which is extraordinarily well.

We have beautiful weather here now, bright pleasant days and beautiful moonlight nights. So inviting indeed are both day & night that it makes one wish himself "out on the railroad sailing" towards the Christian land of Indiana, for such I must call it after living for nearly four months in this half-civilised and wholly demoralised clime called Tennessee. But such longings must not be indulged in or else I will be suspicious on being homesick, and I do not wish to make any such impression.

War Trace, Tenn.
Thursday, Sep[t]. 15

Well we have started home at last and that rather unexpectedly too. When I wrote yesterday morning, there were no indications of our leaving; but about 3 P.M. the order was given to prepare our rations and be ready to move at 8 P.M. You had better believe the boys were not slow in obeying and everything was ready at the appointed time; and we were marched down to the depot but did not leave Tullahoma until near 10 o'clock. And we have had rather an unlucky time since then. After running all night we

23 Lieutenant General Joseph Wheeler (1836-1906), C.S.A. He was one of the most capable cavalry officers of the war, and for his military ability and courage he was given the epithet of "Fighting Joe." Thomas J. Betts, "Joseph Wheeler," Dictionary of American Biography, XX, 50-62.

only arrived here distant 14 miles from Tullahoma just before sun up; and by an unlucky accident by which two of our cars were thrown from the track we have been detained here all day (3 P.M.), and there is not much prospect of getting to Nashville soon. Several of the men hurt themselves by jumping from the cars.

Sept. 16
Some place on the L & N R.R. 94 miles from N[ashville]; 91 to Louisville.

We were more fortunate in getting off from War Trace than I anticipated. The reason we staid so long was because the locomotive got out of water and there were no tanks close by. As soon as the Col. found out what was the matter, he made a detail to go with the engine to a neighboring spring and fill up the tender. This was accomplished about dark yesterday, and at 9 o'clock we left Nashville arriving at daylight this morning.

It is now a little after 12 M., Friday, Sep[t]. 16. We left Nashville at 7 A.M. and are making good time toward Louisville. Lebanon Junction ½ past 4 P.M. Only 30 miles to Louisville. Will be there in a little over an hour. Have had a nice ride today. Our Co. are in passenger cars and if I wasn’t so sleepy, would enjoy myself finely. Have had no sleep worth anything for the last two nights. If nothing unusual happens we will see Indiana before sundown.

Nearly all the guards along the road are Negroes. They are fine looking soldiers. They always turn out at a present arms when the train passes. Their accoutrements and guns are bright as they can be, and the broad smile that marks their countenances attest their like of the change from Chattels to U. S. soldiers.

Louisville, Sep[t]. 17
Saturday morning.

We arrived here safely at sundown last night without accident of any kind. Some of our boys got left along the road, but they all got in last night. We got our suppers at the Soldiers’ Home and were marched out on the commons where we had a nice sleep. We will probably go to Indianapolis today but I don’t know anything certain about it.