

William Doll Memoirs

6th Ind

through the quarters and ordered Every man who had one to fall into line, the men were then marched up to the Colonels quarters and stacked arms. and there were about 300 of the new guns in our Regiment, a delegation of 93 Ohio men were there with a wagon and hauled them back to their own camp. A few days later new Enfield rifles were issued to our Regiment and the men were satisfied and there was no more exchanging of guns, The Army arrived at Nashville in the later part of October 1862, and our Corps bivouaced [sic], in a large timbered tract of land near the Cumberland River and North of the City. The next morning after our arrival our Brigade was detailed to convoy a long wagon train back to Mitchelville [sic] a station on the railroad 35 miles North of Nashville and return with it filled with Supplies, this journey of 70 miles required four days, on our return we had the honor of escorting Major Genl [sic] W S. Rosecrans, who was [crossed out] to [crossed out] had Superceded [sic] Gen Buell as the new commander of the Army of the Cumberland, as we were hereafter to be called. this exchange was very agreeable to the Army and General Rosecrans was respected and admired by the men, a few days after our return we moved across the River and went into winter quarters about seven miles South of Nashville. This ended that remarkable campaign of the Army of the Ohio and Cumberland for the Summer and fall of 1862.

Chapter VIII

It was about the first of November 1862 when the Army of the Cumberland took up winter quarters about seven miles South of Nashville, Tenn, our Division (RW Johnsons) lay near what was known as Granny White pike, and near the State Insane Asylum, The camp was an open one without any breastworks or intrenchments of any kind, though we had a number of field batteries posted in the most commanding positions, and and [sic] the front was constantly guarded by a strong picket post [crossed out] line, and strong cavalry outposts, Braggs Army was encamped in the vicinity of Murfreesboro 30 miles South of Nashville, Hardees Corps of Braggs forces laid in an advanced position at Nolenville [sic] and was a source of great annoyance to our right wing which he menaced, Rebel scouting and foraging parties were continuously [sic] harrassing [sic] our outposts, and firing on our picket lines was of so common occurance [sic] that scarcely any notice was taken of it in Camp, Skirmishes between our foraging Squads and the rebel cavalry was of almost daily occurance [sic], we lay in this Camp during Nov and Dec. 1892

In good weather our time was principally occupied in Company and Regimental drill, our Company had been for several months perfecting themselves in skirmish and bayonet drill, going g [crossed out] through all our manouvres [sic] to the sound of the bugle, we were acknowledge the best drilled company in the Regiment, and on skirmish bugle drill hard to beat by any troops in the field. this drill proved to be of great service to us in after campaigns. The winter was mild and pleasant so we did not suffer from severe

weather, the health of the men was also remarkably good, although we were in permanent quarters, we received only the coarse fare usually [sic] issued when on a march, I find in one of my letters written home Dec 2ⁿ 1862, this sentence, "I have to quit writing and get Supper, which will consist hard tack, fat meat and coffee, we also had beans, onions, potatoes and compressed vegetables issued to us about once a week, I also find in a letter written Christmas day 1862 the following telling my mother what we had for our Christmas dinner. Thus well dinner is over, and I will tell you what we had, it was fried bacon, black coffee light bread and soup made from compressed vegetables this was our Christmas dinner, I hope you had a greater variety than this, and much better, but I am as well satisfied with mine as if I had had all the cakes pies and sweetmeats I could have eaten, and I will bet my dinner tasted as good to me as yours did to you, for after a fellow soldiers 16 months he would not trade a pot of bean soup for a sugared pound cake, and if we never had worse times or fare than we are having to day. I would just as soon serve my three years but as not," In the latter part of Sept [crossed out] November 1862 our large tents were taken from us and in return the Government issued to us what they called Shelter tents, this was a section of water proof drilling about 6 foot square with eyelet holes and cords for stretching over ridge poles, when put up properly and stretched tight, they turned water and made a very [sic] comfortable shelter. at first the men refused to accept them but when told it was them or nothing they were very [sic] reluctantly [sic] received, and the men started for the woods to cut poles on which to stretch them, and we soon had quite a village [sic] of "Dog tents" as they were designated as soon as a fellow would get up his tent he would crawl into it and sticking out his head and [crossed out] commence barking like a dog to announce his being at home, and soon the whole camp was a perfect babel, and a listener would have thought all the dogs in creation had cornered in this one spot, the voice of every [sic] imaginable specie of canine ever heard, could have been recognized, from the little yelping snarling fist to the deep mournful baying [sic] of the fox and deer hound, and the gruff course bulldog and Newfoundland The ludicrous spirit seemed to be irrepressible, and was liable to break out at any time of the day or night, some fellow coming in of of [sic] guard duty at midnight or early in the morning before crawling into his tent, would yelp out in imitation of a fist, hound, or bulldog, and in a few minutes it would be taken up and pass from camp to camp until the air would ring with the music, after this had been kept up for a few minutes it would suddenly cease, and the camps would become sudd [crossed out] perfectly quiet," In the latter part of December, scouting and foraging parties were in [illegible] number, wagon and provision trains were put in order, and preparations for putting the Army in a condition for active campaigning, The increased drilling and activity betokened some kind of a movement, and we soon learned what it all meant, At dress parade December 24 orders were read to prepare for marching at daylight in the morning, we made all the preparation necessary and about 10 o'clock [sic] Christmas morning our Division moved out onto the Nolenville [sic] pike where we stood in line for half an hour, when orders came to return to camp get out dinners and be ready to march at half past two P.M. we went back to our old quarters got our dinners and waited orders, which came at 3 P.M. and were to pitch tents for the night, this was soon done and the rest of the day and the night were passed as usual, we were roused at the usual hour 6 am [crossed out] o'clock [sic] the next morning and at roll call ordered to get breakfast, prepare cooked rations pack

knapsacks and be ready to march on orders which was promptly obeyed, about 8 o'clock [sic] of the morning of Dec 26 1862 General Davises Division filed past our camp taking the advance for the day on the Nolenville pike, after they had passed the bugle sounded the assembly and our Regiment was formed in line marched out on the pike and was soon following in the rear of Davises Division, our entire Corps. (Alex McDowell McCooks) marched down the road. Generals Thomas and Crittendens [sic] Corps advanced down the Murfreesboro pike, in this order the Grand Old Army of the Cumberland under Command of Gen W.S. Rosecranx [sic] left Nashville to meet and encounter the deadly Conflict the Rebel General Braggs forces who were lying at Murfreesboro only 30 miles from Nashville, As previously stated, Hardees Corps of Braggs Army was encamped near Nolenville [sic] about half way between the two Armies, and to our corps (McCooks) the duty of forcing him to retire to Murfreesboro, Gen Davis Division moved forward the first day about 10 mile meeting with but little resistance, only receiving a few shots occasionally [sic] from some of the enemy scouting parties, his Division was marched through Nolenville [sic] and camped about a mile South of the town on the night of Dec 26 1862. Early the next morning R. W. Johnsons Division passed to the front and continued the advance. our Brigade Col PP Baldwin of 6th Ind Inftry [sic] Commanding was deployed in line of battle on the West side or right of the pike, our Regiment (6th Ind Inftry [sic]) resting on the pike and forming the left wing of the Brigade and the right centre [sic] of the line Gen Willichs Brigade being deployed on the East or left side of the pike, Capt Simonsons 5th Ind battery of 6 – 12 pounders marched down the pike in sections forming the center of the line, Gen Kirks Brigade moved down the pike in close order as reserves and support for the battery. the rest of the Corps moved in the rear in regular order," In this order we moved forward early on the morning of Dec 27 and had gone but a short distance when we encountered the enemys [sic] outpost pickets who immediately commenced firing at us, we continued advancing and returned their fire and soon drove them back to their reserves posted in a strong position, who also opened a brisk fire upon us, the line halted and returned the [crossed out] fire warmly. the battery came rumbling [sic] to the front a section went into action and was soon shelling the enemys [sic] line, our lines were reformed, cavalry was sent out on both flanks and soon [crossed out] again the [crossed out] our entire line moved briskly forward and soon dislodged them and sent them flying to the rear. but our continued advance was of short duration, as the enemy reformed their lines at evry [sic] available position, and turned to meet us at short intervals, As the day advanced they seemed to increase in numbers, and grew more and more stubborn and we were obliged to advance slowly and with greater caution, they contested the ground hotly, and often our line would not move the distance of half amile [sic] in an hours [sic] time, the enemy fell back very slowly and doggedly, and only when hotly pressed or flanked, and then only to take a new position a short distance to the rear, again to be routed and forced back, and thus it continued through the entire day. The last charge we made was up a considerable slope, heavily wooded on the North Side, and a corn field on the South Slope, a broad meadow lay between the cornfield and a heavily wooded ridge to the South of the meadow. when we started up the ridge at double quick and with a yell, the rebels who were in line on the crest of the ridge held their ground until we were within about two hundred yard of them when they turned and broke for the rear. our boys renewed their Speed cheering as they run, but

we were unable to catch any of them, though we pressed them so closely that hundreds of them threw away their Knapsacks and dozens of them their haversacks also, these our boys picked up as they ran and that evening many a supper that was cooked for a Johnnie, was eaten by a yankee, [sic] The shades of night were fast drawing their curtain and closed the contest of the day. our boys standing in line in the cornfield where we had halted [sic] and cheering [sic] and waving their hats at the rebels who were fast disappearing [sic] in the rear. taking refuge in the woods in the distance, The artillery [sic] rendered us most effective service, rapidly moving down the broad solid pike, and by the time the enemys [sic] lines were reformed, the guns were in position and tossing Shells in their midst. Night only put an end to the conflict and so stubborn was their retreat that we only advanced about five miles during the day. this advance was in regular line of battle through fields, woods, thickets, marshes, over streams and fences, up and down hills and hollows and was very tiresome and fatiguing, upon the retirement of the rebels, a strong picket line was posted, "our Regiment the 6th Ind being detailed for guard duty that night, the troops went into bivouac [sic], soon had fires blazing and were engaged in preparing their evening meal, discussing the events of the day, and the prospects of a warm time on the morrow, thus ended the second days advance on Murfreesboro, and what was in reality the first days fighting of that terrible conflict the Battle of Stone [sic] River, The troop retired to rest that night fully expecting to renew the conflict the next morning, but during the night Hardee retired and joined the rest of Braggs forces at Murfreesboro leaving a small cavalry force to harrass [sic] our advance, and cover his retreat, our Brigade was left in position to cover the movement of the remainder of the Corps, which on the 28 moved across to their position in the line by Gen Rosecranz [sic] we remained until the 30th when we also moved across to the Murfreesboro pike and down to our position in the line, which was to be on the right wing, we arrived late in the afternoon and was marched up in the rear of Gen Davises Division and formed in reserve, we had lain there but a short time, when we received orders to move off to the right, we moved out beyond the extreme right wing a distance of about a mile, halting in a heavy woods until dark, where we were again moved back in the woods near where we first stopped and between Willichs [sic] Brigade and the right wing of Gen Davis Division where we bivouaced [sic] for the night and proceeded to boil some coffee and prepare something to eat. after which we laid down to rest sleeping on our arms for the Enemy was in line of battle less than half a mile in front of us, and we now knew we were to meet them in the morning, word having gone through the camp we were to attack at daylight The formation of our line of Battle on the night of Dec 30 1862 before Braggs Army (near Murfreesboro, Tenn or Stone [sic] River as we called it,) was in the following order, Gen Thomas Corps formed the left wing Gen Crittendens Corps the center and Gen McCooks corps the right wing, Gen Rousseaus Division in reserve in rear of center of right wing, our Division RW Johnsons. of McCooks corps formed the right flank of our Army Gen Willichs Brigade being on the extreme right wing, our Brigade Baldwins, resting on his left and Davises right and Gen Kirks Brigade in rear of the center of our Division in reserve. Such was the formation of our battle line on the night of Dec 30 when the troops retired to rest, Alas, many a brave man closed his eyes in sleep that night full of confidence and hope, who was destined nevermore to witness the setting of another sun; Very early on the morning of the 31st our Brigade was aroused and ordered to prepare breakfast and to be as quiet as

possible in order not to attract the attention of the Enemy whose lines were in view of us, details were sent after water, knapsacks were piled up, arms and ammunition were inspected, Stretcher bearers and Ambulances men were detailed, and other things necessary for the coming conflict, we were still eating our hastily prepared meal by the light of our Early morning fires, when suddenly, heavy and rapid firing on our left in front of Davises Division announced to us that the rebels had anticipated us and had themselves opened the battle, not waiting to be attacked by us as was the intention. "Instantly evrything [sic] was activity and bustle, the order to fall in was promptly obeyed by the men leaving their half finished meal scattered on the ground, the roll was hastily called and answered to the last time on Earth by many a loved comrade, and we stood in line at shoulder arms and fixed bayonets awaiting orders, we had not long to wait, and Aidecamp [sic] came riding rapidly toward us, issuing orders to Col Baldwin as he passed, and we were immediately moved out into line of battle at double quick step [crossed out] time taking position behind a rail fence enclosing a cornfield which lay between us and the Enemy. four pieces of Simonsons battery were moved out in front of us and we were ordered to support it, the remaining two peices [sic] were in position in the rear of the center of the regiment, The guns soon opened fire on the advancing lines of the Enemy, and their rapid effective fire soon drew upon them the concentrated fire of three rebbel [sic] batteries, and in a few minutes the storm of shot and shell, and the leaden hail of bullets which were raining in our midst was terrific, and we had a number of men killed and wounded before we had fired a gun, the rebel Sharpshooters soon picked of [sic] all the battery horses, belonging to the guns in front of us, thus rendering it impossible for them to be moved off the field and we lost these four guns, The firing continued to grow heavier evry [sic] minute and to move down the right, we were receiving a perfect hail of missles [sic] but the 22nd Ind Regt of Davises Division lapped over our line in front of us and we had to hold our fire until they retreated through our line to the rear, which they soon did, followed by the long gray lines of the Enemy who were pouring volleys into them and us, as soon as the 22nd Ind had passed to our rear we were ordered to open fire, our heavy fire assisted by the battery stopped their advance for a time, but their wavering was of short duration, they were three double lines deep, and the rear lines were pushing the front lines forward and they soon continued their advance in overpowering numbers. our right flank was turned very early in the fight. through some oversight or mismanagement Gen Willich Brigade were just eating breakfast when the Enemy came upon them in their quarters capturing a great portion of them without serious resistance, the battery horses were also off to water and their six guns were captured as they stood parked in camp. There was a great blunder on the part of some General Officer, it was known we were to attack Early in the morning, and the troops should all have been in line prepared to move at amoments [sic] notice, but instead the extreme flank, the most important position in the right wing was exposed by a large gap between our Brigade and Willichs, and his men still eating breakfast after the firing had been going on for several minutes, then the rebels attacking unexpectedly, instead of us opening the fight threw Willichs Brigade into confusion, This turning of our flank was very disastrous to the right wing and made our position a very undesirable and untenable one, we were soon receiving an enfilading fire from the right as well as the fire from the front which compelled us to retreat to a new line, Kirks reserve Brigade was thrown forward, but was unable to stem the the

[crossed out] torrent of advancing hosts and they were forced to retire we held our position until ordered ordered [sic] to fall back and form a new line which was done in very good order, we retired about one hundred yards into a heavy woods and formed a second line and poured several volleys into the advancing foe, the battle was now hot and Earnest men on both sides were falling by the score, and the shrieks and groans of the wounded helped to swell the roar of the terrible conflict Our second line maintained their ground until the rebels were less than a hundred yards from us, they came steadily on with a yell that could be heard above the roar of battle, but our flank being still unprotected, and being in danger of being surrounded we were again forced to fall back to form a new line, In falling back from this second line a number of my Regiment were taken prisoner, myself among the number, we were met with the taunting cry of "oh, you damned blue bellied yankees", [sic] we are giving you hell this morning, they hurried us to the rear, and in passing back we could see the numbers which had been opposed to us, and were not surprised we were not able to hold our ground in going through their second and third reserve lines, we were again received with curses, jeers, taunts and demonical yells, they became so demonstrative that many of them threatened to shoot us or run us through with a bayonet, we appealed to the rebel Major Gen McGowan riding close in the rear, for protection, and he had humanity enough to issue orders that we should receive the treatment due to prisoners of war, and the demonstrations ceased with the men. I can now only write of what I witnessed within the rebel lines until our release from Richmond Va, We were now going back over the field so recently occupied by us and oh! what a sad heartrending spectacle presented itself to our view, tears trickled down our smoke begrimed cheeks, as here and there we recognized the ghastly face of some loved comrade who would never more return our greeting, men who a few hours, nay, a few moments before were in the full vigor of life and health, now lying stark and ghastly in death, a sacrifice upon the altar of Liberty. they gave their lives that their country might live, noble, glorious death, what more could they give? there were many wounded, and their appeals were piteous to hear, but we were ruthlessly pushed on, and were denied the privilege of giving them a drink of water, or assisting them to a more comfortable position, being assured by our captors they would take care of the D_d [sic] blue bellies, Truly was this a mournful day for us, captors in the hands of a merciless foe, many dead and dying comrades scatered [sic] over the bloody field, and the others retreatreating [sic] before their pursuers, Sad indeed to contemplate, and many a silent prayer went up for the preservation of our fleeing comrades from death or capture. The loss of my company in this engagement was four killed 3 wounded and 4 prisoners, The enemy were now pressing our lines vigorously at evry [sic] point, but we knew from the heavy firing our men were contesting the ground stubbornly, and were falling back slowly and doggedly. Sorrowfully we were passing from the field of death when we were startled by a most welcome sound, a deep thunderous volley of musketry and artillery [sic] making the very Earth vibrate, we begged permission of the guard to stop and listen to the tremendous roar, Eyes brightened, smiles wreathed our faces, as it rolled onward, and cheers burst from us, Rousseau, "Rousseau", saved, saved, Oh! what music to our ears were those thunder peals, they told us that though our comrades were falling back before an enemy flushed with the prospect of victory they were making a determined and desperate resistance, and it would be a dearly bought field to the enemy if they won it. The battle was now

raging furiously and the Enemy were delirious over the success of the morning, declaring they would not stop until they annihilated our Army. we could see their reserves being hurried to the front, aides, orderlies and General officers riding poste [sic] haste in evry [sic] direction, they were wild with with [sic] exultation, but the right and center of our Army after falling back about three miles, secured a strong position, and cheered and encouraged by the presence of Generals Rosecranz, [sic] Thomas, Sheridan, Davis, McCook, Rousseau, and many others in whom [sic] they had confidence now met the enemy with such determined and deadly resistance that they were brought to a Stand, and no efforts could dislodge ourom their position, night only brought an end to the fearful slaughter, our loss in killed and wounded was very heavy 1500 killed and about 5000 wounded, and near 3000 prisoners, among the latter was one General officer (Willich) and dozens of field and line officers, Our loss in artillery was thirty six, ten and twelve pound field guns which they shipped to Atlanta Geo [sic] the next day. The rebel loss was also very heavy, as admitted in their papers the next morning, and we knew the great number of wounded they were bringing into Murfreesboro that they had bought their boasted victory at a terrible cost, Gen Rains, Col Moore, Col Blake and many other rebel officers of rank were reported Killed in their paper the next morning. General Sill of our Army was Killed and Gen Kirk severely wounded, Thus ended the first days battle of Stone [sic] River, in which the rebels claimed a decided victory, but a most barren one, for they were unable to dislodge our men from the final stand, and had to content themselves with the portion of the field they had secured in the morning, To show how narrowly a man may escape death in a battle, I will just state that after my capture, upon making an examination I found my clothes had been pierced by four bullets, and a ball had passed through my hat rim a bout [sic] one inch from my head near the left ear,"

Chapter IX

Those of us who were taken prisoner were sent back to the rear gathered into squads of about 200 each and taken into Murfreesboro under guard, Murfreesboro was about four miles from the battlefield, arriving there we were put into the Court House yard, a large bare lot surrounded with a stone fence about 4 feet high a strong guard was stationed around us pacing back and forth on the fence Early in the afternoon a number of rebel officers came into the Court house and organized a parolling [sic] board, we were marched into the building in small squads, and our names, rank company and Regiment registered and a parole oath which they told us was to prevent us attempting to escape during our transit to Vicksburg where they had originaly [sic] intended to send us. they then proceeded to strip us of nearly evry [sic] thing we possessed, I copy from a diary I was fortunate enought [sic] to conceal and Smuggle through the lines, Thursday evening Jan 1st 1863 the rebel papers stated this morning the loss was verry [sic] heavy on both sides, the killed and wounded numbering thousands, they also state our Army had fallen back about three miles, and were now in full retreat for Nashville in the greatest disorder, but we know from the heavy firing we have heard to day, we have a strong determined force still in their front, they stripped us yesterday of knapsacks, gum blankets canteens overcoats and blankets generously permitting us to retain our haversacks for the time being, A train load of prisoners were sent to Chattanooga to

day. this evening they issued us the first ration since our capture one pint of dry flour and 4 ounces meat per man We now had something to eat, at least enough to appease the cravings of hunger for the time being, but the question was how to cook it, we had no fire and nothing of which to make any. as we were confined in a bare inclosure [sic] and evry [sic] scrap and chip had been scraped up the night before and burned, and to add to our discomfort a cold drizzling rain was falling, but soldiers are prolific of resources, in one corner of the lot was a large pile of corn with the husks on, and if we could get enough of it to make fires we would be all right, but the corn is guarded and how will we get it, after consultation it was decided a large squad of men should approach the guard surround him and engage his attention while others were to carry off arm loads of the corn, we immediately put this scheme into execution and for a few minutes worked it sucessfully [sic]. but the guard soon discovered our trick and presenting his bayonet he pushed us back and tried to drive us from the pile, Still the boys were persistent in carrying off the corn, they would edge up to the pile, work out a few ears with their feet and kick them back into the crowd, they would also squat down close to the pile rake out a few ears and throw them back, we kept this up for a few minutes when he called for the corporal of the guard, who soon came and learning the cause of the trouble repeated his orders to the guard not to let any of the corn be carried away, the corporal went and reported to the officer of the day, who came out and ordered the guard to shoot the first man who took an ear of corn, still determined we waited till the officer returned to his quarters, when we again approached the corn pile, the guard ordered us back saying we knew he had orders to shoot which he did not want to do, shoot and be d__d [sic] was the reply of the men, but if you shoot or attempted to shoot one man you will never live to see another sun rise, let the consequences [sic] be what they may. the men were thoroughly exasperated and wholly [sic] oblivious to danger, exposed in the cold January night air in a drizzling rain shivering with the cold wet and hunger, and for aught we knew we had a long period of captivity, Starvation and brutality before us and under such circumstances life was of little value or consideration, However we succeeded in overaweing [sic] the guard long enough to get corn sufficient to do our cooking without any shooting being done, we built fires scooped little holes in the ground and mixed our flour with water baking the black dirty dough in the coals. we broiled our meat also on the coals and with the addition of burnt corn we made our suppers. pretty rough fare we were glad to get even that much, supper over we disposed ourselves as best we were able for sleep on the cold wet ground, with a drizzling rain still falling;

Friday night Jan 2 1863 – Diary –

The rebel officers marched us down to the depot about an hour before day and kept us standing in line until ten oclock [sic] when we were ordered into cars to go to Chattanooga, they put us into filthy stock cars without seats in which they had been shipping horses and had not cleaned them out. we were scarcely loaded when an officer came along and ordered about 250 of us to get out, this squad was marched back to the court house and kept standing in line until one oclock, [sic] we were then informed we would be taken out on the battlefield for the purpose of burrying [sic] our dead who were lying inside the rebel lines, We were marched out upon upon the field

guarded by a detachment of Terrys Texas Rangers, a body of cavalry who were no better than land pirates or Mexican bandits, on arriving upon the field we were coolly [sic] informed we would not be allowed to burry [sic] our dead, but were brought out to burry [sic] dead rebels," and they put us at work digging long trenches in which we placed their dead in rows of 20 to 30 in each trench, there were hundreds of them scattered over the field, we filled a number of trenches, leaving a great many unburied [sic], there were also a great many of our own dead scattered over the field, but we were not allowed to do anything with them except to gather a few of them in piles and build rail pens around them, we found our dead striped [sic] of all wearing apparel down to shirt and drawers, even the socks off their feet, and numbers of them without a vestige of clothing except a pair of drawers. this was done by that boasted Southern Chivalry that only wanted to be let alone, this clothing was cleaned and afterward issued to rebel soldiers, We were also victims while on the field of the piratical Texas Rangers, they robbed our men of clothing, watches and anything to which they took a fancy, if a man chanced to have on a good coat, hat or cap pair of boots or shoes he was preemptorly [sic] told to stand and deliver, and if he offered a protest to this summary treatment, a drawn sword or cocked revolver soon enforced compliance to the order, and he was coolly [sic] told he might be thankful he was even permitted to live, It was during this afternoon and while we were engaged in the burial duties that the third and last days battle was opened and fought, this engagement was between Brecinridges [sic] and Hoods Corps of the rebel Army, and Thomases [sic] and Crittendens corps of our own, the fight was brought on by sending one of our Brigades across a stream into an open field as a decoy for the purpose of drawing the rebels out to try to capture them this ruse was entirely successful, and brought on a general engagement about 3 o'clock, [sic] the roar of the battle was terrific, we were close enough to their lines to witness some of their manouvres [sic], and the fight had been raging but a short time when we discovered great commotion inside their lines, Regiments and Brigades were moving rapidly from one point to another, mounted men were riding in hot haste from right to left and it was easy to be seen something very unusual even in a battle was taking place, the fight had been going on for about an hour, when a courier [sic] came galloping to the officer in charge of us with orders to return the prisoners to Murfreesboro as soon as possible. we were hastily huddled together and hurried back to the town at double quick, the slaughter of the rebels in this last days fight was fearful, they leaving 1700 of their men upon the field in less than two hours fighting, the remainder of their Army were shattered, demoralized and falling back Rosecranz [sic] was master of this bloody field at last, and Bragg was the man who would do the retreating. Our loss in this days [sic] fight was small compared with that of the enemy. as the terrible execution upon them had been mostly with a massed battery of 36 guns throwing grape and canister shot into them at short range. on our return to Murfreesboro we were placed in an old church lot without any shelter or anything to eat. while on the battle field I found near one of my dead comrades two pieces of hard tack sprinkled with blood I eagerly picked them up chipped the blood of [sic] them and ate them glad of a morsel to stay my hunger

"Diary" Saturday night Jan 3 1863 Chattanooga Tenn –

It rained all night last night, and this morning we were very wet cold and hungry. they took us down to the depot early this morning and after loading us into filthy stock and open dirt cars without seats, packing us in like so many hogs, we were started for Chattanooga Tenn 161 miles, a few miles below Murfreesboro we passed through the advance guard of Braggs retreating Army. we halloed [sic] to them that they were going the wrong way to get to Nashville, and they jokingly replied we are not going there to day. The ride was a long and tedious one, and the cold drizzling rain pouring on us all day and our hungry condition did not add any to our comfort. We did not arrive a Chattanooga until midnight, after getting off the cars we were marched to one side of the town and put into some tents which served to keep the rain off of us, this was the first shelter of any kind we had had since our capture and was heartily appreciated by us," While at Chattanooga the prisoners were divided into four sections of about 600 each, as I reached there with the last train load from Murfreesboro I was allotted to Section four. the morning after our arrival at this place, the citizens brought baskets of eatables to our camp for Sale, but though we were willing enough [sic] to buy anything that looked fit to eat, we had been robed [sic] of everything of value, and the only thing we could do was to feast our eyes on the good things they tempted us with, for at that time charity for a yankee [sic] in that section was not very extended. I made a memorandum of prices in my Diary at the time and will reproduce them here, Flour (50¢) fifty cents a pound. meal ten to twenty cents a pound, meat fifty cents a pound, Eggs one dollar a dozen, small loaves of bread fifty cents, biscuit [sic] about the size of comon [sic] cracker one dollar a dozen Salt fifty dollars a bushell [sic], potatoes five dollars a bushell [sic], chickens twenty five to thirty dollars a dozen, onions one dollar a dozen, and a fearful combination they called pie, fifty cents to one dollar each, the pie more nearly resembled a section of gum belting, than any thing else I can compare it with.

On Sunday Jan 4 Sections 1 and 2 were forwarded to Atlanta Georgia, Section 3 was sent on the next morning and Monday evening Jan 5 our Section no 4 also started for the same place 140 miles, we arrived there about 6 oclock [sic] the next morning, we remained on the cars until 8 oclock [sic] when we were marched to the conscript camp, where they gave us a Small quantity of bread and meat, we had now been prisoners six days and this was the Second ration issued to us, In going from the train to the camp we passed by a larger brick building Strongly guarded in which our officers captured at Stone [sic] River were confined General Willich was standing at one of the grated windows looking out at us, he was soon recognized by our men who gave a rousing cheer for him which seemed to please him very much. Early in the afternoon we were taken back to the cars which we boarded and started for Montgomery Ala 192 miles, we arrived at West Point, a small town on the State line about midnight intending to go on in the morning, but before getting Started the officers in charge of the train received a dispatch to hold us until further orders, we remained at this point until about three oclock [sic] when we again Started for Montgomery at Opelitia we met and passed two trains containing Sections 1 and 2 returning to Atlanta to go from there to Richmond Va. General Sherman had captured Jackson Miss, thus cutting the Mobile Jackson and Vicksburg Railroad by which route we were obliged to reach Vicksburg the Western point of exchange, so we were ordered to be returned to Atlanta and from there to be forwarded to Richmond the Eastern point of exchange, one train load of men had nearly

reached Mobile before orders turning them back reached them. After passing the two North bound trains, we continued our journey and arrived at Montgomery about 8 o'clock [sic] the evening of the Eighth [sic], here we found Section 3 in camp but they Started for Atlanta the next morning, The rebels had a small ship yard here and were then building a large "Iron clad ram" this vessel was afterward captured in our fleet at the fall of Mobile Ala, we found provision and everything else here higher than at any other point we had yet reached, and evry [sic] thing was very scarce, we received a small quantity of corn bread and meat here, which was the third ration issued to us in ten days, on the morning of Friday Jan 9 we left Montgomery and started on our return to Atlanta arriving there Saturday morning about four o'clock,[sic] we remained on the cars until daylight when we were again taken to the conscript camp where they gave us what they called two days rations of coarse unbolted meal, which we were ordered to cook up before continuing our journey, we soon baked up our meal, and then proceeded [sic] to dispose of it at one meal which did not take long to do, we left Atlanta Saturday evening the 10th arriving at Dalton Junction Sunday morning about four o'clock [sic] where we changed cars and went on our way toward Richmond, we arrived at Knoxville Tenn about midnight we found Section 3 on the cars ready to leave, which they did Monday morning the 12th, This was the home of Parson Brownlow, who afterward became known as the fighting Parson, he was intensely loyal to the Union, and correspondingly bitter against the rebel Government, he was so aggressive and outspoken against the rebels that he was finally arrested and was confined in the Knoxville Jail for Several weeks, but at last he was liberated as the only charge they could place against him was loyalty to the Stars and Stripes, he was also editor of the "Knoxville whig", a Staunch Union paper, and by reason of his bold and fearless utterances, his determined attitude, and his well known spotless character and prominence he exerted a great influence in East Tennessee ,and was the cause of thousands adhering to the Union cause through all difficulties and persecutions, he was also instrumental in raising several regiments of East Tenn troops for our Army. his Son also took a prominent part in the war and raised a Regiment of Cavalry in the Mountain regions of which he was appointed Colonel, he rendered gallant and efficient service to the cause of the Union. At Knoxville we soon we soon [sic] discovered we were in a region or center of a very Strong Union sentiment, and while there we were very closely guarded to prevent the citizens from holding conversation with us, or in any way affording us any assistance, persons suspected of loyal sentiments were strictly forbidden to approach us, and a number seen talking to us were arrested and sent to prison as traitors to their Country. Notwithstanding this many men, and especially women watched their opportunity to say a few words assuring us of their loyalty and expressing their sympathy for us in our condition", Many of them displayed small union flags which they wore secreted about their persons, They told us hundreds of men were hiding in the mountains to avoid the rebel conscription, and watching an opportunity to escape to our lines and enlist in our Army. (after events proved this to be true). Many of the men who guarded us were union men in sentiment and had been conscripted into the rebel service, they were possessed of a feeling of humanity, and treated us kindly when not under the eyes of their officers, but this was only the case when we fell into the hands of Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky and North Carolina men, while the Lousiana [sic], Texas, Mississippi, Florida South Carolina and Virginia troops seemed to be possessed

of the very essence [sic] of demonism [sic] and to vie with each other as to who could use the greater brutality toward us, we received at Knoxville a small quantity of bread and meat making the sixth ration issued to us in fourteen days. Early on Tuesday morning the 14 we were marched to the cars which we boarded and started for Bristol Va. a station on the State line, and the eastern terminus of the East Tenn and Va Railroad, while passing through this portion of Tenn, we seen a great many Unionists, and a number of brave women waved small union flags at us, and were heartily cheered by our men in return. When we arrived within twenty miles of Bristol we were obliged to halt for the night in consequence of the destruction of the railroad bridges spanning the Clinch and Holston rivers, by Stonemans Cavalry raid, we camped on the West bank of the Clinch river, and next morning waded the river which was broad and shallow being about three feet deep at this point, and being a cold frosty January morning our enforced bath was not very pleasant, the men compared this to the crossing of the river Styx previous to going into purgatory and the comparison proved a very appropriate one, after crossing the stream, and all the officers and guards had been ferried over, we proceeded to march to the next stream nine miles distant, which we crossed on a pontoon bridge and boarding a train in waiting for us proceeded to Bristol arriving there about 2 PM Wednesday the 15 We again received a small quantity of bread and meat at Bristol, we were confined here in a large round house and guarded very closely. About midnight an officer sent down for 150 men to go to Lynchburg on the passenger train, as I chanced to be near the door when this order came I was included in this squad we were marched to the train and found it to be a passenger train with two boxcars attached for us into which we were ordered, they were without seats and far from being clean, some of the men offered objections to the close packing necessary to get us in, where the officer in charge uttering a fearful volley of oaths ordered the guards to ram the [illegible] yankees [sic] in with the bayonet if they would not get in any other way. Some of the men who were so reduced in strength as to be unable to climb into the cars, were picked up by the guards and thrown in untop [sic] of the others like logs of wood, this was our introduction to the sacred soil of Virginia, and was but a foretaste of what was to come, packed in in this condition, we started on a journey of 204 miles arriving at Lynchburg about 4 o'clock [sic] next Evening the 16. when the train stopped we were ordered out of the cars and to fall into line, a large fierce looking rebel Major stepped in front of us, and in a rough loud voice informed us he had a proposition to make, and he advised us if we valued our lives to accept it, he then coolly [sic] proceeded to tell us the Confederate States Government had decided to shoot all prisoners falling into their hands who did not take the oath of allegiance to their Government but those who took the oath would be set at liberty with perfect freedom to go where they pleased inside the Rebel lines. Now when I give the command those of you who who [crossed out] will take the oath step three paces to the front. ready , forward, march! Strange as it may appear to the reader of these lines, not a foot Stirred," He seemed amazed that his offer of life had not been eagerly accepted, What! do you all want to Shot? the reply came spontaneously from the line, Shoot and be damned we had rather die than live in your d___d [sic] Confederacy. Well he says you have made your choice, but we will take care of you to night, he then gave some orders to an officer near him and walked away. We were then divided into squads of twenty five and fifty each and put in rooms for the night, our squad of fifty was taken to the third

Story of an old dilapidated frame building and put in a Small room, my diary says fifty of us crowded into a room about 18 feet square, and we cannot all lie down at once without lying untop [sic] of eachother. [sic] The question was how can we all lie down and get a little rest after our long tiresome journey. After considerable trial and calculation we found that by lying close together in three rows across the room "Spoon fashion" as the boys used to call it and filling the chinks with the short ones, we could all manage to squeeze in, and in this graceful style we all retired to rest, in one side of the room was an old fashioned fire place in which we had a small fire, after lying down we would lie on one side until we ached all over when some one would sing out right or left "spoon" when the whole row would turn over and lay till the next man called "spoon" about midnight one man lying before the fire in straightening out to ease his cramped position stuck his feet in the fire, he jumped up holding his foot and dancing around holloed [sic] fire, fire, as may be imagined there was some excitement in that room for a few seconds, the guard came hurriedly into the room demanding the cause of the disturbance, a little examination showed the fire was confined to the fellows foot, and we had a good laugh at his expense, it was fire for him but fun for us, the excitement over we again lay down to rest until morning

Before leaving for Richmond next morning the guard brought in about 25 pound of crackers made of a mixture of cornmeal and nigger pen flour, this was a ration for fifty Starving men, and was the last ration issued to us until the evening of the day we were put into Libby[crossed out] Libby Prison at Richmond January 20th 1863 and that half pound of crackers had to last us three days this was a total of but eight rations issued to us in 21 days, and was not more than Sufficient in quantity even such as it was for more than eight or ten meals," Of the prisoners in Linchburg [sic], about 500 of us started for Richmond on the morning of Jan 18 we did not see anything more of our blood thirsty major, but he did not have any of our Squad [sic] Shot, though we doubted not his willingness to do so. I learned from one of the guards he had worked on the fears of about half a dozen chicken hearted wretches, who were promptly set at liberty by being sent into the woods under guard to cut wood for the rebel Army. Our progress to Richmond was very slow and tiresome, we were two days and one night going a distance of 148 miles, which in our cold hungry cramped condition was extreme torture, we arrived at the James River opposite Richmond about Sundown Jan 19 and our introduction to that City was enough to appall the Stoutest heart, we were marched over the long bridge crossing the river and canal, and taken about one Square west of the Libby, where we were divided into two Squads, our Squad was put into the cellar of an old Tobbacco [sic] warehouse which was used for temporary quarters when the Libby was full, I can only give a faint description of this terrible hole, it was one foul, loathsome, horrible spot I will never be able to forget a long as I live," we were driven into it like hogs, and when the heavy oaken door was closed upon us we seemed to have bidden farewell to the outer world, it was a basement room about 60 feet long by 20 feet wide, and the ceiling about 7 feet high, and the only means of ventilation was a small iron grate opening from the sidewalk above us on the street front, and a small barred window opening into a very dirty filthy yard in the rear, in one corner was a large pile of tobacco stems, and in another was a large vat placed to be used as a water closet, this vat was over flowing on the rough uneven dirt floor, and the tobacco stems was a reeking mass of filth, the dirt floor was rough and filthy [sic] and the odors which

permeated the horrible den were almost stifling in their intensity, there was not the slightest vestige of furniture of any description, this is but a faint description of the loathsome dungeon in which 250 men were obliged to pass the night," So overpowering was it that many men were unable to leave it the next morning without the assistance of their comrades, this was our introduction to the city of Richmond Va. the capital of the vaunted Southern Chivalry.

[newspaper article clipping]

The Death Rate of Prisoners in the Last War.

Referring to Mr. Ben. Hills absurd figures on this point, the New York Mail says: "Surgeon General Barnes can hardly be good authority if he says as Mr. Hill quotes that the Confederates had in their prisons 50,000 more Union prisoners than we had of Confederates. And a death rate based upon such a statement is fallacious and misleading. As we understand the matter, the number of Confederates captured and sent to depots at the North was 222,847 and the number of Union soldiers captured by the other side and sent to depots at the South was 126,950. It is upon these figures that the death rate Mr. Hill wants to establish should be computed, and so computed, it is found that (we quote Dr. J. W. Draper) the death rate of prisoners in the prisons of each side was 1 in 8.27 in the Union depots and 1 in 3.44 in the Confederate depots. And the same authority expresses the opinion that the true ratio will probably be no less than three United States soldiers to one Confederate soldier".