

Albert Gsell Diary

Regimental Bugler Second Regiment, Minnesota Volunteer Infantry 1861-1864

Albert Gsell was born in 1842 near Innsbruck, Austria, and came to America with his parents in 1848. On July 5, 1861, at the age of 19, he enlisted in the Union Army at Fort Snelling, St. Paul, Minnesota. The following is a transcript of the diary he kept during the nearly 3 years he was in the service.

July 5 the [illegible] 1861

Arrived [sic] at Fort Snelling on the 7th of July and more [illegible] in the US came on the 9th of July The vast Regt [illegible] having been on garrison [sic] duty the several [sic] Forts in the state of [illegible] during the months of July August and September of 1861 Was assembled at Fort Snelling having been ordered to Washington Embarked thence Oct 14th 1861 on the back board [sic] the steamer Northern Bell and [illegible] started at 5 [illegible] the travel at Ft. [illegible] 7 and [illegible] after marching throu [sic] the city we went on board [sic] of the Boat and continued our way down stream [sic] we arrived [sic] at La Crosse [illegible number]th and left for Chicago [illegible] [illegible] right and arrived [sic] here [sic] the next night and [illegible] on the Wigwam the next day I had very fine time in the City the next [illegible] took [sic] the Rail Road for [illegible] here we [illegible] the next morning in [illegible] [illegible] we [illegible] received [sic] at the Depot by a committee of citizens [rest is missing]

Feb. 1862

and to a point 1½ mile beyond Somerset. During the night it snowed some. Feb. 11th. Remained in camp all day, Weather very disagreeable, snowing and raining by turns. Feb. 12. Started early this morning and marched to Buck Creek where we encamped [sic] for the night without incident. Feb. 13th. Marched from Buck Creek 10 miles to the Junction of the old and new Somerset and Crabb Orchard road. Did not reach camp until midnight. Feb. 14th. It snowed last night to a depth of 4 or 5 inches and this morning it was quite cold and froze hard. Marched from camp to a point 1½ miles from Crabb Orchard on the Louisville Pike. Very cold and freezing hard at night. Feb. 15th. Broke camp and marched through and to a point of 4 miles beyond Stanford. Cold and freezing and snow laying on the ground to the depth of several inches. We shoveled it away and pitched tents. Feb. 16th. Struck tents and marched through Danville to a point a mile and a half from Perrysville and 16 miles from the last camp. Feb. 17. Remained in camp to day on account of bad weather. Feb. 18th. Broke camp at Perrysville at 7 A.M. and marched 20 miles to a point of 2 miles from Lebanon. We remained in camp at Lebanon until Feb. 22nd. Broke up camp and marched to Jackson Farm 8 miles from Springfield. It rained hard all day. We made a heavy march of 15 miles and got into camp late, tired, and hungry and wet as a drowned cat. Found Jacksons Smokehaus [sic] a fine institution for hams were plenty there. Feb. 23rd. Marched from Jacksons to Bardstown, weather fine. Feb. 24. Broke camp at Bardstown and marched 20 miles to Mount Washington. Feb. 25th. Marched from Mt. Washington to Louisville

[image: map of Indiana and Tennessee with a marching route drawn from northern Indiana to Nashville]

[image: map of Kentucky with a black line showing the marching route from Louisville to Danville]

Aug. 1862

the place of the disaster. Aug 6th. Gen McCook died of wounds received the day before. Marched at 3 P.M. and arrived at Salem about eleven P.M. Camped [sic] in town near an old mill. Aug. 7th. Marched at 6 A.M. and camped [sic] between Winchester and Decherd. Aug. 8th. In camp. Plenty of apples and peaches were to be had. Aug. 9th. In camp. Aug. 10th. in camp. Aug. 11th. moved camp a mile towards Winchester near the big springs. Bob Costerd was shot last night. He was a Guerilla Capt. Aug. 12 in camp. 13th. in camp. Aug. 14. Drilling all day. Aug 20th. marched 13 miles to Elk River and camped [sic]. Aug. 21st. In camp, nothing of note occurring [sic]. Aug. 22nd. Still in camp. Aug 23rd. Marched across the river in morning. In the afternoon started again and recrossed the river and marched 8 miles. Aug. 25th. Arrived at Pelham and camped [sic] in the mouth of the pass through the mountains. Aug. 26th. To day the rest of the armee [sic] came up and formed a line of battle and planted the batteries in position. Aug. 27th. Still waiting for Bragg, but he did not come. Aug. 28th. Went foraging up into the pass. I bought a few chickens and returned to camp. Aug. 29th. Still waiting for Bragg. Aug. 30th. Moved camp to the Spring at 4 P.M. Aug. 31th. Marched to Hillsboro.

[image: map of Tennessee and Kentucky with Nashville circled and a marching route drawn from southern Kentucky to near Murfreesboro]

Sept. 1862

Sept. 1st. Marched to Manchester, 18 miles, and camped [sic] in the fair grounds. I had a very fine time there. Sept. 2nd. Marched 12 miles to a point 2 miles from Beach Grove on the Murfreesboro Road. Sept. 3rd. Marched 3 miles to Horse Gap. Sept. 4th. Marched to Murfreesboro. Sept. 5. Remained in camp until 7 A.M. when we resumed our march for Nashville. Marched 7 miles and [missing text] at 6 A.M. and marched 18 miles to Bacon Creek. Met quite a number of Rebel stragglers that had been paroled. Sept. 24th. Marched from Bacon Creek to a point 4 miles beyond Elizabethtown, about 21 miles. Got into camp after dark, were told that we would continue the march as soon as had got something to eat, but we remained in camp that night. Sept. 25th. Marched at 5 A.M. this morning and camped [sic] at 1 P.M. at West Point having made 25 miles. Sept. 26th. Passage for Louisville on the steamer Sir. Wm. Wallace. Landed in the afternoon and camped [sic] in the suburbs of the city. Sept. 27th. Regt. In camp. Sept. 28th. In camp. Sept. 29th. Remained in camp and received our pay. Sept. 30th. Still in camp.

[image: map of Tennessee with Murfreesboro circled and a marching route drawn from Winchester to Murfreesboro]

[image: map of Tennessee showing the marching route]

Oct. 1862

Oct. 1st. Broke up camp and started once more for Dixie. Marched 12 miles and Camp [sic] for the night. Oct. 2nd. Marched to Shepherdsville and camp [sic]. Oct. 3rd. Remained in camp all day. Oct. 4th. Marched 12 miles, camp [sic] at Henpeck. Oct. 5th. Marched through Bardstown to Frederickstown, camp [sic] at Buffalo Creek. Oct. 6th. Marched early in the morning and had some skirmishing after passing through Springfield with the Rebels. Rear guard drove the Rebels 12 miles. Roads very dusty and water scarce. Oct. 7th. Marched 7 miles. Mitchells [sic] Division in advance which skirmished heavily with the enemy all day. The Roads were very dusty and water scarce. Got into camp very late and then could find no water. After a long running round I found a mudpuddle out of which I filled my canteen and returned to camp and got supper. Then I went after a canteen full for breakfast. Oct. 8th. early this morning cannonading commenced in front, and heavy [rest is missing]

[image: map of Tennessee with illegible town circled]

Dec. 1862

Dec. 25 Today we had Christmas and then went on drill. Everything passed off very quietly except some drunk officers made commotion in camp, but by tattoo [sic] everything was quiet.

26 Received orders to march at 4 A.M. We went 6 miles, one mile beyond Gallatin and went into camp.

27 Remained in camp and fixt [sic] up for a long stay.

28 We had inspection at 11 A.M. In the afternoon I went into town but the whole town was full of soldiers. Nothing to be bought what ever.

29 We had battalion drill and in the night the Regt. was alarmed and the Regt., with 9th. Ohio and a section of the battery, went out from the camp late and (stayed) behind a fence all night with rain and all, and waited for the Confederates, but they did not come.

30 In the morning we returned to camp but had not finished our breakfast before we were called out again, but it did not amount to anything.

31 We had review and inspection and in the evening had a merry time.

[image: map of Tennessee with Murfreesboro circled]

Jan. 1863

Jan. 1, 1863. Remained in camp. I had a very fine time. We heard the cannons from the battle at Murfreesboro all day.

2 We had Battalion Drill in the forenoon.

3 In camp. Firing was still going on at Murfreesboro.

4 Battalion Drill in the Forenoon and skirmish in the afternoon.

5 The same.

[image: map of Tennessee with Nashville, Gallatin and another city circled and a route drawn between them]

Feb. 1863

Feb. 1. Marched toward Franklin and a wild goose chase. Had a very hard time of it.

2 Marched through Red Man and returned to Nolinsville [sic] Pike and moved camp about 1½ miles further on towards Nolinsville[sic].

3 We stayed in camp. It was very cold. Our Regt., and with camp of 1st. Tenn. Cavalry and a team of Smiths [sic] Battery, was sent out on a scout. We marched through Nolensville and Triune, out to Harpethville where we stayed for the rest of the night.

4 Our battery got into position and the Cavalry had a skirmish with the Rebels and took 60 prisoners. In the afternoon the rest of the brigade came up and we crosst [sic] the river and went out to (Regis) crossroads where we campt [sic] for the night.

[image: map of Tennessee with 2 places circled and a marching route drawn]

March 1863

March 5th. We went out within ½ mile of Duck River. Had skirmishing inn front. Came back to a hill and within 1½ miles of Circlesville and campt [sic]. Marched 16 miles to day.

6 Marched by Circlesville and recrosst [sic] the Harpeth River and came back to Triune, a distance of 8 miles.

7 Marched through Triune and campt [sic] ½ miles this side of town for tents and baggage.

8 The Regt, made rifle posts.

9 In camp until the 11th.

12 Detachment was sent to build a bridge over Harpeth River.

13 In camp all day.

14 In camp all day.

15 The 1 and 3 Brig. arrived from Murfreesboro.

Apr. 1863

We remained at that camp until June 29th. We had drills of all description during that time.

[image: map of Tennessee with Murfreesboro circled as well as another city and a marching route drawn from that city]

[image: Photo of an old book with the label: Copy of Tennessee Military Instruction published in 1810; was taken from a house near Murfreesboro Tenn. by J.W.I. Smith 1st Lieut. Co. G. 36th Ind. Vols. Jany [sic] 11th 1863]

[image: man in Union uniform holding a bugle, presumably Albert Gsell]