



*Diary of*

**Sheldon R. Curtiss**

*Through his three years  
of service in the Civil War*



1970

Presented to the M.D.U.  
Civil War archives by Sheldon's  
R. Lester's youngest daughter (92 years)  
Evelyn Lester Loney (Mrs. Harvey H. Loney)

Acc. # HC-86

Received Jan. 22, 1970

# Experiences of Saranac Civil War Veteran Make Fascinating Reading

The Ionia County News is proud to present a series of five articles, which deal with the experiences of a Saranac Civil War veteran. The articles are being provided through the courtesy of Mrs Harvey H. Lowrey, of Saranac. Mrs Lowrey is the daughter of Civil War veteran, Sheldon Russell Curtiss.

The first article of the series includes the general recapitulation of highlights. The next four articles are portions of the actual diary kept by Mr Curtiss. This material should prove both fascinating and interesting to County News readers.

## NOTES TAKEN FROM SHELDON RUSSELL CURTISS' MEMORANDUM

My first vote was for Abraham Lincoln in 1860. In 1862 Lincoln called for volunteers and I enlisted. We young soldiers sang in those days "We are coming Father Abraham, 100,000 strong", that our flag might be protected and our Country not be "Divided against itself."

For about two months Company M. 6th Michigan Cavalry were stationed at Grand Rapids for training. The horses were trained, as well as the men, to make right and left swings, jumping fences and ditches, bugle calls and guard duty. The 5th, 6th and 7th Cavalry were stationed here and were known as Custer's famous Michigan Cavalry Brigade.

After this we were ordered to Washington. Our horses were carried by freight and we had good passenger cars. The car in which my Company was riding was derailed near Baltimore. I pulled the rope in time to stop the train and no damage was done, but we were delayed for about two hours. It was thought the switch was left open by the enemy. We were two days in reaching Washington, tired and hungry. There were so many of us that when eating breakfast we were obliged to stand with our sides to the table as there was not enough room to face it.

Our new encampment was soon equipped with tents, cooks (I was a cook) and rations which consisted of black coffee with brown sugar, hard-tack and beans. We were stationed here most of the winter.

We were put on detached duty along the Potomac Canal and River to guard against "Mosby's Guerrillas" who did their



desperate work in the night, turning their prisoners over to the Rebel Army and destroying Government property.

We had many battles such as Harpers Ferry, Rockville Coal Harbor, Battle of the Wilderness and others. During the time of the Gettysburg Battle, we were holding the crossing at Harpers Ferry. The roar of the guns continued for several days. The Rebels were entrenched behind us. We got them out by backing a long freight train with iron clad cars and artillery in the rear of the train. We fired for an hour or two and held the enemy back.

About this time we were sent about 20 miles up the Potomac to Falling Waters. Here we found Lee's Army had built a pontoon bridge across the River. This was made of boats anchored side by side with stringer planks laid from one to the other. Whole armies could cross this bridge. Our men were hiding in shrubbery along the River when the Rebel Army came skulking along. Our men came from the bushes with their revolvers leveled upon them, giving orders to dismount and lay down their arms and give themselves up. This they did and were taken prisoners. Our Company destroyed the pontoon bridge, dumped their wagons of supplies into the Potomac and took the prisoners back to Harpers Ferry where they were sent to Washington. The capturing of these men and this bridge was a great victory for the Union Men. Later there was a hard battle at Falling Waters for the Rebel Army were not able to cross the Pontoon Bridge as they had anticipated and came to defeat.

Since the backbone of the Confederacy had been broken at Gettysburg we had been having victories here and there and little thought as we were marching these prisoners to headquarters that the tables would be turned and ours would be a like fate - NO - not a like fate, but a far worse fate, for nothing could compare with the terrible outrages of the Rebel Prison at Andersonville.

(Was Captured By the  
Enemy June 12th, 1864.)

Had a hard fight and some of our train was cut off near Chancellorsville. Was captured while trying to make our escape to Blue Ridge. The Rebs used us



very mean. Took everything we had, our boats, our "cup money", robbed us of everything.

We marched at daylight for New Canton. Citizens with shot-guns following us. My feet were very sore as I was not used to marching on foot, being a Cavalryman. Next day we were stowed into old boats and started for Richmond like so many hogs. We traveled all night. We had nothing but raw meal and onions to eat. Arrived in Richmond at eleven in the night.

Next morning we were formed in line and counted and marched to the old Libby Prison. We drew small pieces of Indian bread, a piece of maggoty bacon and a few beans. The Union men were confined in the lower part of the Prison where it was so damp and unhealthy that mold actually accumulated on their beards. Many noble men closed their eyes forever to the scenes and sufferings that surrounded them. From this prison a tunnel was dug underneath the ground through which about sixty men escaped and some succeeded in reaching the Union Lines.

From this prison we were loaded into box cars, closely crowded with but little to eat or drink. Our suffering was great, and the filthiness of the cars was beyond description. There were no physical facilities provided. Late one afternoon in June we arrived at our destination - Andersonville Prison.

The prison was made by setting logs in the ground side by side, running up some fourteen feet. Before entering the prison we were taken to the quarters of the commanding officer, where for the first time we saw that heartless wretch called Wirttz. We were glad to get away from his profanity.

I shall never forget the gloominess of that afternoon when we were put inside the stockade (prison). I was surprised and horror stricken. Hope was gone and death seemed stamped on everything. The air was full of deathly odors rising from the filthy ground and the water was putrid from the wash of the prison. A long row of our boys who had died during the day lay on the right as we passed through the gate. The number would be added to until morning when the "Dead Wagon" would take them to the place of burial.

This stockade prison enclosed about twenty acres which in a short time was enlarged to thirty acres. Guards could be seen on top of the stockade at intervals of about five rods, all around the prison. There was a line staked out some twenty feet from the stockade that was called the "Dead Line," beyond

which it was sure death to go.

That first night four of us laid down in the rain under our one blanket, weary, hungry and sad, but in a short time were awakened by robbers that infested the prison. One of these fellows stood over me with a large club, another held a razor over the throat of the one next to me, while another looked over a roll containing writing

material, needles, thread, etc. I held my gold pen under my tongue and the holder was in the seam of my pants. I got comfort in writing home and averaged writing three to five letters a month. I received no letters and how I longed for them. I learned six months later that none of my letters were sent home.

Days and weeks passed by and October found us hungry, cold, waiting and hoping for release. To walk about from point to point was not a pleasant mode of pastime. One needed a stout heart to walk down by the old prison gate in the morning, and look at the long row of our dead comrades awaiting the "Dead Wagon."

We had but little reading matter and a newspaper hardly ever found its way inside the prison. We tried to sing but our hearts were too heavy for that. I had a Bible which was not taken from me in all the searching through which we passed. This was often called for and read carefully by the boys.

Rations were withheld three days from the whole prison because a few had been caught planning to escape, and this at a time when we were almost reduced to absolute starvation.

Wells were dug to a great depth in an effort to get pure water but not much could be obtained in that way. The suffering for it was great until the "Providence Spring" broke out. This spring was so named because it was looked upon by many as a direct gift from God. I have drunk from many a fountain of living water but I never found one so sweet and so pure. How eagerly we crowded up to get a draught from that pure fountain, and how we hastened with a cup of it to a helpless comrade racked with pain and burning with fever. How thankfully the sufferers received it, I have no doubt that many of us live today that would not have survived without it.

Finally a detachment of a thousand men were sent into the stockades in Milan, Georgia. This was a much better place to be than the one we left at Andersonville.

We met a Michigan man here. He was in

the Rebel service because he had property in Richmond, Virginia. He was in sympathy with the North but dare not be seen talking with a Union soldier. Through his efforts we were relieved from prison to work for him in a Rebel eating house and bakery. (Father was a cook in the army.) During my first day out, General Winder of the Rebel army came for me and asked, (with oaths) what I was doing? He told me the tent I was putting up belonged to him and he didn't want anything to happen to it. Shortly after this he was taken sick and I was requested to prepare and carry him some food. I told him, I had prepared it the best I could with what I had to do with. It was not as good as my mother would do but I hoped it would taste good to him. At this time he had gotten beyond swearing.

This heartless Gen. Winder was one of the men who helped to plan Andersonville Prison. He made his boast that they "would kill more men there than in battle." He had cursed at me as I was putting up his tent and making my bunk, but while he was sick at Mahlon, I had fed him, and later I learned while we were at Savannah he was taken sick again and died under the tent I had staked and on the bunk I had made. "If thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."

Our Michigan friend had received orders to leave Mahlon.

Sherman was on his famous ride from Atlanta to the Sea and was very near Mahlon, so we were getting away, we didn't know where. We loaded all supplies on the train and went with him. This time we located near Savannah. In the middle of the night our Michigan friend came to our tent and told me he thought he could work us through to our lines as a nurse for the sick soldiers who were leaving. We decided to go. We went to where the sick were and answered to our description papers. There were many sick leaving. We marched through the streets of Savannah to a large Rebel flat-boat and were carried down the Savannah River to our lines. We saw in the distance on one of our Union gun boats, our Flag, the grand old Stars and Stripes. It was the first time I had seen our flag since before I was taken prisoner, over six months previous. I shall never forget how blessed it looked to me. It seemed like being brought back to God's Country.

We reached our lines where the gun boat was guarding between the North and South. We soon passed this line and came

to one of our Government transports. We were transferred to this in the early evening and it took all night to unload. Some of the men were too weak to walk the plank. Early in the morning we were ordered out on deck to remove all our clothing, together with the "Gray backs" which might be crawling here and there. All this was thrown into the Atlantic. The sailors threw out long ropes with buckets to get water for their bathing. It surely seemed good to have some care for our welfare once again and to be treated like real men.

We were four days on the Atlantic toward Annapolis, Maryland, where our parole was located. While on the boat I had a letter ready to send home and the Chaplain mailed it when we landed. This was the first letter that had reached my home for over six months although I had written many.

As our transport was being anchored, we were notified by one of our soldiers that we were to have a furlough of thirty days. As soon as we received our papers, we were on our way home, reaching Ionia, Mich., at daybreak one morning. No one knew we were coming, so we started on foot to our home about nine miles away. We went by the way of the aged parents of the Michigan man who had befriended us, whom we had left in Savannah. They had not heard from their son for three years and to them it was almost like hearing from the dead.

We were soon united with my wife Abby, and our little girl, Rose, whom we had left behind, and the new baby, Lillian Abby, whom I had never seen and was over a year old now.

#### PROVIDENCE SPRING

Mr Curtiss lived to be 84 years old but never had the pleasure of visiting the Providence Spring as it is now, a National Shrine; nor the National Cemetery where out of the 52,345 comrades who were confined in the Andersonville Prison, 13,900 are buried. Through the help of the Government, Mr Curtiss was able to locate the marker of his brother-in-law, George Barnard, who starved to death there and also the number of his grave.

The Pavillion over Providence Spring was erected by the W.R.C. Inscribed on it is: "The prisoners cry of thirst rang up to Heaven, God heard and with His thunder cleft the earth and poured His sweetest waters gushing here."

Copied by Evelyn Curtiss Lowrey, the youngest of Shel-



don Russell Curtiss' family of seven, and in memory of his Civil War baby, Rosa Curtiss Stowell.

A copy of the diary kept by my father, Sheldon R. Curtiss, during some of his service in the Civil War and also during his incarceration in the southern prison, Andersonville. On the fly-leaf of the little black book in which he wrote from day to day, he had inscribed below his name and his Company M, 6th Mich. Cavalry, these words: "He that endureth to the end will receive an everlasting reward." He has mother's name, Abigail Curtiss, Ionia, Mich. on the opposite page, doubtless with the thought in mind, in case of a casualty, the little book might fall into her hands. The record begins when father was twenty three years old.

Friday, January 1, 1863 - We have been in comotion all day. Sent some of our things to the ferry and were in line of battle all the forenoon. This has been a cold windy day. (Seven o'clock evening) There has been no enemy in sight.

Saturday, 2nd - Our horses were saddled all night and early this morning we were out to meet the rebels. It is still cold and windy. We have expected to be ordered out but are comfortable in camp yet.

Sunday 3rd - We were out early this morning and ready for the march. Started at seven o'clock, went to Winchester and from there to Newtown where we took a number of rebels and returned to camp at eleven at night.

Monday 4th - We all feel tired out after our 58 miles in eighteen (18) hours. We had 300 cavalrymen, two pieces of artillery. We wounded two and took seven prisoners.

Tuesday 5th - We received marching orders at two pm. I started but my horse lost a shoe and I was sent to camp. It is still very cold and bad to get around. Some of our Company came in last evening.

Wednesday 6th - We have received strong re-enforcements from the army on the Potomac. The enemy has not come any nearer than Winchester.

Thursday 7th - The weather is a little more moderate. The forces came in from the scouts this pm. They did not find the enemy of any account. Took one rebel in Newtown and killed one rebel. A captain of the first New York wounded.

Friday 8th - Everything is quiet above here as far as Newtown and the rebels are supposed to be retreating.

Saturday, 9th - There was two inches of snow fall last evening.

# Diary of the Civil War

## Experiences of Sheldon R. Curtiss

★ Courtesy of Mrs. Harvey H. Lowrey, Saranac ★

The weather continues cold.

Sunday 10th - Well, after a long tedious time of cold weather another pleasant Sabbath has dawned upon us. How pleasant, how joyous! I have been writing and reading most of the day.

Monday 11th - It is still warm and pleasant. The rebels are said to be retreating. There is nothing new, all is quiet along the lines.

Tuesday 12th - I have been out taking a horseback ride for my health and my horses health. We are having very easy times now but are expecting to go on a scout soon.

Wednesday 13th - The 21st and 22nd Company of Cavalry started for home this morning. I would have liked it if it had been our regiment some better. They were six month men.

Thursday 14th - I have spent the day mending and washing. This has been a very pleasant, warm day. The Orderly started home today to recruit. We are having very easy times at present and some of us are thinking of going home.

Friday 15th - Got up this morning and cooked a good lot of buckwheat cakes which was a great treat with us. (Father was a cook in the army). The weather is still warm and prospects of a storm.

Saturday 16th - I have been at work fixing the captain's tent. There is some excitement about the rebs coming but we are all right yet.

Sunday 17th - This is another pleasant Sabbath day and I am well and able to enjoy the precious blessings of God. I have spent the day reading and writing.

Monday 18th - The news is very good today. The 21st and first N.Y. had quite a fight this evening. After untying some soldiers the 21st had tied, so a fight ensued.

Tuesday 19th - I have been fixing up in the tent. This pm Levi and I went out and got a nice fat sheep.

Wednesday 20th - Last night was a restless one for me. My lungs bothered me very much. I feel better this morning. All is quiet along the lines today.

Thursday 21st - All quiet but a raid is expected in direction of Stransburgh.

Friday 22nd - It has been a warm and pleasant day. I was detailed to go with the brigade Quartermaster this pm. Returned to camp at five o'clock after a pleasant ride.

Saturday 23rd - We were all out early this morning ready to march at seven. Went to Newtown. Stopped all night. I was on picket, the night was pleasant and we had a very good time of it.

Sunday 24th - We marched all day. Found the rebels at Woodstock.

Monday 25th - We stayed at Winchester last night. Started at seven and arrived at camp at three o'clock and found all well.

Tuesday 26th - Levi Barnard and I went to Cabetown after butter. We are looking for the paymaster all the time now.

Wednesday 27th - This is a very warm pleasant day and we are enjoying it pretty well. The news is good in the day's papers.

Thursday 28th - Levi and I were detailed for picket and finally were kept on reserve. The boys go out on a scout to return at six o'clock in the morning after marching all night.

Friday 29th - We are all in camp today. Have had a picture taken of ourselves and quarters. This is a very pleasant day.

Saturday 30th - Still in camp but expect to go on scout any time. The rebels have captured Michigan's trains and a large number of cattle.

Sunday 31st - We started on the march at ten o'clock today and marched until eleven o'clock at night. Encamped five miles West of Winchester. Had a good time and nice lot of honey. There are about 3000 of cavalry and two pieces of artillery with us. We are probably going to assist General Muligan. The boys all feel well and appear to be enjoying themselves. Our destination is probably into western Virginia. Sent six letters to Abigail this month.

Monday February 1, 1863 - We drew rations for two days and marched at seven. The day has been a very pleasant one. Our march has been over mountains and through valleys. We camped by a big canyon.

Tuesday 2nd - We started before daylight after a good

night's rest and our stomachs full of mutton. Had a very pleasant ride. Arrived in Romney at 2 o'clock. Had a fight with rebs at macanics gap in the afternoon.

Wednesday 3rd - We held the Gap last night and have been to Springfield today from there to Romney again. At one o'clock marched for Moorfield. Had tedious time and very sleepy on our way.

Thursday 4th - We came to Moorfield at daylight and found the rebels in force and engaged them at eight o'clock and drove them through lost river gap. The loss is not yet known. We encamped west of the river near Moorfield at eleven o'clock.

Friday 5th - We marched for Romney early and marched all day without encountering the enemy. Just before dark landed in Romney safe and sound.

Saturday 6th - I was on guard last night but had a good rest and put shoes on my horse. We encamped in Winchester very late.

Sunday 7th - We started out of Winchester and fed five (5) miles out, then started on and came to C Town, found the camp moved to Halltown, every thing looks dreary in the old camp.

Monday 8th - I have been resting today and feel very well. Are glad that we have all arrived safely in camp. We have heard that Corporal Province was killed at Smithfield by the Rebels and we feel very sorry to lose one of our number.

Tuesday 9th - We have been fixing our tent today. Have worked very hard.

Wednesday 10th - We have finished our tent and are very comfortable again. The weather continues to be pleasant.

Thursday 11th - We were ordered on scout duty but after getting ready the order was countermanded and we have been working on our stable.

Friday 12th - Are still in camp and at work on the stable. There were some rebs came in with flag of truce today. I have not learned their business.

Saturday 13th - I have spent the day in camp writing and reading. Everything is quiet along the lines. Weather is warm

and pleasant.

**Sunday 14th** - This is the first

Sunday I have been in camp for three weeks. This is a very pleasant day. I have been writing and reading and thus passed the day.

15, 16, 17, and 18th of February not recorded.

Friday 19th - I have been to Charleston with the men who were enrolling the militia and we had some time with the secession women there.

Saturday 20th - We were at Duffield Station today. Our business was the same as yesterday.

Sunday 21st - I am in camp today again. All is quiet and the day is pleasant. Densmore (Coinneille) and Hartley started for home this morning.

Monday 22nd - Levi and I came in the night of the 17th and saw a woman who complained of one of the artillery men and asked us to take him to camp. We did so and had some fun with the drunken fellow.

Tuesday 23rd - I was detailed for picket duty this morning and went up to the stone mills on the Shenandoah. Had a very good time.

Wednesday 24th - We came in about noon from picket. Levi and I brought a pail of nice honey and a good supply of milk.

Thursday 25th - We were out with the enrolling officers today. Had a pleasant ride. Returned at dark.

Friday 26th - We were at Charlestown today. Took dinner at Mr Langdon's and fed the horses at the mill. We had some tough fighting with the rebel women but nothing serious.

Saturday 27th - We have had a risky piece of business to perform. Went from camp up the Shenandoah to the county line among the Rebs.

Sunday 28th - This is a very pleasant day. I have been in camp for the first time in many days, but the blessings that are bestowed upon me are many for which I have great reason to be thankful.

Monday 29th - I am on dismounted guard today in front of

Colonel Taylor's quarters. There is appearance of snow but it may turn into rain. I have written five letters this month.

Tuesday March 1 - There was quite a fall of snow last night and the weather is cold.

Wednesday 2nd - We have spent the day in camp as it is very bad to be out on such a day. We have been talking with the enrolling officer and have had a very good visit.

Thursday 3rd - Today we crossed the Shenandoah and went upon the East side and

crossed a bad fork near Snickers Gap.

Friday, March 4, 1863 - This morning at the first dawn we were on the alert. Went to Smithfield and from there toward Lee town, found no Rebs so left the enrolling officer and returned to camp.

Saturday 5th - I did a washing and sat down to write when the bugle sounded to horses and we were soon on the road toward Waterford where we arrived at midnight. Found no Rebs.

Sunday 6th - This morning we were out early and started for camp about noon. The first Vets. lost 23 men at Snickers Field.

Monday 7th - We moved from Halltown Fernsville, Virginia. Found that the tents and the equipment were all gone so after we fed our horses we followed on and found the boys all safe in a comfortable place.

Tuesday 8th - We have all been busy fixing our tents. There is appearance of rain. We like our situation very well.

Wednesday 9th - The Pennsylvania Cavalry left here this evening as we were sent here to relieve them. They expect to go home to recruit.

Thursday 10th - We heard that the New York Veterans (1st.) lost some men and with them a Major killed. Aside from that all is well.

Friday 11th - It has rained hard today and the mud is getting very bad. We have been out and got a rotary stove and it is a very good one for our use.

Saturday 12th - I came early from picket and have been fixing the quarters. This has been a very pleasant day after the rainy weather.

Sunday 13th - All is quiet today. I have been writing most all day. There are no particular news.

Monday 14th - The weather is some colder this morning. We are ordered to lie on our arms tonight but I think we shall not be troubled.

Tuesday 15th - We are all right yet in camp. I am on picket in camp tonight.

Wednesday 16th - I have been on patrol today. Went to Leesborough. Found all quiet.

Thursday 17th - This is St. Patrick's day in the morning at eight o'clock. It is some warmer so the day is very pleasant. There was one of Co. I's men taken last night.

Friday 18th - We have been busy today looking for the stray Rebels that are scouting around but have found none.

Saturday 19th - It is colder today. I was out on patrol today. Had a good time but quite cold. All is quiet but here and there

are Rebs reported about Bergville.

Sunday 20th - I have spent the day by writing home. We heard that we are going to be ordered to our regiment, but if we are we will try to put up with it.

Monday 21st - There is nothing new today. The weather is quite cold again. We had a good meeting last night and yesterday.

Tuesday 22nd - I came off picket this morning. We had a very cold time.

Wednesday 23rd - It is very lonesome in camp today and time seems to pass very slow.

Thursday 24th - It is very warm and pleasant today. We have had a game of ball all this afternoon to pass the lonely hours.

Friday 25th - All quiet today Mr Myers came and stayed with us tonight. He is now enrolling the slaves.

Saturday 26th - I have been very lonesome today. All the time seems to drag.

Sunday 27th - Oh how pleasant it is today! I have spent the day writing and reading some good books the Chaplain gave us.

Monday 28th - It is colder today. The Infantry are ordered away and some Ohio Regiment in their places. So we are to have some new neighbors.

Tuesday 29th - It has been raining all day so I have been in all the day.

Wednesday 30th - This has been a very stormy day. The snow has fell thick and fast. It has stopped here now.

Thursday 31st - I came from picket at seven this morning. Took a good nap and then had the pleasure of eating maple sugar from home that Jal (?) brought. We have had a good prayer meeting tonight. There were two Rebs from Richmond came today.

Friday, April 1st - It rained all of last night. We have six men recruits come today. The satler shot the colored boy in the head but did not kill him. We signed the payroll today.

Saturday 2nd - This has been a bad stormy day and everything looks gloomy. We are expecting our pay the first of the week.

Sunday 3rd - We have had preaching today in the tent. It is a very muddy time outside.

Monday 4th - We were paid off this pm and was very glad of it as the boys were all out of money.

Tuesday 5th - I have sent part of my check home and am going to send some money in a few days.

Wednesday 6th - We have been after some horses beyond Smithfield. Found some rank secessionist and some of the

women wanted to fight.

Thursday 7th - This has been a very warm and pleasant day. There are no particular news. I have sent \$75.00 home this pay day.

Friday 8th - It is a warm pleasant day. I have spent the day in the tent drawing off music of a piece from the Waverly and writing home.

Saturday 9th - All quiet.

Sunday 10th - We only had a meeting this evening. We are all in camp today. I have written most all day.

Monday 11th - We received marching orders today to go to Halltown. I am on picket near Leetown. Our lines run from the Shenandoah to Bunker Hill. There were two Rebs came in today.

Tuesday 12th - We were relieved about one o'clock, went to camp and found it all torn up. We were soon on our way to Halltown where we arrived about sunset.

Wednesday 13th - We all went on picket this morning. This is a rainy day. There were bushwhackers around last night and wounded one of the 21st men. The men up the river saw seven Rebs beyond there.

Thursday 14th - We were relieved and went to Snickers Gap today. Found all right there. The river is high and the railroad bridge went off carrying a coal train of cars.

Friday 15th - I came in late last evening, found George and Levi (Abigail's brothers) all comfortable in our little tent where we all took a good night's rest for the first time in some time. All is quiet.

Saturday 16th - I sent a few things home in the box that George and Levi sent. It has been a rainy day so I have been in the tent most of the time. There is some talk that we are going to the regiment.

Sunday 17th - We are out on picket near Charlestown. The Rebs fired on our pickets last night on the right of our line. We have a very nice camping ground at Halltown but we will have to leave it soon, as we always have to do.

Monday 18th - We came to camp last night and had a good night's rest. The weather has come off more pleasant, but cool.

Tuesday 19th - We received orders to join our regiment this morning. We are ready for anything consistent but hate to leave our nice quarters. But so it is with soldiers. 3 P. M. We have torn down our tents and things look bad but it only reminds us that all things are uncertain.

Wednesday 20th - We marched to Boliver and encamped near the heights. Expect to start for Washington soon. I



have a very bad cold and feel about sick. The weather is very cold.

Thursday 21st - I went out on picket and came nearly having a fight with a woman. She called me "A damned Yank, and would not do anything to save my life." I would not let her out was the trouble.

Friday 22nd - I came to camp this noon and have been napping the remainder of the day. We were up by false alarm in camp tonight.

Saturday 23rd - I went up to Key's ford today noon, came back and went on picket. There is a force of 8,000 Rebel Cavalry in London Valley, said to be at Leesborough. With this exception all is quiet.

Sunday noon 24th - Just came in camp from picket duty. This has been a very pleasant day and one that I could enjoy if I were only at home. I trust this war will soon end so we can enjoy the blessings of home.

Monday 25th - All is quiet.

Tuesday 26th - We were relieved this morning and shall start for Washington in the morning. So must bid adieu to this part of Virginia.

Wednesday 27th - We were out early this morning and started at sunrise. Went by the way of Fredrick. Have had a pleasant time. Stopped at night at Hayettstown (?).

Thursday 28th - We marched until noon and encamped on the old campground at Rockville. It is very pleasant and seems like old times. When I staked my tent I said I was one day nearer home.

Friday 29th - We bid goodbye to Rockville this morning and marched to Washington this noon and encamped on Camp Stonema. This is a very pleasant and slightly place.

Saturday 30th - I have been all over this camp this morning after I heard that break away. Have been writing this afternoon. We were mustered for pay this evening.

Sunday, May 1st - We have not spent this forenoon much like Sunday. Have been turning over our saddles, guns and sabers. There was a heavy wind this evening with some rain.

Monday 2nd - We were out early this morning to curry our horses and start for the front. We have marched all day and finally found the regiment, after a long search. There are a large number of troops here.

Tuesday 3rd - The whole army broke up camp this morning. Our army is a splendid one. We camped for the night and got part of a night's rest but feel pretty good to start off.

Wednesday 4th - We have made a long march today. Went to the battlefield of Chancellorsville where we encamped for

the night and drew our rations preparatory for a fight. There has been a fight on our left this pm.

Thursday 5th - We started out early this morning to meet the Rebs. Marched about ten miles, fed our horses and ate our breakfast in eight minutes, then had a hard fight lasting about three hours. The fight drove the Rebs off the field. We killed one of Lee's artillery generals. They left their killed and wounded on the field. We left a part of our division to hold the field and marched toward Chancellorsville to hold another field. Stayed all night.

Friday 6th - This morning we marched back to the field we had the fight upon yesterday. Another hard fight but no great loss on either side. We were glad to see the night set in so as to rest.

Saturday 7th - We had but little rest last night. Our pickets were fired upon many times.

Saturday 7th continued - We have marched all day and it has been very dusty. We encamped on a large, clear piece of ground.

Sunday 8th - We have 1600 Cavalrymen with us. We think we are on the road to Richmond. Butler (?) is said to be there. Our Regiment has been in advance. Some skirmishings in front.

Monday 9th - We have made a long march of it today. Crossed the North River and encamped for the night at dark. We are out of rations both for ourselves and horses.

(note - Sheldon lost track of a day or two somewhere after the battle.)

Tuesday May 12th - There were forty of our Company out on flankers. About noon we began tearing up the RR track seven miles from Richmond. We had a hard fight but were the victors. Took two pieces of artillery.

Thursday 14th - We had an all night march yesterday. Came to the Forts of Richmond just before day. The Rebs had a torpedo buried in the road but no damage done. We had a hard fight at Chickamauga Creek that lasted all day.

Friday 15th - It was a bad rainy night last night but we laid down in the water on the grist mills battle field. We rested well as it was the first night's rest we had had in a long time.

Saturday 16th - We have marched today without having a fight. There was a spy shot by our men. He led our advance under a masked battery. We encamped at three p.m. Thirty five of our company were on picket.

Sunday 17th - We camped on Melvern Hill this pm. Our gun

boats threw some heavy shell at us supposing us to be the enemy.

Monday 18th - This is a pleasant place to encamp the water being good. We were made to rejoice with good news from the army; a chance to send off some letters, a good supply of rations and our horses were inspected and some taken out to send back to the rear.

Tuesday 19th - We marched with three day's rations. All is quiet.

Wednesday 20th - We left Melvern Hill last night. We marched all night over some very bad road but today it has been better. We marched half way from Melvern Hill to White house landing.

Thursday 21st - Our regiment left early and destroyed Battons bridge today. I stayed with the train. It has been a rainy day and I have been very lonely. Oh how I long to see this wicked war ended. May the Lord send a speedy termination.

Friday 22nd - We marched for the RR near Hanover and reached there at sunset. We drove out a small rebel force and destroyed a bridge and some of their works around the depot and encamped for the night.

Saturday 23rd - We met the enemy near Hanover Court. We found they were strongly fortified and guarding a bridge just beyond. We destroyed the RR bridge and marched back to the Whitehouse an encamped.

Sunday 24th - Oh, what a pleasant Sabbath. We are laying near the White House eighteen miles from Richmond. This seems like a Holy day and I feel the presence of God. May I long remember this day. We crossed Tamenkey river. We drew our rations at White House landing.

Monday 25th - I was up at five o'clock this morning and we marched at day break to the White House landing. We crossed on the rail road bridge and

drew rations from our boats, on the Tamenkey river. They have not been here before since Mr Lincoln.

Tuesday 26th - We have had a hard day. Are on the way to have training with the main army. We have had a long, hard march and need some rest very much.

Wednesday 27th - We marched half a day and reached our train at noon. We got a nice lot of letters from home. Oh how thankful I am for them and that God has spared my wife and children. His care is ever upon them.

Thursday 28th - We drew rations and marched at noon. It has been a rainy day. Our horses and men are well drilled out.

Friday 29th - We marched all night and this morning early found a force of Rebs where we crossed Tamenkey (?) river. Our regiment lost four men killed. We finally drove the enemy back.

Saturday 30th - I have been to the creek and washed myself and clothes. I have done some writing. We marched at noon and had a hard fight. Our Company lost three men killed, Sergeant Campbell, Clark Gross and Martin House.

Sunday 31st - We fell back with our regiment and had a good night's rest. Marched toward the White House landing; stayed all night in a field of plenty for our horses.

Monday, June 1, 1863 - I was out early this morning after my horse, found him, and then took a good nap.

Tuesday 2nd - We laid in camp a good share of the day and toward one o'clock our regiment marched and had a heavy fight that lasted all night. Our regiment were dismounted on the skirmish line. We lost but few. The enemy tried hard to turn our left flank but were repulsed.

Well, another month has gone and by the goodness of God I am spared from the balls of the enemy. For this I am very thankful and will trust Him for the coming month.

Wednesday, June 3, 1863 - There was some fighting this morning. We were relieved by the 6th Corps. Inf. It is a very dusty and hot time. The fire is ruining the crops, the woods and on all sides, all looks dismal.

Thursday 4th - We moved to Batons Bridge. We found the enemy in fortification on the opposite side. We encamped for the night and I enjoyed a good meal cooked in the rain. All is well.

Friday 5th - We have remained in camp twenty four hours. Our horse's feed is out and feed is very low. We have encamped on this ground before.

Saturday 6th - We moved about fourteen miles, came up to our train. Saw some of our dismounted boys. All is well.

Sunday 7th - This is the Holy Sabbath but does not seem like it. I have tried to make it seem like Sunday. There has been heavy cannonading in direction of Fort Darling. We drew one day's rations.

Monday 8th - We marched ten miles and camped on the bank of the Potomac. We drew rations for a long raid; start in the morning.

Tuesday 9th - We started on a raid this morning. I was up early, got a good breakfast and was ready to start at sunrise. We had a very pleasant ride and a short march.



Wednesday 10th - There is nothing new. We are still marching toward Blue Ridge toward Charlottesville.

Thursday 11th - We are on the march, destination unknown.

Friday 12th - We have marched all day through the dust. Encamped at eleven o'clock at night. Got our supper and a little sleep preparatory to a hard day's fight.

#### CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY A. D. 1864

Saturday 12th - We are near the R. R. near Charlottesville. Have had a hard fight and some of our train cut off.

Evening - I am a prisoner. Was captured while trying to make our escape to Blue Ridge. The Rebs used us very mean; took everything.

Sunday 13th - I am in the hands of the enemy today. They use us very well, but there are no prospects of getting rations, and the Rebs took all we had.

Monday 14th - I took a cup of coffee for breakfast and at noon we started for Richmond. Saw one woman with a spy glass supposing we were little inferior animals, but she soon found she was mistaken. We have been robbed of everything.

Tuesday 15th - We took the cars at noon yesterday, rode to a miserable Reb town where we were put under guard in an open field, and drew a little meal very late. I did not get up to cook anything.

Wednesday 16th - We have been kept in the hot sun today and I have tried to put up with my lot without a murmur. Everything looks pleasant (when speaking of weather).

Thursday 17th - We draw a small piece of bacon and a pint of meal a day and pass the time by making our corn-cake and mush. The weather is very hot. We fastened up my blanket to shelter us from the sun.

Friday 18th - We marched at daylight for New Canton. Had citizens with shotguns to guard us. I did not stand it very well. My feet were very sore as I was not used to marching on foot. We stayed at White Plains.

Saturday 19th - We started at sunrise for the canal where we arrived and cooked our dinner, after which we were stowed in to three old boats and started for Richmond like so many hogs.

Sunday 20th - We traveled all of last night. I passed a very restless night. It was very hot and very crowded. We have nothing but some raw meal and onions to eat. We arrived in Richmond at eleven last night.

Monday 21st - We marched to an old tobacco house where we were stowed in and searched to the skin. Every-

thing was taken away, even private property. A little after noon we drew a little piece of pork and bread.

Tuesday 22nd - We were formed into lines and counted. Then we marched to the old Libby prison. We drew small pieces of Indian bread, a piece of maggoty bacon and a few beans.

Wednesday 23rd - We marched out by file and drew rations as we passed out and over the river; took the cars about eleven for a Southern prison. We were jammed in the cars so tight that we almost suffocated.

Thursday 24th - We were taken off the cars and drew rations at Olanville and then got on the cars again and started for Charlotte.

Friday 25th - We lay at Charlotte one day. Drew some moldy bread and bacon; very short rations and very poor.

Saturday 26th - We rode to Columbia today, were unloaded and stowed in a tight car where we suffered very much for want of air. Some of our men died for want of air.

Sunday 27th - We went to Augusta and the engine ran off the track so we were detained in the hot sun until after noon. I rode on top of the cars and slept on them over night.

Monday 28th - We stopped in Atlanta quite a long time but drew no rations. The weather is very sultry.

Tuesday 29th - We got to Andersonville and were put into the old prison, or stockade, where an awful sight is to be seen. I was very much surprised when I first saw the suffering.

Wednesday 30th - We lay down in the rain having no place of our own, to lay our head. The raiders took some things from the boys and finally we scared them out and were not disturbed afterwards.

Sunday July 3rd - This is another of God's holy Sabbaths. We sang some and I have prayed in secret that God would take care of me, and mine at home.

Monday 4th - This is a curious Independence Day to me, and one that will long be remembered by me. I hope and trust that God will hasten the time when I shall be free from the works of war.

Tuesday 5th - I feel like a lonely man today. Have no consolation, only the consolation of feeling I am protected by the strong hand of God. God helps me to be a faithful follower of His blessed Son.

Wednesday 6th - We have spent the day in tinkering around our small quarters. I lay down this evening asking God

to "cover my defenseless head with the shadow of His wing." Had a good rest.

Thursday 7th - This has been a very warm day. I am very well and trying to keep up my courage, but it is hard. The cars have been running very briskly and the report is that there has been musketry heard near Macon.

#### AUGUST, 1864

There has been a large number of days in succession that there has been nothing in particular transpired so I will put down some of the popular prices of things in camp.

August 20 - Flour, \$1.00 per pint. Beans 25c per pint. Pepper 50c a spoonful. Red pepper 75c a piece. Potatoes \$1.50 per dozen, size of hen's eggs. Small biscuit 25c. Watermelon and muskmelon \$3.00 to \$5.00. Salt 75c to \$1.00 per pound. Rice 50c per pint. Apples 25c to 30c a piece. Onions 10c to \$1.00. Tomatoes 25c to 30c. Peas 25c to 30c a pint. Green tea 50c per spoonful. Soap \$3.00 per pound.

August 31, 1864 - The last day of another month spent in a rebel prison has come and with it no particular prospects of getting away. We are not as well as I would wish we were but are enjoying blessings for which we have great reason to thank Almighty God. I have thought many times of comfortable home and when I compare it with the hardships we have to endure here, it makes the heart ache for the former times to return. My prayer is that the happy time may be speedily brought around and the war ended and the right prevail.

Thursday, September 1 - Well another September has come but not as in former days. Instead of bringing joy and happiness, it is bringing gloom and sorrow and privations. I often ask myself how long this cup must last.

Friday 2nd - There has been great excitement in camp about our being released from this awful bull-pen. I hope it may all prove true and so save many from a painful death.

Saturday 3rd - We are having very pleasant weather for which we ought to be thankful to the Giver of all good. I am trusting Him for all things.

Sunday 4th - This is another Sabbath spent in prison. We were cut short on our rations today. There is some talk of our being exchanged and the time wears slowly away; may our lot soon be cast in better lands.

Monday 5th - It has been a warm sultry day. I have been busy working out some trinkets of bone to keep as a memento of old Camp Sumpter and thus pass the long, lonely hours away.

Tuesday 6th - At a late hour this evening, the order came for eighteen detachments to prepare to march. There has been a great deal of excitement and many hearts made to rejoice.

Wednesday 7th - There has been a great stir in camp all night and this morning the old prisoners commence to go out but some are afraid they are going to another prison instead of our own lines.

Thursday 8th - Our detachment was ordered to be ready to march at any moment so we all feel well about it. I have been cooking some, for a start.

Friday 9th - We are all in prison yet, and shall probably be for a week if we go according to our detachment.

Saturday 10th - All is tumult this morning. I am put in mind of bees swarming when any part of the camp gets orders to go out. There are a great many sick left in barracks until the last.

Sunday 11th - Well, I suppose I am to spend another Sabbath in the Georgia bull-pen. How little it seems like the Sundays used to be at home. I feel very lonely today, but God alone can comfort.

Monday 12th - I have been fixing up for a start which I hope will be soon. There were twenty detachments ordered out tonight, but did not all leave the grounds.

Tuesday 13th - Levi Barnard, brother-in-law, and I have been drying down some molasses and had a good sugar eat. The cars ran together and killed a number of our men this morning so the transportation is stopped for today.

Wednesday 14th - I dreamed of Abigail (wife) last night but did not have any visit with her. I thank God he has spared my life. For this I often think I shall give Him the glory if it is ever mine to reach home.

Thursday 15th - I was awake last night giving Othaniah (a comrade) medicine, so I do not feel well today. The sick were ordered out this evening to go to our lines. It is raining tonight.

Friday 16th - I passed a very restless night but feel better this morning. I have been hoping that I might be well until I get away. There are many flying reports.

Saturday 17th - I have been dieting for a day and think if I am careful for a few days, I shall be well again. I trust all in the hands of a just God who does all things well.

Sunday 18th - This is another very pleasant Sabbath (father refers to the sunshine when he uses the word "pleasant") but a lonely one for me. I hope I may soon be released from this awful place.

Monday 19th - There is no particular stir in camp today, only a few of Sherman's men going out. I am sick again. George (Barnard - brother-in-law) is very sick and I am afraid he will not stand it long.

Tuesday 20th - I dreamed of going home and eating roast corn with Abigail. Had a good time but it soon proved to be only a dream. I am very lonely and want to hear from home very much.

Wednesday 21st - Well, one day goes only to bring another with its sorrow and gloom. George and Norton are very sick. I am afraid it will go hard with George yet.

Thursday 22nd - We took George and Norton to the doctor and got them admitted to the hospital. Took them to the north gate just in time to go out in the last wagon. I hated to part with them but so it goes. (He never saw George again. He starved to death.)

Friday 23rd - We are having rain every day and it seems hard with only a thin blanket for a shelter. Our detachment was filled up this forenoon. We expect to be taken away every day and are very anxious.

Saturday 24th - A. Morse went out to the hospital this pm. Has the scurvy. There are about twenty - five taken out each day. I feel pretty well today but very weak for the want of food.

Sunday 26th - There is a lonely silliness hanging over camp today and it brings a time for reflections and meditations. I have thought of home many times today. Prayed God to hasten me there.

Tuesday 27th - Everything was quiet until evening when there were four detachments ordered to the cars. This gave us a little more courage. Levi and J. Leake and I have dug us a nice lot of wood today from a stump.

Wednesday 28th - I had a good night's rest last night, for which I am very thankful. Levi is not well. I have strong hopes of getting out of here within a few weeks. We drew very bad rations yesterday.

Thursday 29th - We hear very discouraging news but cannot tell anything by what we hear. This a very dark time truly but the old adage is "the darkest hour is just before day." I trust it may be so.

Friday, 30th - Well the last day of September finds me a poor lonely prisoner and not many signs of better times. I feel very lonely and sad. How I long for home, remembered home!

## OCTOBER

Saturday 1st - All the world

seems darkened, except the bright spots that God permits a ray of Holy light to shine along my path of life. My only home is in God. In Him will I trust.

Sunday, 2nd - I have a very poor appetite and nothing to eat. I asked God today to hasten the hour when I would be restored to my family. I know this is the prayer of Abby (Abigail) today. God bless her and the babies.

Monday 3rd - We had a very rainy night and this morning is cooler. We had a hard shower with wind this pm. The day has been a gloomy one but the presence of God has been with me.

Tuesday, October 4, 1864 - We have spent another long lonely day but my prayer has been, and is, that I may live a more devoted Christian life. I am determined to live nearer to the foot of the cross. As for me, I will serve God.

Wednesday 5th - Three or four detachments left last evening. We hear very discouraging news, that there is no exchange agreed upon. I can only wait and see the salvation of the Lord who is able to save all.

Thursday 6th - Well, another day has come with all its gloom. How dark this world looks, and how dreary, when we part with the ones we love.

Friday 7th - We look for a train every moment to take us to Charleston. There are all sorts of rumors and some are very discouraging. The weather is quite warm and dry.

Saturday 8th - All is quiet in the camp. The prospect is that we shall stop here a while longer yet. Times are rather gloomy but I will look for better times trusting in God.

Sunday 9th - Just after breakfast, we had orders to move across to the south side of camp and put into detachment of 500. The day has been cold and blustery. It has not seemed much like Sunday.

Monday 10th - I slept by the side of a pine log with Levi. We laid on some boughs. It was a very cold night so Levi and I sat up until 9:00, then we got some salt from the guard and heated some boards and had a very good night's rest.

Tuesday 11th - I have been at work on the tent but can do little. A few moments of work puts me out of breath and I am so weak I can hardly walk straight. The day has been very pleasant.

Wednesday 12th - We have some of the timber out for the house. We shall finish tomorrow. There were 400 of Sherman's men who came in today.

Thursday 13th - The camp

was reorganized and we are to move our tent so shall have a good deal of extra work to do. The boys do not want to go away but we shall have to do it.

Friday 14th - We have been moving today. We have got along well. The Rebs are putting round a dead line. There are some prospects of our staying a spell at any rate.

Saturday 15th - We are almost straightened around for Sunday. We are having very pleasant weather. It seems like Indian summer.

Sunday 16th - How pleasant a Sabbath this has been. (when father spoke of the word "pleasant" he was referring to the weather.) My thoughts have wandered back to childhood days when I was blessed with the blessings of home but now, how different.

Monday 17th - This morning has some signs of a storm. I have been fixing around our tent for cold weather. Went out after wood. Got some brier root for Levi. All is quiet. Nothing new.

Tuesday 18th - The weather still holds pleasant and seems very much like the old Indian summer we had at home. I feel very lonely and often think of home.

Wednesday 19th - Levi has gone out after wood and Johnie and I have been at work at the fireplace. We drew nothing but beans and molasses last night - so have but little to eat today. All is loneliness in camp.

Thursday 20th - The weather still holds very pleasant, but dry. We have been improving it to the best advantage as far as we are able, by fixing our shanty for the cold.

Friday 21st - I took cold and have been sick today. Feel very lonely. My appetite is entirely gone so the food we have is of little worth to me.

Saturday 22nd - Well, the boys have got the tent so it is very comfortable. We have two fireplaces and a nice lot of wood to burn so we keep comfortably warm.

Sunday 23rd - This is a very pleasant Sabbath and I trust it has been spent to some little good by myself. Levi and I had a good dinner of wheat bread, beef and potatoes. Soup for the first.

Monday 24th - I feel better today. Levi and I had a soup with an old sock leg boiled in it for seasoning. We have learned that "necessity is the mother of invention." (Note - I remember father told us of the "sock leg soup". The sock leg had been used to wrap their bacon in and was saturated with the bacon grease, therefore the seasoning.)

Tuesday 25th - I am sitting in the tent by our fireplace after all the rest are asleep. I am

thinking of home and loved ones there. How well we could enjoy a warm supper tonight. I suppose they are thinking of us as we are of them. How tedious the long lonely hours.

Wednesday 26th - I have tried to walk around some for exercise today. I am very weak. I cannot walk straight. We are trusting we may see better times soon. The weather is still very pleasant but there are signs of rain.

Thursday 27th - There has been some rain today. Our tent goes very well so we did not get wet. We are looking for an order to leave here for another prison in Milan.

Friday 28th - We heard we were going to another prison today. There was a tent fell and came nearly killing three men of the 6th New York. Levi and I dug some oak stumps this p.m.

Saturday 29th - Well another week has gone and I am still a prisoner. I have traded my pocketbook for 15 potatoes and some paper for four cards of gingerbread so we will try to live a day or so yet.

Sunday 30th - This has been a very pleasant Sabbath considering my situation. We have orders to leave (to be ready to leave) the bull pen at 8:00 in the morning.

Monday 31st - We received orders to go to Milan and all left up to one hundred. We expect to go soon. There are many sorrowful hearts about the dull prospects of an exchange but we must remember that the "afflictions work out for us a far exceeding and eternal weight of Glory." My trust is and ever will be in God who doeth all things well for those that do His will. Time flies fast but it may be to bring joy to the many broken families that are made so by the cruelties of war. The Lord grant it and that speedily.

Tuesday, November 1, 1864 - Well we are all on the old ground yet, enjoying the com-

forts of our hog feed and trying to make the best of it as well as we can hoping one day to see better times and enjoy the blessings of home and friends.

Wednesday 2nd - We received orders just after 9:00 to fall in to leave for parts unknown. I had just laid down for the night when it came. We drew rations on the cars and then started. We ran all night.

Thursday 3rd - It commenced raining last night and has continued all day. We landed safe at our destiny's end after a ride of two days in a tight car and were very crowded.

Friday 4th - We were up early this morning and were formed into a detachment of a thou-

sand men and sent into the stockades in Maylon, Georgia. We found a much pleasanter camp than the one we left at Andersonville. We draw rations now. The nights are very cold.

Saturday 5th - Well we spent a very cold, restless night and one long to be remembered by me. There are many without any clothing, pants and shirt. There are many suffering with cold.

Sunday 6th - I rested very well last night. Had all lay under our blanket so slept a little. The day is very pleasant after the rainy weather.

Monday 7th - There is a story afloat in camp that there is to be one thousand men exchanged, so some excitement prevails. We have a very nice camp for a prison.

Tuesday 8th - There are Confederate officers here in camp getting recruits from the old discouraged prisoners. There are a great many enlist and thus escape a horrible prison only to make their case worse.

Wednesday 9th - There are signs of rain today. Levi, John and I have gone into a tent of our own and are making it very well.

Thursday 10th - Levi and I have been out to market this forenoon. A man from Ionia gave us some encouragement of getting out where we could get

better fair of rations and quarters.

Friday 11th - There are men in camp from outside taking names of those who are destitute of clothing. Some say it is for an exchange and others say it is to draw more clothing.

Saturday 12th - Levi and I have some expected to go out and work for Mr Taylor but he did not send for us. The prospects of exchange of sick are good. We expect some to go next Thursday.

Sunday 13th - Well this, another Sabbath finds me in prison but prospects are better. Levi and I have lived very well today on rice and soup. Our rations are best we have had since we have been in the confederacy.

Monday 14th - This has been a pleasant day but last night was a very cold one. There was a little gouging about rations this noon. We drew sweet potatoes for the first time today. Recruiting is quite brisk today.

Tuesday 15th - We have been at work at our tent. Am in one large enough for four men covered with fir boughs and stockade with shack three feet long. It is the best tent on the ground.

Wednesday 16th - Levi and I worked at tent in the forenoon and sold mush and molasses in the afternoon. The sick started for our lines yesterday and

some delay being made, they were brought back in camp. Levi and I traded a ration of beef for a spoon.

Thursday 17th - Levi and I had just taken breakfast when Mr Taylor came and told us we could go out, so we were soon in the open air. I am to cook. I think we shall fair well I lost my star but will get another.

Friday 18th - Well I have got partly fixed round so it seems a little like old times. We live first rate out here. I like Mr Taylor. The air feels like rain.

Saturday 19th - There has nothing new taken place today. There is talk of our leaving here soon for parts unknown.

Sunday 20th - We have had good times eating apples, ground peas and persimmons. Levi is not very well. Sherman is creating a great deal of excitement all through here.

Monday 21st - Our boys came out tonight to leave. Levi and I expect to leave soon but our employer talks of keeping us with him.

Friday 25th - This morning about 8:00 Levi and I were informed we were to be paroled and were soon on our way.

Saturday 26th - I was up at daylight and at 8:00 started for the flag of truce boat. Came to

our boats and drew clothing and got supper in the afternoon.

Sunday 27th - We lay at anchor until 3:00 pm and then started for the big waters on the river from Savannah. This is the date of my reaching my lines.

Monday 28th - We have had a very pleasant time so far, the water being smooth. There are a great many of the boys seasick. Dark closes in very pleasant.

Tuesday 29th - I got up early this morning and cleared away for the day. We passed Cape Hatteras.

—  
This is a copy of my father's diary written before he was captured and after he was imprisoned in the terrible prison of Andersonville, and later in the southern prison of Maylon. He received his parole after spending 21 days in the latter prison.

In the back of his little black book he has this memorandum:  
Sheldon R. Curtiss, Co. M. 6th Regiment, Mich. Cavalry. Enlisted in Ionia County, Mich. the 11 of Sept. 1862. Was mustered into the United States service Oct. 11, 1862.

Copied by Evelyn Curtiss Lowrey, the youngest child, of family of seven children.