A "BYE" GOES OFF TO WAR

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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INTRODUCTION

In May and June of 1861, after it was seen that the Civil War would last more than a few months, and as the enlistment terms of the three-months volunteers were expiring, companies of what would become the 19th Indiana began to form. These units were formed primarily in central Indiana. Three companies formed in Delaware County. Companies A, E, and K formed in Delaware County. While Company E was made primarily of people from inside Muncie, the other two companies, A and K, formed in the surrounding county.

The 19th Indiana traveled to Washington, D.C. in August of 1861. Eventually they wound up brigaded with the 2nd Wisconsin, the 6th Wisconsin, and the 7th Wisconsin. The brigade was placed under the command of a regular army officer, John Gibbon. Gibbon had commanded the artillery before the war, but quickly familiarized himself with infantry procedures and began to institute a greater level of discipline than the men of this brigade had known before. The brigade later became known as the Iron Brigade after their performances at the battles of Gainesville (also known as Brawner Farm), Second Bull Run, and South Mountain. To the Confederates, they were known as “those damned black-hatted fellows” due to the uniform Gibbon adopted for them (the uniform of the regular army).

This “Iron Brigade” was special for another reason. They were the only all “western” brigade in the Army of the Potomac (during this time anything west of the Appalachians was west). These western men were known to be tough fighting men. The Iron Brigade had one of the highest kill ratios in the army. General Gibbon recognized the special nature of his brigade. After the battle of Antietam, where the brigade (as always) took heavy casualties, he went to General McClellan. He explained that he needed another regiment for his brigade, and he specifically requested that it be a “western” regiment. He got the 24th Michigan.

After taking heavy casualties at Gettysburg and the Wilderness, the 19th Indiana was consolidated with the 20th Indiana, forming a new 20th Indiana. The men of the 19th had wanted to keep their regiment alive, but could not recruit enough new soldiers, or convince enough veterans to re-enlist when their three year terms expired in 1864.

I was drawn to write about the 19th primarily because I am part of a Civil War Reenactment Unit that portrays Company A. I was drawn to write about William Roby Moore because he was from Delaware County, and because he was only 16 when he went to fight in the Civil War. Additionally, Moore’s manuscripts stated that he was writing about the war as one of the rank and file. His story was a private’s story, not a general’s.

Unfortunately, Moore’s battle descriptions are not those of a member of the rank and file. When he describes a battle, Moore tries to give an overall picture of what happened at that fight, instead of writing about his own experiences. As a private, however, Moore was not in a position to have an overall view of the battle. Therefore, I have added reports from other men in the 19th, as well as reports from the Official Records in order to give a more accurate picture of the battles and the 19th’s role in them.

Moore also has confused some battles with others. This is understandable when one considers the fact that the 19th (along with the Army of the Potomac) fought on the same ground over and over again. Three battles, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and the Wilderness all occurred in the same area of Virginia (plate 6 gives two maps of the 19th’s area of service). In order to present events in chronological order, portions of Moore’s texts have been re-arranged. In addition, spelling corrections have been made when a word was mis-spelled to a degree that
might obscure Moore's meaning. All of William Roby Moore's words are in italics. Lastly, punctuation and capitalization have been added to the letters quoted. Civil War letters frequently do not contain punctuation. The writers tended to capitalize words beginning with "s" or "j", but did not necessarily capitalize the beginnings of sentences.

William Roby Moore actually wrote four manuscripts. Each one tells the same stories. In the last two Moore gives himself a pseudonym ("Bon" during the war, and "Ami" after the war.) and refers to himself in the third person. The first two manuscripts are written in first person, and I deemed them more suitable for my use. What I have attempted to produce is one complete story of Moore's war experiences.

Moore's manuscripts as well as the letters I read in doing this research show the soldier's frustrations during the war. Aside from battling the enemy, they also had to battle the Virginia mud, miserable weather, illnesses, and supply problems. They would frequently receive orders to prepare to march, only to have their orders countermanded a few hours later. Men sent home letters saying they expected to move any day, only to write a week later from the same location, still awaiting the order to move. To a member of the rank and file, this was a very confusing and frustrating situation.

I have found Moore's texts to be very useful when looking for descriptions of every day experiences in the army, but they are not particularly helpful if one is looking for details about battles. Moore would not be very helpful to a student of military history, but for a student interested in life between the battles, or to a re-enactor trying to create a persona, he would be very helpful.
PLATES

1. The Nineteenth Indiana’s Regimental Banner, made by the ladies of Muncie
   Located in the Indiana War Memorial

2. A Re-enactor’s recruiting poster, using authentic graphics


4. Photos of Cameron and Meredith copied from Dunn’s book

5. Diagram of a camp from *The Flags of the Union: An Illustrated History* by Deveraux D. Cannon, Jr.

6. Maps from Alan Nolan’s *The Iron Brigade: A Military History*

7. Map from Alan Nolan’s book

8. Photo of Gibbon copied from Dunn’s book


10. Nolan’s map of the battle at South Mountain, from his book

11. Nolan’s map of the battle of Antietam, from his book

12. Photos copied from Dunn’s book

13. Nolan’s map of the battle at Fredericksburg, from his book

14. Nolan’s maps of the battle of Gettysburg, from his book

15. Photo from Dunn’s book

16. Photos from Dunn’s book

17. The National banner carried at Gettysburg, as identified by veterans in 1911
   Located in the Indiana War Memorial
William Roby Moore was born March 9, 1845 in Selma Indiana. In 1861, at age 16, he joined many other young men in going off to war. Starting in 1919, Moore began to record his experiences in four autobiographies. Each manuscript is 8 chapters long, the last 4 covering his war experiences. In each manuscript Moore tells similar stories, but in the last 2 he gives himself a pseudo-name and tells events in the third-person. The first two manuscripts are written in the first person. This is the story of William Roby Moore’s war, relying on his first two manuscripts, his letters home, the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, and diaries and letters from fellow soldiers in his regiment.

The President hurriedly called for 75000 three-months volunteers to put down the rebellion. They didn’t do it. At the first battle of Bull Run the rebs whipped them and badly routed them, so, that really the Capitol at Washington was in danger of falling into the hands of the rebels.

[It may be observed that I use the term rebel or rebs. That is exactly correct. I believe in calling a spade a spade....] ¹

After the first battle of Bull Run it became apparent that the Civil War would last longer than a few months. President Lincoln called for volunteers to enlist for three years.

*It was in the month of June of that year [1861]. I think, that that call [for 300,000 three year troops] was made, and the dogs of war, so to speak, was being unleashed in our midst as well as all over the North: that is, the fifes were fifing and the drums a beating everywhere in town, village, and hamlet.*

*Samuel J. Williams, a prominent stock-buyer and shipper of our town, a big good hearted man, with a laugh in him that could be heard a quarter of a mile, assisted by Benjamin C. Harter, another jolly good man, a merchant of the place, and William Orr, a young lawyer, then living with his parents three miles North of town, commenced raising a Company of volunteers.*

*My father was anxious to join, but was beyond the maximum age limit, 45, and I was wild to enlist, but was too young, the minimum age limit being, 18. However, my importunities at last won my father’s consent for me to go, and he had a talk with Samuel Williams, our near neighbor, (who became our captain, afterwards the colonel of our regiment) who told father that if he was not able to get me into the service on account of being under the age requirement that he would take me along as Company cook anyway. To that my father consented and placed me under our neighbor’s care, and he never neglected it.*

*After having formed a nucleus for the Company we went hither and yon a drumming up for other volunteers, obtaining men from the extreme Southernmost to the Northernmost parts of the County (Delaware).* ²

*Our Company was not all raised in our home town, Selma, but many who became members of it did live in town. After starting its formation we began to drum for volunteers in the surrounding country in the Township, and soon had the farmer’s sons a joining the ranks. In our own immediate vicinity we had the Campbell boys, William and James, then one of their cousins, Crockett East, and perhaps others that I do not now recall the names of:....With these and others as members we reached out Southward in the vicinity of Blountsville and gained a number of accessions to our ranks, amongst which I recall that was Wes.Galion, Job Gant (the jollier), Samuel and Ezra Hackman, W.H.M. Cooper, two of the Murray boys, Will H. and his brother John Weidner, Odell, the hairy man, and in and around Smithfield, Andy Knapp, a*
TO ARMS!

Up, Patriots, and at Them.

NO COMPROMISE WITH TRAITORS, AND NO ARGUMENT BUT A KNOCK DOWN ARGUMENT.

Volunteers Wanted!
FOR COMPANY A
19th Indiana Vol. Infantry
"Iron Brigade!"

This is an excellent opportunity for Young Men to serve in this Company. The Officers have been in active service since the commencement of the Rebellion, and understand their duty.

PAY AND RATIONS BEGIN WHEN ENROLLED

Contact Regim'l Head Quarters
young blacksmith, Daniel and Oliver Conrad (Coonrad, was the name that they had been generally known by); and on further East we got Harvey Mcnees, Joseph Bailey (and a brother of his, I think); and then we had William Boots of our own town, and Edmund Davis, who had been a good smithy in our blacksmithshop.

North of town we had William Level, Absalom Shroyer,....

I have sometimes in later years questioned in my own mind whether it was a real spirit of patriotism in we boys, in any of us in fact, that prompted us to volunteer to go to war. At least it was so considered then. But, was it so? I fear that many of us did not regard the matter of volunteering wholly from a patriotic standpoint. I think that many of us may have regarded the going to war as a kind of a possible frolic. However, it did not appear to others that we were going out merely to have a good time. Nor did it to us, later on. We may have had some frolicking. But we had other times which were "no joke." I guess, however, if we had been a little shy of the questioned patriotic spirit as the incentive for volunteering, it grew upon us apace in time.

While the Company was being made up to the requisite quota (100 members for the ranks) we had regular Malitia Drills upon the commons each Saturday, at which James Orr acted as drill-master. The commons was full of stumps and logs which made it somewhat inconvenient for a complete advancing "Company front." We managed to scramble over the obstructions and keep a fairly good line.

The mothers, wives, and daughters had made us malitia uniforms out of somekind of a brownish colored tweeds, coats cut frock fashion, and trimmings with red flannel and brass buttons, and each wore soldier-straps, if I remember aright, made out of the red flannel. There may have been some with emulets for the officers. Notwithstanding we might then have been classed as "tin-soldiers", yet as I remember it, we looked pretty nifty. I didn't get very well acquainted with my malitia uniform, for after we had been in training camp awhile we received another kind of a uniform (of which I will tell of later on), so I took mine back home and that is the last I remember of it. However, I have a tintype of myself taken when in that uniform but, it is now almost faded out.³

After the quota for our Company had been made up we met one day at our school-house to organize, by electing our officers. When we engaged in that there was a spirit of rivalry and jealousy cropped out which some of us had not suspected.

There was no secret ballot taken for the officers, and it militated against some of us who had to show our hand, or preference. It might have been as well for myself, and perhaps some others of the Company, if we had had a written ballot when voting for the to be commissioned officers for Our Company, for each one was spotted by the one who got the tail end in rank of the three officers that we there elected, and the time came when he could show his littleness by ignoring the right to promotion of such as had been so enthusiastic for Samuel J. Williams as captain of the Company. It was his just due, he had been the initiatory in getting it up, and besides, he was better fitted to be its captain than either of the other two.

...We were told that all that were in favor of Samuel J. Williams being the captain of the Company to step three paces forward out of ranks. He being my choice, and the only one I had any idea of becoming its captain I quickly stepped out, as did also a large majority of the others of the Company. Then we were told, all that were in favor of William Orr for the captain to step
Samuel J. Williams
Fell in defense of his country
at the Battle of the Wilderness
May 6, 1864
Commissioned Captain of Co. K
19th REG IND VOL
July 29, 1861
Commissioned Lieutenant Colonel
Sept. 18, 1862
Commissioned Colonel
Oct. 7, 1862
Aged 33 YRS 6 MO 122 DS
(taken from the inscription of his headstone)
forward. He, of course, had some friends and relatives in the Company and received a considerable vote, but, certainly, not one third.

Then we elected Benjamin C. Harter first lieutenant (he and captain Williams were very good friends), and then gave Orr the place of that of second lieutenant. I think that he always felt disgruntled about it. Anyway he never seemed to be able to rise above his little petty jealousies. He's dead and gone now, but, I am writing true history of that long ago. Further along I will have occasion to relate some things while in the army that may tend to strengthen my assertions as now stated.

The company left Selma on the 2nd day of July, 1861. For many of these young soldiers it was their first trip away from home, or their first trip on a train. They traveled to Indianapolis, to Camp Morton (on the state fairgrounds) where they would become part of a regiment, have their staff officers assigned to them, and be given their orders as to which army they would be joining.

THE “SEND-OFF”

The host of relatives and friends had planned and had a great dinner for us in the grove a half mile South of our town. Long tables, improvised for the occasion, groaned under the stacks of provisions that had been brought in by the farmer's wives and our town people.

In the eating line I have from my earliest recollections been abundantly able to do my share (and am yet), but, on that occasion I am not quite sure that I then maintained my usual standard in the gastronomic try-out (as I think of it, now, I certainly could not, even under those circumstances, failed to have filled my bread basket).

I fear that I must have appeared very much like a lost dog, not, that I did not have aplenty of friends there, besides our immediate family, I think, but, I didn't then, seem to care to be sociable. I remember that I seemed rather anxious to have the whole thing over with as soon as possible.

The train that was to take us on the first leg of our journey to War (to our State capitol, Indianapolis) was not due at the station until about 4 p.m. I didn't want to get left, so, I slipped away from the crowd awhile after dinner was over and put off by myself back to town (as if there was something that I had forgotten to attend to).

There were two passenger coaches that had been placed upon the siding for our Company's use, and I entered one of them and sat down to meditate. I, nor neither of those coaches, turned a wheel for two solid hours. “All things come to him that knows how to wait,” so, I patiently (?) waited and waited, and I think that I may have cried some, silently like. I know that I did not blubber, even though I might have been heavy enough hearted to have done that.

In due time the Company formed line out at the grounds to march back to the train, and my sister, Lizzie, not seeing me in the ranks may have suspicioned that I had gone on ahead (to make sure of having a seat) came ahead of the Company looking for me and found me a sitting in my place (?) in one of the coaches, and a bit redder about the eyes than was my wan't.

I have no recollection of having said good bye to a single one of our family, nor to anyone else. What was the need of going through such a trying ordeal as that would have been? I have seen two flannel-mouthed Irishmen slobber all over each other when parting. That would
upset my gizzard. In my young manhood days I have been guilty of letting some real "pirty" girl kiss me smack upon the mouth, and, possibly, I may have re--retaliated. "Like begets like." It's a dangerous thing to do without one knows whose mouth, and what right, if any, he or she may have to kiss it.

Well, in the course of time, we were off. The riding on a railroad train, or any other conveyance, for that matter, always had a sort of a soothing effect on me (and does yet) and it was not long after we began to get up speed that I became as happy as a lark, and 'joyed myself.

CAMP MORTON, INDIANAPOLIS

It was dusk that evening by the time our train had reached the point of our destination, Indianapolis, where volunteer Companies were being assembled to go into 'tensive training. There were some of us that had never excursioned on a rail road train as far as that before. Some of the boys obeyed the injunction on railroad crossing signs: "Look-out," and one of them had lost his hat en route by leaning too far out of the car window.

Captain Williams decided to take his Company to the Old Macy House, that stood on the Circle Square (?) and paid for all of our suppers (some of the other officers may have chipped in) before marching us out to Camp Morton to go into quarters. That was the last (and first for some of us) hotel meal that we partook of for many a long day.

I remember what a time that they had in feeding us. The regular supper was over, and then turning a hundred, or more, men into the dining room at once must have put the cooks at work at high speed. I remember George Crannell's sally at one of the waiters after he had served him with a blood-raw tough beefsteak. He yelled at the disappearing waiter into the dining room: "Cut the rope and let that bull go." Crannell made a fairly good soldier, but was meaner than poison when in his cups, and that was about as often as he could get there.

After we had had our suppers we fell in line and marched out to camp, which was a considerable distance from the centre of the City. We had no tents nor blankets, but the majority of us had brought along a pieced quilt or some other kind of covering. That night we slept on the soft side of a plank, we being quartered in the cattle stalls and horse stalls. It was in the old State Fair Grounds.

Moore's letter home from this time does not agree with this description. He wrote on July 5, 1861, from Camp Morton, to his sister, "We formed ranks in the Union Depo & marched up to the State house and was sworn in to the State service and then we marched down to the Macy house and put up. Next morning we formed ranks and marched down to Camp Morten . . . ." One of Moore's fellow soldiers, Absalom Shroyer, also wrote home describing his arrival in Indianapolis. In his July 4th letter to his parents, Shroyer wrote, "We arrived in the City about six o'clock a Tuesday evening. After arriving at the Union depot we got off of the cars and marched to the State house and after being sworn we then marched to a hotel and put up for the night. After walking over town a while we retired to our rooms. The next morning we got up and went out on the streets to see the troops parade and it was as nice a sight as I ever saw." John Hawk's description in his July 12, 1961 letter is also similar. He wrote to his father and sister: "We came down to Indianapolis the same day that we started down here. When we get out of the cars in the Union Depo, we formed ranks and marched up to the State House and was sworn in to the State Service. Then we marched up to the Macy house and
WE BEGIN SOLDIERING

At the time when we entered camp the machinery had not got to running very smoothly, and we experienced considerable discomfort by lack of efficient camp equipment, which, however, was soon remedied.

Our life in Camp Morton was not exactly a picnic, even if on that order to some extent. It was quite warm (hot) weather, as is apt to be at that time of year; we were being drilled vigorously in military maneuvers, learning how to march in twos, fours, squads, platoons, and Company in line, learning "hay-foot, straw-foot," marching, counter marches, quick time, and double quick, etc.

Adjutant T.J. Woods [here Moore has confused Lt. Col. T.J. Woods, who was the mustering officer at Camp Morton and the 19th's Adjutant, John P. Woods], a regular army officer, was our instructor in the arts of war, and drillmaster in Company drills. He was a regular martinet. Then atween times we had squad drills by our sergeants. Taking it all in all we had quite a strenuous time a training for the field service. Considering that even our Company commanders did not then know anymore about Hardee's tactics than the rank and file it may be easily understood that we were "raw." But, Hardee was being assiduously studied and practiced, and in time the whole Company got so proficient that it could start promptly with its left foot as one man, and keep it up, with only a tangle-leg now and then.

Of course, we had to eat, and did eat; and not having yet got beyond the soft-bread line had bakers bread issued to us every day and plenty of other good provisions. I do not now recall what all we were fed upon, but we had a plenty of fresh meat then, potatoes, beans (staple), but no nicknacks as our boys menu's now includes.

As it was possible that I could go only as a Company cook (account of my minority) I was detailed as such cook for the Company, and had details to do the heavy work for me. I was wholly unlearned in the art. However, I have no recollection of having heard any kicks about the cooking. But, I also, drilled notwithstanding. It was a sort of a shotgun policy, if I couldn't be mustered in as a soldier I could cook. As it turned out I got to do a great deal of both.

SOME RECREATIONS

Notwithstanding our somewhat strenuous activities that I have mentioned we had a modicum of recreations. We could obtain passes and go down into the City and see the sights, sample berries out of the crates in front of fruit stands, and could make pilgrimages to Fall Creek and go in swimming. By mentioning of the latter, it reminds of seeing Andy Ribble of our Company and town come near drowning in Fall Creek. He couldn't swim; was very venturesome, got out into deep water and couldn't keep his head above the surface. All that we could see of him was a lock of hair floating on the surface. One of the swimmers went to his rescue and saved him, afterwards to be shot clean through and through, thru the lung at the battle of Antietam, from which he miraculously recovered, and lived to come home and be killed by being knocked from the top of a freight train near Winchester, Indiana.
Robert A. Cameron, the 19th's first Lieutenant Colonel

Solomon Meredith's 19th's first Colonel
WE ARE MUSTERED IN TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY

In the course of three or four weeks after our arrival in Camp Morton (so named after Indiana's Great War Governor, Oliver P. Morton) the camp had been filled up by accession of Companies from Marion, Elkhart, Wayne, Randolph, and another one from our County, Delaware.

After about a month of the hardning process in Camp Morton, or to be exact, on the 7th day of August, 1861, our Company was mustered into the United States service for three years or during the War. [According to the muster rolls, this actually occurred on July 29, 1861.]

SOLOMON MEREDITH IS COMMISSIONED OUR COLONEL, he being a prominent citizen of Wayne County from which Governor Morton was from, and a raiser of fine cattle. He was somewhat of a character, too; stood six feet two, in his stocking feet, and had many peculiarities, of the which I will point out further along.

The choice of Solomon Meredith was a controversial one. Solomon Meredith had come to Indiana from North Carolina in 1840. He was a farmer, but his real gift was for politics. He was twice elected county sheriff, was elected to the state legislature, and was appointed U.S. Marshall. At the outbreak of the war, Meredith was serving as Clerk of Wayne County.

Governor Morton and Solomon Meredith were friends. Meredith had nominated Henry S. Lane for Governor at the Republican convention in 1860, and accepted an amendment nominating Morton for Lieutenant Governor. When Lane was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1861, Morton became governor. Meredith came under attack from Morton's political enemies, and the Nineteenth was supposedly Morton's favorite regiment (due to Meredith's presence and the fact that Company B was from Wayne County).

In addition, there was rivalry within the regiment. Meredith's Lieutenant Colonel, Robert Cameron, had also been active in Indiana politics. He owned and published the Valparaiso newspaper, which he re-named The Republic when he purchased it in 1857. He missed serving in the Mexican War only because Indiana's regimental quotas had already been filled. In 1861, Cameron was elected to the State House of Representatives. Cameron and Meredith soon clashed, and in the process they divided the officers of the Nineteenth.

William Orr wrote home to his father describing the situation in November of 1861.

For some time back there has been a difficulty in our regiment. I have heretofore said nothing about it, hoping that it would be Settled. It has now however assumed such a phase as to preclud [sic] all possibility of a Satisfactory Settlement. Col. Meredith is [illegible] unfit to command the Regt. Every day he attempts to command the Regt or Brigade Drill he exposes himself to the contempt of the Officers and becomes a laughing stock to his men. Col. Cameron is a good officer and the men almost Idolize him. The manner in which Meredith managed the regiment was so mortifying to the officers, that some time ago they determined in good earnest to try to get rid of him. Their first plan was to make him a Brigadier & he was vain and weak enough to fall into the trap and suffer them to use his name. Well that was a failure. Then they tried to get him to resign. All of the field officers and a goodly number of the Company officers pledged themselves to resign if he did not. Col. Cameron about the time received assurances that he & the major & Cap Wilson could get the command of a new regiment and then [ill] suddenly concluded that they would resign or leave the regiment.

In the end Cameron was transferred to another regiment. In February of 1862 Cameron was made Colonel of the 34th Indiana Volunteers. In response to this Thomas Hart Benton of Company B wrote home "by that we loose our best officer."
WE ENTRAIN FOR WASHINGTON on the evening of August second, 1861, our train being in two sections, and actual passenger coaches, too (the Pullman sleepers were not then at the disposal of the army). Our locomotives were not moguls, so, we made very good freight train time. If one was to start across the Continent now in a ramshackle of an ordinary day coach he might expect some pretty rough sledding before reaching his destination. (According to W.H.H. Terrell, Adjutant General of Indiana, the 19th Indiana left Indianapolis on August 5th.)

OUR FINAL LEAVE TAKINGS of relatives, of sweethearts, and of friends was given opportunity for by a considerable portion of our regiment, as the route lay through many of the Counties that the several Companies were from, and the railroad Company was obliging enough to make stops at all stations where the friends were to get on or to get off.

At Muncie my oldest brother and sister got aboard of the train and rode to our home town, Selma, as did also a number of others our hometown people. My brother was always rather quiet, and never had much to say, only at times. He, at least, showed his interest in my going to the War. He, too, might have gone, but had married a wife. He named his first born After myself and my Colonel, and his second child he christened it after my middle name, which, however, was a family name.

My sister’s sweetheart (her betrothed, if I mistake not) occupied the most of her time during the run of the six miles, and I don’t know but what I didn’t quite like it.

SIDNEY OHIO

I may have slept some during that night, as I remember only the arrival and stoppage at the State line between Indiana and Ohio, at Union City.19

At daylight the next morning our train had gotten one-hundred and twenty five [miles] from its starting point, and had stopped at a station the name of which I did not then know. I remember that there was a large water-tank there, and I got off and washed up, at a stream of waste water from it. In later years I had located that nice little city, and was located there for more than a dozen years, to my (our) delight. It was Sidney, Ohio. 20

AT PITTSBURGH PA. we were to have a change, and we did, but, not for the better. We arrived there at an early hour in the evening, and the necessitated change to the Northern Pennsylvania railroad from thence to Baltimore caused a delay of a few hours and we did not get out of there until after midnight. But, we enjoyed our stop there very much indeed, because the patriotic people of that good old town done themselves proud in entertaining us with a great spread of such viands as the average Pennsylvania woman knows how to prepare. Shall we ever forget that night in the “Smoky City? Nay.”

We had no day coaches from Pittsburgh to Baltimore, but, instead, were made as comfortable as possible in a train composed of common box cars and stock cars (the latter, I think, however, was used for the officer’s horses and luggage).

It was on that leg of our run that I remember about John Truitt accompanying us through to Washington. He was a cousin of my mother’s, a jolly good natured fellow (and the same who with my father and Lewis Smith built and operated for a while the first sawmill in our embryo city, of which I have previously herein mentioned). He and Captain Williams... were
associated in business together, in that of buying and shipping of live stock from our town.

One of the circumstances that causes me to remember about John going with us, is, when we took passage in the box-cars at Pittsburgh he came in with the then regulation oilcloth carpet bag in which he was endeavoring to transport through to destination safely a lot of china plates for his friend (the Captain's mess). He stretched himself out on a plank seat in the middle of the car and used the carpet bag for a pillow, and the bumping up and down of the almost springless box car caused his head to bump his improvised pillow so hard that it broke the china plates.

[Note--It is not of much importance, but I discover that I was wrong in saying that we took the Penn Northern at Pittsburgh. It was the Penny Central, and we diverged from it at Harrisburg thence to Baltimore. May as well be correct about it while we are at it.]

Our train reached the Great Horse Shoe Bend at about sunrise. I had arisen and was standing leaning against the side of the box-car door, and had an eye-opener. As forward end of the train struck that famous curve I saw the engine with some cars going in one direction and then looking rearward I saw some cars going in another direction at the same time. It was a bit mystifying to me, but, I concluded that may be I was seeing snakes. But a little further around where the train acted as if it was going to tumble down the canyon several hundred feet below it waked me up. In after years I have been guilty of stopping over in Pittsburgh so as to catch a "through fast daylight train" just in order to enjoy a ride over that scenic part of the road from Pittsburgh to Altoona. It's great.

WE ARE "SKEERED"?

The following morning we began to near THE CITY OF BALTIMORE, and a few miles out of that city our train stopped, and we [were] ordered to detrain and load our muskets. The fact that we received this command had a disquieting effect upon us. Without our supply of ammunition, the three cartridges of bull and buckshot [issued in Indianapolis], we were not well to meet an attack of the enemy.

Only a few days previous to that the 6th Massachusetts regiment had been mob[bed] in the streets of Baltimore when upon its way to Washington.

That was the reason that we loaded our guns. When we had detrained at the Calvert street station and stood in line upon the streets of Baltimore there was not any joshing, or horseplay, indulged in by any of us. We were on the alert, not knowing when, or how, or from whence we might be attacked. I doubt if our regiment ever entered any battle afterwards with as much fear as it did in the streets of Baltimore that day.

Well, instead of being thus ignobly attacked, we were most agreeably surprised by seeing many of the citizens carrying ice-water to us while we stood in ranks in that hot August sun. They had felt the stigma that had been brought upon their fair city by its many thugs, and sought to redeem it from that so far as it lay in their power.

We had to march a mile and a quarter through the city to reach the Baltimore and Ohio railroad station, where we took train upon the last leg of our tedious journey to Washington.

Neither Shroyer nor Hawk mention any fear in their letters home about traveling through
Baltimore. William Orr described the 19th’s stop in that city in his August 19, 1861 letter home.

“...at about 11 o’clock on Thursday we got to Baltimore. A mile or two before we got to Baltimore we got off the cars and loaded up our guns, each man ten rounds. But were not disturbed at all but on the [illegible] were cheered as lustily as at any other place....We got everything we wanted at Baltimore, but we had to pay for everything but water & water was furnished us.”

“SKEERED” AGAIN

After we had entrained and were slowly pulling out of Baltimore a number of the boys were dastardly enough to unload their muskets by firing them off through the coach windows at chickens, ducks, and geese wherever they were to be seen in the backyards and in the outskirts of the city and our train dragging along at a snail’s pace a bunch of horses was grazing in a pasture-field about half a mile away and some of the devil-may-care kind of boys (soldiers were called boys regardless of their age) began trying their marksmanship by shooting at the horses. Finally one horse was seen to rear-up and fall down dead. None of the boys had any idea that the muskets would carry that long a distance.

Old Sol, our Colonel, came back through the train in a desperate stew, and when he had come into our coach he said: “Byes” (He always called us byes), who shot that horse?” Of course none of them confessed to having killed the animal. It is doubtful whether any one of them knew who had hit him, as they all had been firing at about the same time. The Colonel lamasted them for awhile, and wound up by saying it wouldn’t be surprising if the citizens didn’t overtake and attack us yet. Just then our engine stalled, and couldn’t turn a wheel. We were a bit afraid that the colonel’s surmise might come true.

After a short stand there our locomotive got down to business again and got us as far as the Relay House, and at about dark we pulled into Washington City.

Connected with the barracks where we put up for the night was a large swimming tank, and it was not long until it was as full of as dirty a lot of humanity as could be found anywhere.

At the break of day following the night of our arrival AT THE NATION’S CAPITOL we were up and astir. Few, if any of us, had ever beheld Washington City before. We were not going to see much of it then. But we tried to take in as much of its interesting parts as our opportunities admitted of. We were then quite near the Capitol building (which was still under construction).

We saw the incompletely shaft of The Washington Monument, which is now completed....

Looking down Pennsylvania avenue (which was not then asphalted) we could see many of the massive Government buildings, and the White House, and on over into Virginia.

After we had breakfast the regiment fell into ranks and we marched down Pennsylvania avenue and were halted in front of the White House grounds for an hour or two while our regimental Quarter master was a drawing our camping equipment and regimental teams.

During that wait in front of the Presidential Mansion I cannot say, positively, that we caught sight of Mr. Lincoln, but I have an indistinct recollection that we did. It would not have been at all surprising, for he was very democratic in his ways, and was a mighty good friend to his soldiers.
CAMP KALORAMA HEIGHTS

It was after the middle of the day before we had drawn from the General Quarter Master's store our outfitting of army teams, tents, provisions, etc., and it set in raining and gave us a foretaste of marching in red clay roads, of which, later on, we had aplenty.

We staked off our streets and tent locations and then had our initiatory in setting up tents, and never having had any experience before in that line we did not do a very fine job of it. But, it rained and rained, starting small rivulets coursing down through our quarters, and one considerable stream cut right through our tent, to circumvent which, we cut an abundance of pine and cedar twigs and bridged it and slept over it.

I think that we remained at that camp thirty days or more (possibly with one change on account of supposed poison getting into our spring water) during which time we were being vigorously "hardened" (seasoned) for field work. And it was not a long while before we began to get experience in that line, too. Our regimental guard had more strict orders than prevailed when we were in Camp Morton. One night one of the men on guard duty around the camp got frightened at some unusual noise in a clumpse [sic] of brush near his beat and commenced firing into it. We had the laugh on him, as there wasn't a real reb soldier within cannon range of our camp there.

THE "LONG-ROLL" BEATS

One night just after "taps" had sounded the drummers began beating the long roll, and great excitement in the camp immediately ensued. We were ordered to "strike tents" and be ready for a forced march as quickly as was possible.

That march was the beginning (and the cause of the end of many a man in our regiment). A march after night is very trying, its kind of going it blind, a following the file leader, who is supposed to be following another. At times we would double-quick for a quarter of a mile then without knowing why we would come to a stop, and not knowing what minute the column would move again it did not give opportunity for one to recover from the over exertion in double-quicking (of which there was no need of nor common sense exercised by those in command to have prevented it). It, however, always was thus. 27

Henry Marsh described the army on the march: "Troops are moving over the different roads in solid lines miles in length. I mean miles, you can not have a correct idea unless you could see it, we can see troops in all directions, soldiers can only find their Regt by finding the Gen's command." 28

William Orr wrote home to his mother with a story that reveals some hazards of night marches.

"Every officer in the Regt almost was swearing like mad men. Co. I came up with just 5 men. Co. K however was all right, not a man missing (It is such things as this that makes Co. K the first Company of the Regt). But I confess I never had such trouble keeping the men in ranks in my life. As soon as we halted the men lay down in the road to rest by files, & while in this position a team going the same way we were, a short-distance behind us took fright & started to run away. Companies B & G got out of the way. I was at the rear of Co. K, by yelling I got the boys up & out of the way. But Co. E was not so fortunate & 4 men of Co. E were more or less injured. 29

I think that I will never forget the first forced march (and to add to the trials was the information that we were hurrying along at that unusual pace to head off the enemy, which was
supposed to be nearing the Potomac with a view of crossing over and invading the North). However, the rank and file did not know where we were going, and probably not many of the line officers, either.

I remember that night of the race with the [officers’] horses that I kept plugging ahead in the ranks on the double-quick, but was almost petered out, and of Ed Davis, sergeant in our Company, and with whom I had black smithed in our shop, speaking words of encouragement to me as he, too, trotted along side. All of a sudden our column would run up against something and come to a full stop (of no telling how long), and the boys being almost completely exhausted would drop right down in the damp road to rest a bit. Which, indiscretion, all of us being highly heated up, caused many of them to sicken and die, or made them invalids, which was nearly as bad, if not shammed.

Well, we crossed over the Potomac into Old Virginia on the “Chain Bridge”, and then some, that night. Towards morning, not finding the enemy, we lay down in line of battle sleeping upon our guns. A drizzling rain set in, but, nevertheless, I dropped off to sleep, and slept rather uneasily, as I expected to awake up in the morning facing the enemy. When I did awake at sunrise I was still a bit troubled about the Rebs, and it was quite awhile before I could convince myself but that they were just across a ravine on the hill in the woods in front of us, But they weren’t. It was several days after that before we saw a reb, and then he didn’t want to have much to do with us.

WE BUILD FORTS

We remained around there where we had “met the enemy” (?) for sometime, and were put to work building forts. (I doubt not that the same are still intact to this day). I shoveled and threw up more dirt in fort-building than ever before, or since, in my lifetime.

THE RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

Along the latter part of October we headed down on the Virginia side of the Potomac river towards Washington, and were encamped awhile near the Arlington House. The Army of the Potomac was rendezvousing down around Washington and being re-organized. General McDowell, a regular army officer was our Corps commander (the First Corps), and had his headquarters in the old Lee Mansion (the Arlington House) now a great historical place, and therefore, it would be presumptuous of me to dilate upon it.

The 19th Indiana’s first uniforms were gray. According to Moore, Governor Morton funded the purchase of these uniforms by taking around a basket to various well-to-do businessmen in Indianapolis and asking them to contribute, with the promise of reimbursing them later. Regardless of how they were acquired, these uniforms had, by the time the 19th reached Arlington, been through quite a lot. The 19th were being called the “Ragged Assed” 19th. Winter was setting in and the boys did not have adequate clothing.

...I will tell of how we had...gotten out of our Johnny uniforms which our good government had supplied us with to get us to the “Front” in. As I have said, it was grey, and of the shoddiest of the shoddy goods, and in the three months soldiering in it, drilling, marching,
and throwing up earthen forts we had worn them to a frazzle, in fact we were called the “ragged-assed 19th” (this sounds a little vulgar, I admit, but, its to be remembered that I am writing true history).

“Old Sol,” that is, our colonel (Meredith) possessed more or less gall and generally took it along with him. He would get right through “Red Tape” when he wanted anything real bad, and generally got what he went after. He was so put out about the delay in getting his byes into the adopted blue uniforms, to say nothing of his possible shame-faced-ness when beholding us from the rear, that he went right to Mr. Lincoln himself (being nearly as tall and big a man as the president himself) and [brought] the case of his byes’ disgraceful toggery to him, and said: “By gad, Mr. Lincoln, I must have new uniforms for my byes, and I’ve got to have em p.d.q.”

Mr. Lincoln did not reprove him for his nearly using cuss word, as the aggravations of the case seemed to warrant the use of strong language, and said to him: “I will see to it, Colonel.” and he did. So, we had gotten into the Blue, but, not into over-coats. They couldn’t be turned out fast enough to supply the demand.

But, I and General McDowell fixed that deficiency. One morning I was doing guard duty, and my beat was across the front of Arlington House. It was a cold frosty morning, and General McDowell had come out of the house to get a whiff of the fresh morning air. I didn’t say anything, just let him saunter around the great fluted columns supporting the piazza-roof. After I had presented arms to him on his first appearance I concluded that I was through with him, and started off to pace my beat. I didn’t see how I could do that without re-pacing it. I turned about and went back toward the house, but the general wouldn’t go in and I had no authority to compel him to go in doors I again turned to resume my pacing, when the general spoke to me and said: “Soldier, where is your over-coat?” I replied, saying, “I have none, that we hadn’t been able to get ours yet.” He allowed that it was a pretty cold morning to be out without an overcoat, to which I assented (silence is a vote in the affirmative). He asked to what Command I belonged. I said: “The 19th Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry.” Well, he says, I’ll see that you get your overcoats, and he did.

I may have told herein before, that when I entered the army I did not know one playing card from another, and that I would not learn to play cards, but, I did. Within six months after going out I was as eager to play cards as any of the boys, it was our pastime. And it was not interesting without an ante up. After pay days my tent-mates and I would burn the midnight oil to see who should hold the purse. It didn’t make much difference which one of us did, as whoever did have it he had to supply the delicacies for the bunk. I, also, run an individual account (my first line of credit anywhere before) with our regimental sutler, who would trust me to pay for pies, cakes, etc., up to the very limit (of my pay acoming, which he knew that he would get before I did).

I may mention further of my morals before I was corrupted, that is, in the army, where many a one has been changed, and that is, that I did not know the taste of intoxicating drinks of any kind.

I will say, however, that I have never thrown a card for money since coming out of the army ...

I have no recollection of ever sending any money home from the army [actually, many of Moore’s letters home mention money being enclosed, usually $5 or $10], as did many of the
boys, especially those that had left families at home to be supported. On the other hand, it was not an infrequent occurrence that my father at home would seem to read my mind and slip me a five or tenner in a letter. He knewed [sic] some of my failings. He had a splendid memory. [Moore’s letters mention owing his father $5 or $10, and also owing someone named John similar amounts, but he never mentions getting money from home in them.]

I remember that I was greatly surprised at receiving our first pay from the paymaster. I couldn’t understand it. Uncle Sam was clothing us (after he got in shape) and feeding us pretty well, and then to discover that he was going to hand out to us $13 a month for incidentals was fine. He must dug clear down to the corner of his pockets them days, because the first pay was in gold and silver coin, and it was many a long day after that before I again saw that....

WE GO INTO WINTER QUARTERS

After we had been ordered to go into winter quarters we got busy as beavers in building our bunk houses. There was a grove of young pine saplings about a mile away to which we resorted with our chopping axes, felled the saplings, cutting them into the proper lengths for erecting log huts, which we [ran] up the squares about six feet high, then roofed over with our tents. We made quite fair entrances to them fitting out with doors made of boards; built an open fire-place, in which we could, when we chose, cook very nicely. We cut small poles long enough to reach from wall to wall which made a springy bed, upon which we put layers of spruce and pine spines, instead of geese feathers. We had uppers and lowers, each accommodating two comrades. We were snug as a bug in a rug, as the old saying is.

Then we chopped our fire-wood in that same pinery, but, I believe that we had to, as the Virginian says, “tote” it into camp. This reminds me of an occurrence that happened (?) at that wood-chopping. We had a fellow in our Company (I think I need not mention his name, as all the boys remember it and him) who wanted to get out of the army awful bad, and he had conceived the idea that if he was crippled so as to be unable to carry a musket that he could get his discharge. So, one day when out after wood he decided to cut off his thumb, which he did. But the joke was, he cut off the one on his left hand, which, of course, did not disable him from handling a musket. He remained with us. The last that I saw of him was at Gettysburg, but I will tell of that at its right place.

The man who cut off his thumb was Adam Smelser. He actually cut off his thumb in December, 1862, when the Nineteenth was encamped across from Fredericksburg. Smelser remained with the Nineteenth and transferred into the Twentieth Indiana when the two regiments were consolidated in 1864.

Smelser is not the only man who wanted out of the service. Moore also wrote, both in his first manuscript and in a 1863 letter home, that men were “drummed out of the service.”

Well we have got a new way of discharging soldiers here. We discharged Seven the other day out of our brigade as follows in the first place called out the brigade and then marched the prisoners up in the center under guard then then the next thing in order was to read their sentence. One was for deserting and a going home. I will tell you who that was. It was William Hill From Hagerstown. You have heard Matilda Stirda speak about him often. I know I have. His head was shaved and then there was 6 more to be served in the same manner some for cowardice and some for thing and some for another. Since I come to think of it there was only 5 of them that had their heads shaved....

We enjoyed ourselves that winter quite fine. Of course we had our regular camp duties
to perform. For awhile we received our soft bread from the government bakery that had been installed in the capital over in the city, but that was unhandy as it had to be hauled over to us, so we started a bakery of our own, having good bakers right in our ranks. Ed Robinson, of Company E, a Muncie man, was detailed as one of our regimental bakers, and we received our bread hot, right from the ovens. We were then eating “our white bread”_Our ovens were not of the portable kind. When we broke camp we were relegated on to hard tack again.

Andy Knapp of our Company liked hot biscuits, and just would have them. In his foragins [sic] (we all became pretty good foragers) he got hold of an old fashioned iron Dutch-oven with a lid cover, and in it he would turn out some as delicious biscuits as I ever ate. We could draw rations of flour, but, how he ever procured the other fixins [sic] to make good biscuits out of it was a mystery that no feller could find out. We didn’t question him very closely as to that.

A limited number of passes were issued each day to the boys, and sundry trips over into the city was enjoyed by them. Sometimes some of the boys would over-stay their time, and a patrol would be sent over in the city to look them up and escort them back under guard. One time I was on detail for such patrol. Our search took us down to the landings, where oyster-sloops were discharging their cargos. The stevedores treated us to a bushel of oysters in the shell. We had no oyster-knives, so used the butts of our muskets for oyster-openers, or as busters, finished up with our bayonets. I ate so many, and without any salt, that they sickened me, and nearly ruined my liking for oysters for awhile.

Being compelled to keep guards around our regimental quarters was one cause of the boys staying away over time when out on passes. They know that they were liable to be punished if they were not back to camp within the limits of their passes, so they went upon the theory that they might as well die for an ox as for a calf, and would not come in till broke, or fetched in by the patrol. The time come when we rebelled against having regimental guards, and they were discontinued, and after that the boys were always in on roll-call.37

I remember that during that winter I became a kind of a “Yellow-back Novel” fiend, and would have an armful of them in our bunk house, and often would lie upon my back in the upper berth and read them until two o’clock of a morning. I remember to have then first read Dickens’ David Copperfield. I always was kind of a goose when reading stories, either a laughing or crying in the funny or pathetic parts of such.

I don’t know as it was by reason of my much such reading that caused an admiring friend of mine, big John Knight, of our Company, a Virginian by birth, in an argument with the boys one night to assert that Robe was a better educated man than Bill Orr (our lieutenant). I don’t know where John got the idea, for I did not claim for myself much education, other than in “figgers,” of which I would not take a back seat of anyone. Orr was well educated, and as I have told of him having spotted myself and other supporters for Captain Williams at our election at our school house, and as John’s assertion doubtless reached his ears it boded me no good. As an evidence of that I will further along relate some things in connection therewith that may tend to prove what I here charge. [Moore never does describe Orr treating him unfairly.] But, as he has, long since, gone to his reward, perhaps it were as well if I were to forget his injustice to myself. He really made a very efficient officer, and eventually rose up in the line of promotion to that of colonel of the 19th and 20th regiments after they had each dwindled down in numbers
Maps of the area of the 19th Indiana's service
and were consolidated. 38

After we had gone into winter-quarters at Camp Craig Captain Williams and Lieutenant Harter sent for their wives and each one’s youngest son to come on and spend the winter with them in camp. Rebecca, the captain’s wife, and Henry, their boy, and Adda, Lieutenant Harter’s wife, and Willis, their son (both boys were ten or twelve years old) made-up the quartet that wintered in the officer’s quarters. Then there was a private who had his wife with him part of the winter. I remember of pricking India ink designs into Willis’ arm, for which Adda felt like murdering me for. 39 [Buried next to Williams is a Cassius Williams, born in 1860. Henry was not his youngest son.]

The Army of the Potomac had been organized into corps. The 19th Indiana was in the First Corps, King’s Division, part of the Fourth Brigade. Their brigade, which earned the nickname of the Iron Brigade at the Battle of South Mountain, was made up of the 19th Indiana, the 2nd Wisconsin, the 7th Wisconsin, and the 6th Wisconsin. Later in the war the 24th Michigan was added to the brigade. The brigade was unusual in that it was the only all “western” brigade in the Army of the Potomac. During the Peninsula Campaign the First Corps was left to guard Washington, while the rest of the Army of the Potomac went south to try to capture Richmond.

THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN

General George B. McClellan had been placed in command of the Army of the Potomac, and he was busy in preparing for his Peninsula Campaign down on the James river, where he thought to capture Richmond, the rebel’s capitol, at one swoop. It is needless to write it here that he had done nothing of the kind.

President Lincoln...was doubtful of the practicability of McClellan’s plan, realizing that he would be taking his army too far from his base of supplies, objected to it, but finally consented, conditioned that he leave at least one good Corps in and around Washington to protect the capitol.

One corps, the First Corps, was selected and left around Washington for that purpose. Maybe someone that don’t know anything about it may say: Well, you had a soft thing. Well, wait until you know some of the facts about what a soft job (?) the First Corps had of it.

It was early in the month of April ‘62 that McClellan had shipped his army down to the James River upon transports. On the 15th of the same month Our Corps got on the move. 40 ... we broke camp and started out to patrol our beat, which was a very large one, reaching from the Potomac river a ways above Washington, thence a circuit Westerly and Southwesterly taking in Warrenton Junction, Culpepper, and other smaller places, and on down to Falmouth and opposite to Fredericksburg, thence across to Aquia Creek Landing on the Potomac river, or, correctly, Bell Plains Landing, where we wintered in 1862-1863. 41

The spring thaw had left the roads almost impassable for even infantry, and it may be imagined under what difficulties our field artillery and army teams had in dragging along after us. We found that if we tried to follow after one another in the road that in a short time they would be in a regular loblolly. So, we had to deploy (scatter) out on either side, and not follow the file-leader’s footsteps.
We trudged through a fifteen miles march that first day to Fairfax C.H. By that time it had set in raining quite hard, and was cold, too. I was so ragged out from the days march that I had dropped down upon the ground right where we had halted for the night. It happened that where I had lain down was right where our tent was to be set up, and my tent-mates set up our tent right over me. That what had played me out so completely was a pair of new boots. Realizing that we would have mud to wade through when we set out to march I had invested some of my recent pay in the purchase of a pair of boots. And that was the day I tried to break them in. At the end of the day's march it was with difficulty that I got them from off of my feet. And I guess I had to have help at that. That settled the boot question for me for marching purposes. There's nothing quite so good for that purpose as the regulation army shoe.

I do not recall how we were told off as tent-mates, but it seems that it must have been in the alphabetical order, for I remember that it was Knapp, McNeese, Level, Moore. In Company formation it was according to the height of the men, so as to make a good appearance. Big John B. Knight, a six footer, Old Joe Carter, another, both of them Virginians, with Crockett East the tallest sergeant, as orderly, and then a tapering down the line to little ALC Wasson, who was one of the wiriest little men that I ever knew. He took a fight off of my hands that I had been drawn into by John Brumagin. I had in some way offended Brumagin when our Company had come in off of dress parade, I think it was J.B. took a swipe at me with his cartridge-box. Little Alac saw him, and yelled to me, saying: "Robe, get away and let me whip him for you." And he did, too, and crowed over it like a little bantam rooster. Alac lived to come home after the war, and lived a long time afterwards.

WARRENTON JUNCTION

In a day or two we left Fairfax C.H. for Warrentown Junction which lies in a southwesterly direction from Fairfax, but how far away I do not now recall. It was one of our ports of call when we repeatedly swung around the circle. It was a railroad junction, but I never knew why it was so called. I never seen any trains there (They had probably all been run down South).

CEDAR RUN EELS

Both are closely associated in my memory.... principally for the reason that the aforeremined brought about my only spell of sickness while I was out in the field. In this circuitous march that we were making we at camping time had come to Cedar Run, and after we had stacked arms, and unslung our knapsacks my tent-mate, Andy Knapp, said: "Robe, lets go a fishing." It was then almost dark. We wended our way to the bank of the creek (mountain streams there are about as deep as they are wide) and soon had our fishing tackle ready (I don't know how it was possible, but, Andy was a handy-Andy).

I cast in my hook and line just where we had come to the creek (place or position cut no ice with me when fishing), but Andy wandered down stream away. In a short time I felt something a tuggin at my line, and began taking in slack and when it had become taut I began to haul in. I landed my catch out upon the bank and it was a whopper some kind of reptile, and lively. I didn't know what it was. When a lad at home I was quite a fisherman, my principal catch being little sunfish, perch, and sometimes a waterdog. Ugh! I detested the critters.
holler for Andy to come a runnin. He knew what the thing was as soon as he saw it, and said: “Robe, you’ve got a whopper eel. Let me get it off of the hook for you.” I just let him, as I could not do anything with the slippery thing. Andy got a piece of paper around its head so that he could hold it, then lashed its tail upon the ground until he had killed it. It was over three feet in length, and about two and one-half inches in diameter. We allowed that we had enough fish for one night, and took it to our quarters.

The next morning Andy and Harv had dressed and cooked that eel to a turn before I was awake. I sat down to breakfast with them and began eating heartily of the eel. Presently I quit. I thought I detected something about it that I did not like. I tasted garlic. Ugh! ugh! I always associated garlicky odor with Limburger cheese, pretzels, beer fumes, etc. I never could quite endure it. I began to puzzle about how that eel could taste garlicky. Whether the eels down there actually came out upon the banks and browsed upon garlic.

The how of it came out later on. On those marchings of ours we drove our beef-cattle along with us, and slaughtered according to our needs from time to time. In their browsings they gathered so much of garlic which grew wild in abundance down there that their flesh had become tainted with it. The boys had used beef fat in frying that eel, and that is how I discovered that the eels did not come out of the water and eat it themselves.

I was sick for a week after eating of that mess, and would not touch eel for more than a year afterwards, and that was when the boys a seining had caught large quantities of young eels, and when cooked minus the garlic flavor were fine eating.

I would not like it understood from what I have told about the boys’ taking care of me, one having fought my private battle. Of them having built the tent right over me and helped me off with my boots. And cooked breakfast for us while I was somnolent, that I was a kiddie and needed especial care. Not a bit of it. I was then a pretty husky lad, and had since becoming a full-fledged soldier reeled off another marker. I was then seventeen, and I performed a man’s full duty as a soldier. And drew a man’s pay, $13 a month and found.

THE RAPIDAN AND THE RAPPANNOCK RIVERS

From Cedar Run we headed Southward keeping eastward of the Rapidan and the Rappahannock rivers, our objective point for that particular itinerary being Falmouth which is upon the eastern shore of the Rappahannock and just opposite to Fredericksburg. That stretch was always a long wearily march, but we kept a hiking along (the term “hiking” is of later coin-age). Occasionally we would have a five minute respite, a halt being called for that maximum limit, if longer, we would begin to get stiff-kneed. Then our brass band would start up some lively tune (they were as leg-weary as we) and we would start off like new beings. ..music has its charms.

We went into camp AT FALMOUTH. We had business to detain us there for sometime. We sat in and repaired the wire bridge leading over and into Fredericksburg, and then took over the repairing of an old defunct railroad that had been operated between Belle Plains steamboat landing on the Potomac river and Falmouth. And [we] found it necessary to build a railroad bridge across the Potomac Creek of three trestles high and about one hundred feet long. The object of rehabilitating that road was to make it easier to transport army supplies from a sub-base depot at Belle Plains Landing.
The Rappahannock is a swiftly running river as are all mountain streams, and we lost some of our best swimmers in it. I had an experience in it myself. We were making repairs on a wire bridge that crosses over it to Fredericksburg. We were using a mud scow in our work, and one day when some of us were on it it broke away from the bridge pier and started down the river with us on at a lively gait, and to prevent ourselves from being carried down stream into the enemy's country we had to jump overboard and haul it ashore.

We repaired up the old unused Fredericksburg and Aquia Creek railroad, which necessitated the construction out and out of a bridge across Potomac Creek of three trestling work, one on top of another, and about one hundred feet in length. There was a detail of three hundred men to build it, and I was one of the number.

When we had the road ready for operation we gave a free excursion over it to our boys, and it was the first any of us had been aboard of a railroad train since detraining upon our arrival in Washington. That railroad ride beat nothing. The locomotive was an antiquated old machine, fit only for the junk-pile, (but we forced it into service). The rails were the old strapion kind, and as the car wheels would be passing over them the ends of the rails would stick up their heads like a lot of snakes that were being run over.42

THE MARSDENS

During that summer we were not only guarding our territory against the armed foe, but were given other duties to perform. We had orders emanating from somewhere, possibly, only from our Corps commander's headquarters, to guard our property of all Union men within the circuit.

In one of our monthly itineraries we jogged out of our beaten path a ways, and encamped on a plantation of a Union man by the name of Marsden. I remember the Marsdens well, I slept under their roof, and in a feather bed, too; had a room all to myself, even if it was a porch room.

Mr. Marsden was of the real old Virginia stock, near three score and ten old, a widower, and had two unmarried daughters at home. The elder one of them was pretty gay and entertained the officers of our Company; that is, the unmarried ones of it, and from my experience in the line I half way thought some of them were getting smartly smitten with her. Mine, was the younger one. It happened somehow that I was detailed to guard the premises, and I was inmate of the house. My girl, in imagination, had an ulcerated tooth and was most of the time too miserable to talk to me, so, I had to do most of the talking to her, and I think that I done my best to sooth her (aching tooth). I doubt if I should recognize her if I were to see her now. The old man treated me very courteously and when bed time came around he insisted that I should stack arms and go to bed. It was not doing strictly guard duty, but it had been so long a time since lying in feathers that I couldn't resist.43

It will be remembered that McClellan's Peninsula Campaign was not the success that he thought it would be. He had a very able general--General Robert E. Lee--to combat, and Richmond was the Confederate's capitol! And troops will fight harder in defending their own hearthstones. They generally whipped us down in Virginia, And we whipped them each time they invaded the North.

McClellan had set siege to Richmond, and [was] hanging around. General Lee fell upon a plan to raise the siege. He sent two or three of his army corps on rapid marches up the west
BRAWNER FARM
August 28, 1862
1. Confederate artillery locations are approximate.
2. Only engaged troops are shown.

Federal
Confederate
side of the Rappahannock for the purpose of invading the North, knowing that he had but our one corps to contend with.

He and his generals had a decided advantage over our generals in knowing every road and turn in that part of Virginia. Our generals had to depend upon hired guides oftentimes. Lee knew just what routes to send his different corps over so as to have them converge at any given time and place. In that instance they were to come together on the old Bull Run battlefield. Stonewall Jackson's corps was to head in there through Manassas Gap, the way of his other corps I do not know. I am writing of only what I do know.

When Lee's movements, the detaching of these army corps for the purpose, as stated, became known to our commanders there was a hasty return of McClellan's forces to intercept Lee's proposed invasion of the North, and a complete shifting of the two armies was thereby had, as well as the fighting.

General Fitz-John Porter's corps must have followed in the wake of the enemy's and come inland, whilst the other troops came back upon transports, and had been hurried out Southward from Washington to check the enemy's onward movement.

Afterwards Lee followed up his other corps with his troops that he had retained in and around Richmond. So, it was the full strength of both armies that were to combat later on.

The troops of his initial movement detoured out and away from the Rappahannock to avoid bringing on an engagement and thereby being detained, knowing that they would have no opposition West of the river, nor until after they had began to move to the place where the corps were to come together. The movement of the enemy caused a cessation of our "reconstruction" activities that I have mentioned of, and we hurriedly, and in detachments took up the trail that I have described of our having blazed the way when going South.

WE WIN OUR FIRST LAURELS AT THE BATTLE OF GAINSVILLE

Our brigade of four regiments (the three Wisconsin and ours) were a detachment by ourselves, and were hurrying along on the inner circle; that is, keeping between the enemy's outer circuit and Washington, but we were on the outer circle of our several detachments, all of which were intent in heading the enemy off.

In the evening of August 28th '62 awhile before sun down our (Gibbon's) brigade were hiking along a road by ourselves headed for Manassas Gap [Gibbon's brigade was actually headed for Thoroughfare Gap]. We had been marching pretty swiftly nearly all day. All of a sudden we discovered some troops off to our left some three hundred yards hurrying along headed in the same direction as we were. Their uniforms were not of the blue, so, it was easily understood that he was the enemy that we were endeavoring to ward off.

Of course the brigadier general (Gibbon) and his staff were riding at the head of our column, and had opportunities better than we who were marching in ranks had of discovering the large force of the enemy in our immediate vicinity. General Gibbon felt proud of his command, the four regiments of Western troops, and must have considered them invincible. At least, his actions there and then would so seem to indicate.

We were marching in fours right along an open highway, our regiment's position being the left wing. He halted us, front faced us and went at it hammer and tongs. It was like a cat when discovering a big dog about, and we were at once commenced spitting fire and brimstone
Brig. Gen. John Gibbon
He led the Iron Brigade at
Brawner Farm (Gainesville), South Mountain,
and Antietam
at the fellows on the inside of the fence, the old Virginia kind, constructed of posts set in the ground, bored and mortised for heavy split rails, and which would stop a great many balls; and there were, too, some haystacks along with some under cover of which the enemy had some protection from our firing.

About seventy-five yards in the rear of us was some standing timber, fenced with the old style worn rail fence. It is incomprehensible why our commander did not give his men protection from the enemy’s fire, at least on a partial footing with theirs that I have specified of. It does seem that almost anyone could have at a glance seen the advantages, not much, but some. Perhaps our general did not want to turn our backs to the enemy to make such a maneuver. If so, he could have given command to back step, keeping our faces to the enemy, as we did do in a day or two afterwards at the Bull Run battle when we had gotten into a tight corner.

We actually stood in first line of battle a firing and being fired at for ONE HOUR AND TWENTY MINUTES, and the rebs liked to have shot us all to pieces. One of the dare-devil things that they done just at dusk was to push two loaded cannon right up to within fifty yards of our left wing and had them trained to enfilade on us. The captain of our Company G on the extreme left of our regiment discovered them just in time and promptly left-wheeled his Company and picked off the cannoneers before they could pull their [lanyards]. Had they succeeded in firing those two shots they would have moved down our ranks from end to end.

After nightfall we did then fall back to the wood~ that I have referred to as being about seventy-five yards in our rear, flattened down the rail fence and used it as a sort of breast works. That was what might be called a drawn battle, as it ceased after night, just as it began without any preliminary. We then withdrew further back in the woods, a quarter of a mile, perhaps, and lay down to recuperate.

Of all the battles that I was ever in that was the most distressing one. The crying, the moaning, and the calling for water by the wounded and dying in the darkness where we were forced to leave them, and of both armies, too, was terrible.

Even our brigadier general could not longer endure the distressing cries, which being in the stillness of the night seemed to fill the air more than if in daytime. So, he at last called for one hundred volunteers out of the four regiments to go back to our battle lines and try to bring off some of the wounded. The army was not so well equipped with ambulance corps as now. And, too, perhaps the general’s conscience was troubling him a bit, after he reflected as to what he might have done before beginning that battle.

This is a case of 20/20 hindsight. At the time of the battle, Gibbon was not aware of the presence of enemy infantry. Once the Rebel infantry appeared, he sent for help to General King (who was ill and would step down from command of the Division the following day) and to Generals Patrick and Doubleday. Doubleday did get two of his regiments up the road and into the fight, but King did not respond to Gibbon’s message. Doubleday’s men brought the total number of Federal troops engaged from 2100 to 2900. Jackson, however, had 6400 officers and men in the fight. Gibbon’s brigade lost 133 killed, 539 wounded, and 79 missing. The Nineteenth took almost 40 percent casualties. The Brigade fought so well that in his report Jackson wrote, “Although largely re-enforced, the Federals did not attempt to advance, but maintained their ground with obstinate determination.” King’s Division moved away that
night.

Our Captain (Williams) volunteered to go in command of the hundred volunteers, and as I thought that I could go anywhere he would risk himself to go, I was one of that hundred. We proceeded at once back to the battlefield, but, as we neared it in the darkness a preeminent command came in from in front of us, saying: "Halt, who comes there?" Captain Williams answered, saying: "The ambulance corps." The response came back: "Ambulance corps, hell," and immediately they commenced firing on us. As we had had all the fight that we cared for for that day we quietly returned to our regiments, and listened all through that night to the incessant moanings, wailings, and callings out.

We did not know at the time that we attacked those troops that it was a whole Division of "Stonewall" Jackson's famous fighters, and were four to our one. 'Tis said ignorance is bliss. I might paraphrase (?) and say that our ignorance of that fact possibly saved us from skedaddling, and [bringing] upon us ignominy instead of honor.

We didn't prevent Jackson's Corps or any other corps of the enemy from getting a past Manassas Gap [Thoroughfare Gap], and the day after OUR BATTLE we were in hearing distance of the booming of cannon and the roaring of the musketry at Bull Run, six miles ahead, where the second battle on that field was then opened and raging.47

Henry Marsh wrote a detailed description of the battle at Gainesville in a letter home to his father.

...we moved forward, Patrick's and Hatch's Brigades being in front of and Doubleday's in the rear of ours. After getting out to the pike we went 3/4 mile and were passing through a piece of woods when all at once the Brigade was left flanked over to the fence and Battery 'B' ordered up, the Brigade passed through the woods to an open field beyond which lay the rebels (Stonewall Brigade and two others with batteries) behind a fence, but the 19th being ordered passed through, the 7th Wis and at it with all of the energy of man (the 19th is on the left of the Brigade, no. 4). The fight lasted 180 mi, the firing was tremendous, men never fought better than our Brigade, every man was at his place....we moved away at 12 at night as we were not strong enough to stay....

Marsh's description is a close match to the report General John Gibbon, who commanded the Brigade at Gainesville.


HEADQUARTERS GIBBON'S BRIGADE
Camp near Upton's Hill, Va., September 3, 1862.

Sir: I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of my brigade during the action of the 28th of August:

The division was marching on Centreville from Gainesville, my brigade following General Hatch 's, on the Warrenton turnpike, in the following order: The Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers, Colonel Cutler, Second Wisconsin Volunteers, Colonel O'Connor, Seventh Wisconsin Volunteers, Colonel Robinson; Nineteenth Indiana Volunteers, Colonel Meredith, and Gibbon's battery, Fourth Artillery, Capt. J.B. Campbell. Hatch's artillery was engaging the enemy in front, when from a point to his left and rear one of the enemy's batteries opened on my column. I directed the men to lie down in the road, and ordered up Captain Campbell with the battery. It came up at a gallop, formed in battery under a heavy fire, and opened with such vigor that the enemy's battery was soon silenced and made to retire. In the mean time I found that two of the enemy's pieces had been planted to our left and rear and were firing on Doubleday's brigade, which was behind us. I had no information of the presence of an infantry force in that position, which was occupied by General Hatch in person not three-fourths of an hours before. I therefore supposed that the was one of the enemy's cavalry batteries, and ordered the Second Wisconsin to face to the left and march obliquely to the rear against
these pieces to take them in flank. As it rose an intervening hill it was opened upon by some infantry on its right flank. The left wing was thrown forward to bring the regiment facing the enemy, and the musket firing became very warm. The Nineteenth Indiana was now ordered up in support and formed on the left of the Second Wisconsin, whilst the Seventh Wisconsin was directed to hold itself in reserve. As the enemy appeared to be now heavily re-enforced, the Sixth and Seventh Wisconsin were both ordered into line, and I sent repeated and earnest requests to division headquarters for assistance. Two of General Doubleday’s regiments finally got into line to fall back, which was done in good order. We, however, occupied the ground with our pickets and collected the wounded.

From the best information I can gather it appears that these six regiments and the battery sustained for over an hour the fire of two of Ewell’s brigade, commanded by Jackson in person.

Of the conduct of my brigade it is only necessary for me to state that it nobly maintained its position against heavy odds. The fearful list of killed and wounded tells the rest. The troops fought most of the time not more than 75 yards apart.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN GIBBON,
Brigadier-General, Commanding Brigade.40

THE SECOND BATTLE OF BULL RUN

The remnants of our four regiments lay there in the woods and along the road leading to Manassas Gap the remainder of that night, being almost wholly exhausted from our heavy day’s march and the battle that we had fought.

About nine o’clock the next morning General Fitz John Porter’s Corps was occupying all of the road nearly all of that day, seemingly at a snail’s pace, notwithstanding he could hear the battle at Bull Run raging. His Corps was returning from the Peninsula Campaign by marching through, and ought to have hurried up to the assistance of General Pope, who was then coping with the Army of Virginia. But, he was jealous of Pope (that awful, and almost universal, despicable thing, amongst the commissioned officers from the petty lieutenant to Major Generals).

We could not move toward the battlefield at Bull Run until after he had gotten his Corps apast us, which was sometime late in the afternoon. He was cashiered for his lack of going to Pope’s assistance more quickly, as he should have been, but I do not recall what the findings were.

But, I will say this for Fitz John Porter, he with his Corps practically saved the Army of the Potomac from almost annihilation at Bull Run, but, of that, later on.40

Rather the unusual occurred after Porter’s Corps had gotten by, leaving an open road for us. We were told that all who felt like falling in might do so and that we would go on to Bull Run, but were told that we would not go into battle that evening. There was no command to fall in, it was more like an invitation, an appealing to our sense of duty. It seemed to be a realizing, which grew more and more later in the war, that there were men in the ranks with the intelligence, and the ability to command equally as well as many who wore shoulder-straps.

The result of that invitation to go on down to Bull Run that evening was acquiesced in, not a man remaining behind. We were out of many kinds of provisions, but had a ration of raw fresh beef issued to us when we arrived at Bull Run, and anticipated having some broiled beefsteak for our suppers that night, but, it was an uncomfortable place to cook. We had been lead up a narrow valley for the night, and it was but a few minutes after we had been located there that we had a small camp blazes agoing, preparatory to for making coffee and grilling
hunks of beef upon our ramrods. But we were doomed to disappointment, as our campfires had no sooner blazed up till the rebel batteries got range on us. Old Sol (Col. Meredith) came down the line and said: “Byes, put out those fires.” We didn’t need to be told that. We knew what was acoming to us. We turned in, or down, rather, that night, supperless, excepting that some of the boys may have had a few hardtacks, may be some sow-belly, too.

WE TAKE A HAND IN THAT BATTLE

The following morning we were advanced to our position in line of battle for that day, which was centre. We were projected as far out as the wings would admit of. In being thus sent forward we had to leave our brigade battery boys, who were recruited out of the regiments of our brigade, where their six pieces of twelve pounders brass cannon had been planted for the time being on a commanding knoll commanding the center field. They were greatly worried about it, too, for we had always before been able to remain and support them when in action. Some New York troops were left to support them, and the battery boys were scared to death, almost because we were not there to support them in their stead. We couldn’t take them along, nor were we permitted to remain with them. We were now under the command of the commander of the battle, and had no choice in the matter of our disposition. We were simply to obey orders, and do our duty. That, we done, to the best of our ability.

THE STARS AND STRIPES SAVES OUR REGIMENT from being wiped off the earth by our own Battery B. As I have said, we were that morning given position on the firing line in the middle line of battle, and had advanced a half a mile or more beyond our brigade battery “B,” (Captain Stuart commanding it) [actually, Captain Campbell had command of Battery B at Second Bull Run] into a woods. One brigade in our division, composed mostly of New York regiments, the numbers of which I am not sure of at this time, had been sent ahead of us in the first line, and as we neared the timber I mention, they came out it pell mell, completely demoralized, and every fellow for himself a cutting for the rear. We had never witnessed anything like that before. I will never forget how the Colonel of one of the New York regiments that was “skedaddling” to the rear in such great disorder stopped in front of our line and waving his sword over his head and begging of his men to halt and form a line again, on the left of the 19th Indiana. Out of his regiment of perhaps 400 he succeeded in corralling and forming on our left as many as would have made one full sized Company.

Such panic stricken men fleeing back in that wild disorder might have started a stampede in our ranks, too, but it seemed that we were of different stuff. I do not now recall anything further what the remnant of that New York regiment that was scurrying to the rear in such wild confusion, but it is presumed that it came to its senses when it had gotten out of that hot place and then reformed in line.

We advanced on into the woods and lay down in line of battle, and while we were lying there expecting the rebs to charge upon us any minute I received my first “hit,” it being a piece of “spent” shell that came rolling along and grazed my side. It was so badly spent that I did not count it a hit in fact.

The enemy was pushing our right wing pretty hard and we as I have said being in about the middle of the battle line had to ease back a bit. The command was for us to fall back with
face towards the enemy, which were not visible to us directly in front. After we had emerged out of the woods we were all at sea, and remained there in line quite a while in an endeavor to get our bearings. Finally we filed down a deep railroad cut and it was in that railroad cut that we were within an ace of getting our finish. [Gibbon’s brigade was nowhere near any railroad cut on August 30.]

The smoke of battle was so dense that Captain Stuart [Campbell] commanding our own battery, “B,” could not make out whether we were Union or Rebs, but had his guns all shotted [sic] and trained down the railroad cut, but withheld his order to fire a moment and the delay in giving the order to fire was all that saved us from being mowed down by our own boys, for just then the smoke over us lifted and disclosed our banners.

After that narrow escape we were soon afterwards ordered to the support of our battery “B.” They were over-joyed to have us back, and we were glad, too. We lay down in line of battle right upon the crest of the hill and hardly gave the battery boys room to work their pieces. They, however, made no kick at that.

There was A Fruit Orchard down the slope in front of our battery and pretty soon the line down in the orchard came rushing back saying that they could not hold the rebs back. The “Johnnies” were making it too hot for them. The colonel of the 2nd Wisconsin seeing that the line was broken spoke to his boys saying “come on boys g_d d_n, we can keep them back.” His boys waited for no second invitation and immediately they were trekking down through that orchard like a lot of turkey hunters. They were “stayers.”

We did not move from that position during the day not until it came our turn to draw in for getting away over the Stone Bridge over which our troops had to pass in their retreating.

Ours was a pivotal point and from that point of vision we could see almost the whole of the raging battle. The enemy would make heavy onslaughts first on our right wing and then upon the left steadily forcing them back. The battle continued on into the night, and after the darkness had come on the pyrotechnics showed up grand, but awe-inspiring.

Late in the evening we could observe our right wing being forced back, but our left wing stood firm. That was where General Fitz-John Porter redeemed himself somewhat from the tardiness in moving his Corps to the battle which I have relented of. He had one Division of Regulars and they stood like a stone-wall and held the enemy’s right wing back from the Stone Bridge over which our troops were compelled to retreat over.

About nine o’clock that night our army was all pretty well gotten over the bridge and we fell back and crossed over it in our turn.

It was another starless, moonless night, or the smoke of the battle field may have obscured the heavenly lights.

After getting over the stone bridge we did not loiter a great deal, although in night marching there are not infrequently halts of the columns and no one seems to know why the halt nor when a forward movement will begin again. About the only notice one has of the column moving on again is of the company ahead, and then the order is, Close-up, and generally that means a double-quicking for an indefinite time. 51

General Gibbon’s report does not agree with Moore’s description of the battle.

HEADQUARTERS GIBBON’S BRIGADE,
Camp near Upton’s Hill, Va., September 3, 1862.

Sir: I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of my brigade during the action of the
30th of August:

The division was placed under the orders of Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter to aid in the pursuit of the enemy, who was supposed to be retreating on the Warrenton turnpike. The brigade was formed in two lines, and entered the woods on the right of the turnpike in rear of Patrick's. My rear line was afterwards moved to the right by order of General Porter, and the whole brigade moved forward in one line, the Sixth Wisconsin on the right, then the Nineteenth Indiana, and the Second and Seventh Wisconsin consolidated on the left.

Fire was soon after opened by the enemy, and the fight continued actively until we were ordered to retire, which we did slowly and in good order. The wood being thick, communication between the different commands was difficult. My regiments got separated. Some doubt appeared to exist as to whether the order to retire had been given, and while waiting for its reception all the rest of the troops retired, followed by the enemy, and when I got out with the Sixth Wisconsin none of our own troops were in the vicinity.

Capt. J.N. Mason, my quartermaster, while gallantly making an examination to ascertain the presence of the enemy on our left and rear, was wounded by their skirmishers. After leaving the woods the brigade was formed to support Gibbon's and another battery engaged in repelling an attack on our left and center. It behaved here with its usual gallantry, although subjected to a severe cross-fire of both infantry and artillery, and successfully beat back the advance of the enemy. It retired in excellent order on my receiving directions to that effect from Major-General Hooker.

The commanding officers, Colonel Meredith, Nineteenth Indiana, Lieutenant-Colonel Fairchild, Second Wisconsin, commanding Second and Seventh Wisconsin consolidated; Lieutenant-Colonel Bragg, Sixth Wisconsin, and Capt. J.B. Campbell, commanding Gibbon's battery, by their prompt and energetic execution of my orders merit the highest commendation, while the steadiness and discipline of the officers and men were most admirable, and I have great cause to be proud of the brigade I have the honor to command.

The brigade was detailed by General McDowell to act as rear guard during the retreat, and they were in consequence the last troops to leave the field. The coolness and efficiency of fire exhibited by Gibbon's Battery under its gallant commander were the admiration of all, and the battery did most excellent service throughout the day.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN GIBBON
Brigadier-General, Commanding Brigade.

I CAPTURE A FIFTY POUND BOX OF HARD-TACK

Our retreat was not as disorderly as was that of the Union army from the same battle field, the First Bull Run battle that was fought by the three-months volunteers as was reported to have been, but we had some evidences of that bordering on a panic, particularly of our army teamsters, many of whom had pulled their wagons out to the side of the road and unhooked their teams from them and escaped upon them.

General Gibbon described the chaos that met his brigade as they retreated from Second Bull Run. "Overturned wagons were lying alongside the road, and from their contents my hungry men eagerly supplied themselves with the much-needed hard bread."

During one of these halts (no one knew why, nor how long) as soldiers will when hungry or not hungry I went on a sort of reconnoitering amongst the commissary wagons. I found one wagon that had been ditched and was loaded with "hardtack," and as we were badly in need of that edible I decided to fetch a box of them to the boys of our Company as well as for my own sustenance. I worked and tugged to get a box, weighing fifty pounds, or more, out of the tail end of that wagon and after I had succeeded in doing so I was somewhat like the fellow that had caught the bear, wanted somebody to help me let it go.

I got in on my shoulder and with my musket in hand I thot [sic] to step back in ranks, which was but a few feet away when I had stepped out, but I discovered that I had gotten into a rapidly moving column, but, it was not our Company. It was then away on a head. I hurried
To Shoop Road

To Old Hagerstown Road

To Sharpsburg Road

National Road

STONE FENCE

CO. H, G.O.A.T.

BATTERY

Confederate Regimental Locations are Estimated

Federal

Confederate

TURNER'S GAP
BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN

September 14, 1862

First Corps (Hooker)

Ninth Corps (Reno)
along to over take it, and deliver my present. I finally did catch up with it, and the boys very quickly relieved me of my burden and tore the lid off of the crackers-box and issued the rations all around was we went marching on. I doubt if I ever saw the day before or since, that I could have wagged such a load as that was. One hardly knows what he can do until he is tried.

We continued our marching without halting all night long, knowing that we must keep between the enemy and Washington (one of his objectives). At about daybreak the next morning we came up to some of our troops that were in a temporary camp (it was the 24th Ohio regiment, I think) and they were making camp-kettles of steaming hot coffee and filling our canteens with it as we marched along. That was nice of them. We couldn’t wait to have breakfast with them. Sometime other, perhaps. According to Alan Nolan, Gibbon’s brigade marched 2 miles from the Stone Bridge at Manassas to Cub Run, where they encamped for the night.

THE BATTLE OF SOUTH MOUNTAIN

It was two weeks and more since the battle of 2nd Bull Run had been fought and lost to us. The two opposing forces had been meandering their way up into Maryland in somewhat parallel lines. In the nature of things it would be a question of a few days at farthest when we should come to battle again. Our different army corps were moving along near to each other, and making daily marches of only 12 to 15 miles a day, getting ready for a spring onto the enemy.

It was the afternoon of the 14th of September ’62 that we began to close up on the invader and began to clear decks for action, and early in the afternoon our army had deployed out into line of battle and continued to slowly advance towards the foot-hills of South Mountain where it was evident that the enemy proposed to give us battle. He had selected an admirable battle-ground, for him. There was a stone fence about breast-high extending along the base of the mountain-pass long distances both ways from the pike or pass leading up and over the mountain, and behind which the enemy prepared to give us battle.

Our brigade was deployed out in line of battle with its right resting upon the turnpike road, and continued to slowly advance with the line upon either side of us. Our battery, “B,” of six twelve pounders brass Howitzers was unlimbered and the guns pushed along in line with our infantry line as we advanced.

We were making a clean sweep, didn’t deign to go around farm-yard fowls, just took ‘em along. At one farm-house the owner protested very vehemently against the boys capturing his chickens and turkeys that were obstructing (?) our forward movement. The boys allowed that if they could fight his battles that he could set up the fowls. I know personally that I got one hen, an old one, and I wandered off to a “niggah” hut and almost compelled the mamma to dress it and stew it for me, which she did rather reluctantly. I knew from the slow pace at which our lines were moving forward that I would be able to catch up and be in line when the ball opened (and Was). It is interesting to note how this story changes from one manuscript to another. In his second manuscript Moore wrote: “I personally know of one soldier that captured a hen, an aged one, and wandered off to a ‘niggah’ hut and almost compelled the ol’ mamma to dress it and stew it for him.”

It was almost sunset when the battle commenced, and the rebs having the advantage by
THE FIRST CORPS
OPENING ASSAULT
BATTLE OF ANTIETAM
September 17, 1862

1. Confederate Artillery
   Locations are approximate.
2. Action of Phelps and Patrick,
   Doubleday's Div., not shown.
3. Initial Confederate Advance
   and Alternating Retreat and
   Advance by both sides
   are not shown.
reason of the stone fence it was a difficult matter to dislodge them. The firing continued until after darkness had come on, after which it made a magnificent sight by the blazing sheets of fire of musketry, the booming of cannon, and the bursting of shells in the woods where the enemy was. Finally, we practiced a ruse upon them during a lull in the firing by calling out along the line that we needed more ammunition, which the rebs overheard, as was intended they should. They then raised up above the stone wall behind which they were entrenched and began pouring minnie balls at us at a lively rate. We returned the compliment with a volley all along our line, and that set them going up the hill, or mountain, and the battle was ours.

The rebs would lick us every time down in Virginia, and we done them up brown every battle we had with them up North. Men will fight harder at their own hearth stone, which may account for that. It was at this battle that Gibbon’s brigade received the nickname “the Iron Brigade.” The story goes that General McClellan asked General Hooker which brigade was fighting on the pike. Hooker answered that they were Gibbon’s Western Brigade, and McClellan said that they must be made of iron. Later Hooker reportedly asked McClellan how he liked his Iron Brigade, and the name stuck.

The rebel army withdrew from South Mountain to Antietam, where the two armies met and fought on September 17th.

THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM (the rebs called it the battle of Sharpsburg) was fought. It was a desperately hard-fought battle in which the full strength of both armies was engaged (Actually about 20,000 Union troops were hardly engaged at all. But, again we won, and then Lee concluded to go back to Old Virginia, and did. And Old Horace Greely through his Tribune jumped upon us with both feet because we didn’t take right after Lee and use him up before he had gotten back to his lair. Greely knew more about editing a newspaper than he did of war. Almost anyone with good common sense knew that an army that had been marching off and on for six weeks were too near worn-out to chase Lee or anyone else. President Lincoln showed that he knew something as to what an army could endure when he came there to review that army, of which I will tell of further along.

I think that I have heard myself say sometimes when talking about battles that I had been in that I didn’t seem to have any fear but what I would come out of them alright. In reflecting over such statements I guess that I must have overlooked a few instances where my fear was not wholly absent. And the morning we were going into the battle of Antietam, as I now recall it, I haven’t entirely forgotten the quaking that I had then. We had marched up from where we had fought the battle of South Mountain, and it was in the dark hour of the morning, everything was as still as death excepting for an occasional clank of a saber, or musket. We didn’t know just where we were, nor just where we were going. I think I can almost feel the goose flesh creep yet. However, we were all brave enough when we could see our antagonists.

We were reserves during the forenoon but were formed in line of battle and swinging around to the right wing of our army then engaged in the battle. While we were doing so it took us over ground that the enemy had been fighting on, and it was literally covered with dead and wounded, and amongst which were a good many slackers or skulkers presumably seeking to avoid detection by their officers, but as such observed us moving down upon them they out and
Henry C. Marsh, of Muncie, began his service with the 19th Indiana as a Nurse, but was later made Hospital Steward.

Lt. Col. Alois O. Bachman, killed at Antietam.
ran thru the timber. There was one fellow however who refused or could not run, and deliberately walked off thru the woods, and I think that almost every man in our regiment took a shot at him without a hit. He must have lived a charmed life. At least he got out of range, but sometimes by dodging behind trees.

I CAPTURE A PRISONER

When we moved further forward the dead and wounded literally covered the ground, and as we were advancing I observed a Johnnie Reb raise up from amongst them about fifty yards ahead of our lines having his gun in his hands. I always was a little foolhardy, and without asking anybody’s leave I rushed out of line and up to him and demand his surrender. He readily done so and I took him back to the then captain of our Company and asked what I should do with him, and was told to take him to the rear. I done so, and on our way back I took a fancy to his gun, a Mississippi rifle, which looked smaller and lighter than my Springfield, so I threw mine down and retained his. In time I found it was quite a good deal heavier. It was much shorter in length, sort of a blunderbuss, and I was not in it when it came to target practice afterwards. I doubt if I could have hit a barn door with it. But I had to hang on to it till opportunity to pick up another Springfield rifle.

Moore wrote home from the “Maryland Battle Field” to his Sister, telling her: “I was in all of the fight. As we fell back I took a prisoner and took him back to the Col who took him charge. He was an Irishman. He had his gun in his hands when I rush up on him and took it a way from him.”

When I returned to the regiment after turning over my prisoner it was lying in line of battle and rations of whiskey was being served to it out of our bottles, several cases of bottles being used to supply it. I had heard of whiskey being mixed with gunpowder being used by troops when heavily engaged in battle in order to make them more reckless and fight harder, but I did not believe it. This was the first evidence that I had that such things were done. At the battle of Chancellorsville I had another opportunity to observe that men engaged in battle was served with liquor. There barrels of whiskey stood upon end having their heads knocked off and tin cups at hand.

The idea of issuing whiskey to make men drunk when their lives were jeopardized was horrifying to me, and I believe that any general that would resort to that as a means for winning a battle ought to suffer defeat.

Referring again to incidents of that forenoon when we were swinging around in line and scaring up Johnnies that were hiding amongst their dead and wounded I remember a plank fence, that many of them attempted to escape by climbing over it, but it was almost certain death for them as they were picked off as fast as they mounted the fence. I afterwards saw the dead lying six and seven deep on the opposite side of the fence, swollen almost to bursting, and black as Negroes. That was the day after the battle.

Henry Marsh also wrote home describing the battle:

Lieut Col Bachman was killed while leading a charge with sword and hat in his hands. The charge would have been successful if support had been furnished. He could have taken a battery and many prisoners, but no help came for his little regt so he had to retire. He has been relieved just before but saw [sic] the rebles [sic] running and gave orders to charge...Troops never fought better than our Brigade have since they left Fredericksburg but there is not 400 (four hundred) men in the Brigade. After the last fight only 60 men
were with the Regt... In the last fight there were 3 secesh flags left on the fields where they fought but did not get any of them, as some N.Y. boys who were supporting them ran and got them... When our Regt had to fall back to the rest of the Brigade, our flag was dropped 3 times but picked up by others. One of the men who fell raised it and shook it until it was taken.

Captain William W. Dudley wound up in command of the 19th at Antietam. Colonel Meredith had been injured at Gainesville when his horse had fallen on him, and Lieut. Col. Bachman was killed during the battle. Dudley submitted a report of the battle.

Early on the morning of the 17th instant we were called up and prepared to go into action. We moved directly to the front, in column by division. Our first casualty occurred in a peach orchard near the destined battle-field.

We now moved to the edge of a corn-field near a stone house, which was immediately used as a hospital. Here we lay down, while our skirmishers were scouring the corn-field in front. We were soon ordered to the right, to a piece of woods which skirted the battle-field on the right. Here we deployed column and formed our line of battle on the right of the Seventh Wisconsin Volunteers, and Lieutenant-Colonel Bachman ordered Company B, then my command, to deploy forward as skirmishers. This being done, the regiment moved slowly forward till the right was through the wood, when we halted. It was at this time that the attempt was made to take Battery B, Fourth Artillery, which was stationed at the straw-stacks near the stone house hospital. Upon seeing the advance of the enemy, Lieutenant-Colonel Bachman at once called in the skirmishers, and changed front forward on the tenth company, so as to front the left flank of the enemy.

As soon as it was practicable we opened fire on them, and we have every reason to believe that our fire was very effective in repulsing their attack on the battery. Soon we saw the enemy falling back in great disorder, and it was at this juncture that the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel Bachman, yielding to the urgent appeals of the men, gave the order to charge, and, hat in hand and sword drawn, he gave the order "double-quick," and bravely led on, the men following, cheering as they advanced. We charged across the pike and followed the retreating rebels to the brow of the hill, over which they had a strong reserve of infantry and three pieces of artillery, which pieces seemed to have been abandoned by horses and men. It was at this point that brave Lieutenant-Colonel Bachman fell, mortally wounded, and I took command immediately. As soon as we could carry his body to the rear, we fell back to the pike and rallied. Here we received an enfilading fire, the enemy having succeeded in approaching within 100 yards of our right, under cover of the woods. We again fell back to our old position, and remained there until relieved by one of General Patrick's regiments. We then fell back in good order slowly about 30 rods into the open field.

In making the charge and retiring, our colors fell three times, the bearers severely wounded. When they fell the last time, they were picked up and carried of the field by Lieut. D.S. Holloway, of Company D. One of our men captured a rebel flag and took it to the rear. In this charge Lieut. William Orr, Company K, was severely wounded. At this time, about 2 o'clock p. m., we retired from the field in good order, and formed in a strip of woods to the rear of the battle-field with the other three regiments of our brigade, for the purpose of stopping stragglers.

The officers all vied with each other in the performance of their duty, and too much praise cannot be awarded to the non-commissioned officers for their gallant conduct, and the men of this regiment are all brave men, if we except the few who found their way to the rear when danger approached.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM W. DUDLEY


VISITORS FROM HOME

While we remained there in the vicinity of the battlefield recouping we had a visit from our old neighbor, Martin Ribble, who had come on for the purpose of taking his son (his adopted son), Andy Ribble, home, who had received a gunshot wound during the battle a minnie ball having passed through his lung and out at his back, and yet he lived, and after the war was over he was knocked off a freight train by a low bridge and killed.

During old Martin's stay with us we of our town would gather in Colonel William's large
Sibley tent and all lie down on our bellies in a circle with our heads on the inner circle so that we all could hear and converse. All military etiquette was in discard. Sam. Williams (Col. Williams) was at home with us all. We plied old Martin with questions about friends and things back home, and he was posted and told us. We would talk over old times and enjoy ourselves, and our colonel would forget that he was a colonel in the army and would remember himself as yore, as one of us (and he never seen the time in the army that he did not feel, even though military discipline did require a bit otherwise).

I remember a message that he sent to my father by old Martin during that confab:
Looking over towards me he said: “Mr. Ribble, when you get back home tell uncle Billy that his boy has made a pretty good soldier.” That was a good enough commendation for me, coming as it did from such a man as he was.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN COMES DOWN FROM WASHINGTON TO SEE HIS BOYS AND REVIEWS THEM ARIGHT

During the time our army was lying there a recuperating from its strenuousness it had been passing thru President Lincoln and some other distinguished men came down from Washington to review the victorious army.69

AN UNIQUE REVIEW OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

As I have said it was while we were resting-up after the battle of Antietam that President Lincoln desired to and did review us, and thereby lend good cheer to his army. That was a unique review, in that he reversed the usual order of such reviews. Instead of the various commands being required to weary themselves as usually was the case by long tedious, tiresome, parading before reviewing officers, he ordered that the troops be formed in line and that they stand at “parade rest” while he mounted and McClellan and his staff galloped adown the long line at a short distance in front of the troops who, themselves, were the reviewers.

That considerate act upon the part of the great president was but one of the demonstrations of his well-known good sense, and of his fellow feelings for mankind. The soldiers all loved President Lincoln. None of them who stood in that line and witnessed of that review will ever forget it. The mind’s-eye brings back that view of President Lincoln as vividly as it but a yesterday (now 57 years ago).

The president’s mount was upon a horse of not less than seventeen hands, and strong, but notwithstanding, his long legs seemed to almost come down to the ground as he galloped along. He was said to be a very homely looking man. But, to me as he rode apast us there seemed to be a something a sort of a halo, or aura, that surrounded him which hid from my view any physical ugliness of the man.

Just how many days that our army remained around that battle-field, a recuperating, a burying of the dead, and tending to other incidentals after a great battle, I do not now remember. But, at all events, it was long enough to enable Lee to re-cross the Potomac back into Virginia at Harper’s Ferry, the same place he had effected his entrance into Maryland. Our army trailed back after him and recrossed the Potomac at the same Ford where we had when following him into Maryland.

Greely and other newspaper editors was very insistent that our army should follow-up its
victory, pursue the enemy at once and use him up. I will admit that that is my idea (at this
distant date).

TELEGRAPH WIRES

We, however, got after Lee's army in time to nip his rear-guard occasionally. A funny
thing occurred after our regiment had forded the river and was halted for a time along the road.
A line of some kind was observed stretched along on top of a rail-fence. We always had fellows
along that were inclined to be curious, and that would investigate anything that came under
their eyes which they did not exactly understand. While we were awaiting there along the road
one of the boys decided that he wanted to know what that line upon top of the fence meant. He
stepped out of line walked over to the fence and began investigating as to that "string" (?). He
concluded that some of it might be useful to him sometime, so he took out his jack-knife and cut­
out a few feet of it and brought it along with him. It was the military telegraph wire which had
been temporarily stretched along on top of the fence for the purpose of the head of the
advancing army to communicate back. Telegraphing was then almost in its infancy. The wire
that lay upon the top of the fence was an insulated wire, and that deceived the investigator. It is
needless to add that all communications with the "front" were cut-off until the line-men got
back and spliced in another insulation section. Of course we had military telegraph wires and
regularly stretched upon telegraph poles and cross arms.70

WE RESUME OUR OLD TRAIL DOWN IN "OLE VIRGIN"

The enemy wended his way back to Richmond from whence he started, and we, at least,
the First Corps, worked our way on down over about the same territory that I have told of as
being our patrolling, to the Rapidan and the Rappahannock rivers as far as Falmouth across the
river on the East from Fredericksburg, where we remained for sometime doing some
reconstruction work, of the which I may have herebefore told of, but rather than go back thru
that what I have written to ascertain whether I have or not I will detail some of it as it comes to
me.

It was when we had gone into winter quarters at Bellplain Landing (I don't remember
whether it was spelled as I have herein spelled it, or whether it was not spelled "Belle
Plain" there was nothing in the place that suggestive of the latter) that the splendid appearing
regiment of Wolverines, 1000 strong, under the command of Colonel Morrow, we tacked onto
us, and we went into winter quarters with us upon a parallel ridged with our other regiments.

We had some scalawags in our regiment, too, who may have been inclined to attribute to
themselves that they had settled the War (I find some of that disposition even unto this day). The
24th Michigan were a fine body of men, being mostly college students. Frequently our disreps
[sic] would go down by their quarters and torment them by cat-calls and other derisive ways,
that was shameful. It was the way that new recruits were treated by some of whom had been in
the field a year or so.

The 24th boys did not resent the unwarranted treatment. But, of an evening after
nightfall they would come down by our quarters and serenade us by fine singing. In a very short
time they had made our scamps ashamed of themselves for mistreating of them as they had been
wont to do. The first engagement that we got into after that, which was Fredericksburg, the 24th
THE FIRST CORPS
BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG
December 12-15, 1862

1. Artillery is unidentified and locations are approximated.
2. From Doubleday's Div. only the IRON BRIGADE is shown.

Federal

Confederate

FRANKLIN'S CROSSING
Route, Dec. 12

Route, Dec. 13

SMITHFIELD

BOWLING GREEN ROAD

RICHMOND, FREDERICKSBURG AND POTOMAC R.R.

STUART CAVALRY

JACKSON

RAPPANNOCK RIVER

GIBBON

Woods carried by 24th Mich. Meade
Attacked and repulsed Dec. 13

BATTERY B & 6 Guns
showed the metal that they were made of, and ever after that they were full-fledged Iron Brigaders along with us.

While we were encamped opposite Fredricksburg we could see that granite shaft over in the cemetery which was intended to be erected at the grave of Martha Washington. Some of the boys in our division were so lost to a sense of reverence to the mother of the Father of His Country that they used it as a target.

While our picket line extended down the river bank on the North side of the Rappahannock the rebels did on the South side, both sides were on friendly terms. It was not uncommon to see the musket of a picket inverted and stuck into the ground by its bayonet. Exchange and barter was indulged in between the Confeds and the Union pickets. Although the river was about a quarter of a mile broad at that point a wireless would come across it from the pickets on the other side, “Say, Yank, we’ll trade you some tobacco for coffee.” It was usually a bargain, and each side constructed their ships (which was sometimes a piece of bark, a shingle, or a piece of board, was out rigged with a tiny sail, the cargoes put aboard and each side set his ship afloat, and both usually reached their destined port). Such dealings with the enemy was afterwards ordered to be discontinued, as it was thought it might lead to conveying information to the enemy.

OUR FIRST BATTLE AT FREDERICKSBURG

It was at that battle that the 19TH INDIANA REGIMENT WAS TO BE SACRIFICED to save the Union army. When it was seen that our army had to be gotten back over the river that night to be saved from being used up it seemed that our picket line would have to be sacrificed to the enemy, and our regiment was determined upon for such sacrifice, as it was absolutely necessary to have troops that would hold the enemy back while our army was being moved back across the river, which it was thought could not hardly be accomplished before daylight.

After darkness had come on our regiment was marched way down the river and covered our extreme left-wing, and was deployed out about two paces apart, and all orders that were passed down the line were given in a whisper, and passed down the line from man to man, that is, by the one receiving it whispering it to his comrade further down the line.

We had a plenty of time to think of our prospects. Libby Prison stared in the face in our minds, even if nothing worse. Our army had been moved across the river more expeditiously than had been thought possible. It had to be done very quietly so that the enemy could not discover what was in the wind. The pontoon bridges were littered with hay and straw to prevent the rumbling of the artillery wheels and the horses’ feet.

It had been gotten back over the river about an hour before daybreak, and it was decided to try to save our regiment, too. The word was whispered down the line to move back up the river to our pontoon bridge and to avoid making any noise in doing so.

Just at the dark hour before daybreak we had gotten back to the bridge and had to wait a few minutes until the last of the army had gone off of the bridge before we were permitted to start across. It was a ticklish time for us, and we could hear the clanks occasionally of the sabers of the rebel cavalry right upon our heels. No sooner had we marched upon the bridge till the South shore end of it was cut loose and that end swung around and down the river, the other holding fast. Two or three of our regiment got left sitting upon the bank of the river, they having
fallen asleep after the nights vigil. It was broad daylight before we had gotten off of the bridge. The enemy then discovered us, and got range on us, and how they did pour shot and shell at us, and as we entered into some timber their shots brought limbs and trees down upon us.  

Henry Marsh also wrote home describing the battle and the regiments adventures that night.  
...about 11 P.M. I learned the forces were crossing. O how bad I felt to think that we were whipped, I could think of nothing else. When I went to the Regt next morning I first heard that the Old 19th was to be sacrificed to save the rest of the army. In a consultation of the Gens it was agreed that it must be done as they were the outer pickets and near three miles from the bridges but God bless Col. Cutler, he wanted to save the 19th if possible so he sent two [illegible] Aids and had our men slip quietly away. When they got to the bridge all were over but one Regt which was there to hold the Bridge expecting the boys would come in loose. They came in rank.  

Solomon Meredith, then in command of the Iron Brigade, wrote the following report on the battle of Fredericksburg.


HEADQUARTERS FOURTH BRIGADE, December 22, 1862.

SIR: I beg leave to submit the following report of the part taken by the Fourth Brigade in the battle of Fredericksburg, on the 13th instant:

We crossed the Rappahannock on the 12th instant, and passed down the south bank of the river nearly 2 miles, where we went into camp near a stone house, known as Bernard’s, and remained there until the next morning. Previous to reaching the house, and during the afternoon, while the brigade was closed en masse by division, we received the first fire of the enemy. The firing was of short duration, and I have but one casualty to report in this instance. A private of the Seventh Wisconsin was instantly killed.

At sunrise on the 13th, I received orders to form my brigade in column by regiments, and advance with the division line of battle. The Twenty-fourth Michigan, being a large regiment, its right wing was formed on the right, the left in rear of the right; the remaining four battalions 100 paces in the rear, and with an interval of 100 paces between the brigade on my right and the right of my command. We moved forward in this manner about half a mile, when we approached a ravine, where we halted and deployed the Twenty-fourth Michigan into line, their left reaching the river, supported by the Second, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin and Nineteenth Indiana, formed in column by division. At this time the enemy opened upon us with artillery, but, owing to a heavy fog, his range was imperfect, which resulted in no injury to any one of my command. The skirmishers to my front and right had met the skirmishers of the enemy, and the musketry revealed the fact that they were opposing our advance. I then received orders to advance and form a line of battle on the opposite side of the ravine. The order was promptly executed by a movement by the flank across the ravine, when the brigade was deployed into line, supported on the left by the Sixth Wisconsin.

After advancing some distance, the skirmishers reported a force of cavalry and infantry concealed in a piece of pine wood skirting the river, immediately in my front. Battery B, Fourth Artillery, Lieutenant Stewart, shelled the wood, and, with the assistance of a battery of heavy guns on the opposite side of the river, succeeded in driving the enemy from their naturally strong position. The brigade then advanced in two lines upon the wood, the first line composed of the Twenty-fourth Michigan and Seventh Wisconsin; the second of the Nineteenth Indiana and Second Wisconsin, the two lines supported by the Sixth Wisconsin. As the first line approached the wood, some of the enemy were discovered, when the Twenty-fourth Michigan pushed forward, and captured a number of prisoners and horses. In passing through the wood, fortifications were discovered, constructed for the purpose of commanding the river. Our left was then advanced to within three-fourths of a mile of the Massaponax, when we changed front and held a line running parallel with the Bowling Green road. By direction of the general commanding, our line was frequently changed, but we were under fire during the entire day.

Late in the afternoon the cannonading was terrific. One of the enemy’s batteries was placed within 500 yards of my command, and was worked with great precision. It was here our heaviest losses occurred. At night we held the same relative position that we did during the day, having gained over 1 mile since...
I cannot close this report without reference to the officers and men of my command. The Twenty-fourth Michigan, commanded by Col. Henry A. Morrow, is a new regiment, having never been under fire before. They showed themselves to be worthy of the praise they have received, and of association with the old Iron Brigade. Their line of battle upon entering the wood was splendid, showing both courage and discipline.

The Nineteenth Indiana, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, behaved handsomely during the entire day.

A large cavalry force was discovered on our left in the afternoon, supposed to be at least a brigade, their design being evidently to break our lines; but, discovering the disposition of our troops, withdrew, as there were serious doubts of success in that quarter.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. MEREDITH,
Brigadier-General, Commanding.

1863

We entered upon the third year of the Civil War in 1863. That what Grant, Sherman, and the other commanders in the Western armies had been and were doing is a matter of history, and no part of my story. Lee with his Army of Virginia set-out to make another Invasion of the North, to levy tribute upon its people, to capture the capitol of the United States, and other important cities of the North. McClellan's Peninsula Campaign, "taking Richmond," was temporarily abandoned, and it (his army) was nearer its base of supplies, and in considerable force down where we were, and at Fredericksburg.

We enjoyed our wintering at Belle Plains. I remember that it was early the following Spring that we had orders to break camp and make a movement to some other point some miles away. I think that it was intended to be the opening of the Spring campaign. We packed up, de-roofed our winter quarters, and started out upon the march. Along soon afternoon it began snowing hard, and it was soon so muddy, sloppy and bad that it was almost impossible to get along, and was harder upon us by reason of our lack of activity during the winter.

A halt was called and a consultation was had, and it was decided that it was too early in the spring for us to move. Remembering that our winter-quarters were still intact, needing but our tents to cover them, we were told to find our way back there regardless of one another. It was surprising at the alertness in which we arrived back and were again settled in our old quarters. It certainly seemed like a home-coming. Things went on then just as if we hadn't took that sasha.

I do not remember how long a time it was that we remained in our winter quarters after having re-occupied them, but from a circumstance that I recall it could not have been but a short time. The circumstance was this: One morning we had hurriedly issued to us a day's rations and an additional supply of rounds of ammunition, and soon were heading for the Rappahannock river towards Fredericksburg. In the distance we could hear ominous sounds, which sounded very much like the booming of cannon. Some of the boys in the ranks tried to turn it off by declaring that it was nothing but the noises of unloading our pontoons upon the frozen ground down near the river. That version may have quieted the apprehension of some. But our ears had not deceived us.

In the Spring of the year, 1863, Lee commenced another movement up North. We met him again at Fredericksburg, and a hard battle was fought there. Our army attempted to stay his advance there, but didn't succeed in doing so, although a fierce battle ranged.
It was there where that addition to our brigade, the raw troops, the 24th Michigan, had their first opportunity to "show us." In their turn to the pontoons they quickly got across the river, scaled the bluffs under fire and bagged in 120 prisoners. By that feat they established themselves in our good graces.

After we had gained a footing on the bluffs upon the Johnnie's side of the river we began to entrench ourselves by throwing up some breastworks and digging rifle-pits, picks and shovels having been dispatched over to us. Our batteries upon the bluffs kept firing shots and shells right over our heads. One cranky piece which kept throwing quite an awful disagreeable noise as it passed over us. We were more worried on account of the firing from that piece of than from the enemy's.

Our Division was of the left-wing of our line of battle which put us quite a distance down the river below Fredericksburg. There was quite a valley upon our bank of the river, and before being sent down there we were halted upon the bluffs awaiting orders, and stacked arms. Shortly after having done that a quartet of boys in our Company had thrown down a knapsack upon the ground and were engaged in a friendly game of cards. Pretty soon we saw a little puff of smoke five or six miles down the river and on the opposite shore, and the next observation from a Whitworth Cannon had landed on the knapsack right between those four card-players. But done no damage to the players, other than a destruction of their property.

We advanced down into the river bottom's and our engineer corps attempted to throw a pontoon bridge across the river so that we could cross-over. The Johnnies who were behind breast-works upon the bluffs made it too hot for them to lay the bridge. Our batteries tried to shell them out of their breastworks but failed to dislodge all of them, and the sharp-shooters would pick-off the bridge men so fast that it seemed out of the question to get the bridge laid down. They had the pontoons in the river alright, but could not owing to the incessant fire of the enemy connect them up.

A WETTING

Our Division commander, General Doubleday, became exasperated at the delay and called out to us to follow him into the pontoon-boats, he taking the lead in one of them leading his horse which had to swim the river. The boats were quickly filled to their gunwales and propelled across the river. They being loaded down so low in the water we could not get them nearer than about ten feet of the opposite bank. When the pontoons would run their nose in the mud the men had to leap-out for the shore. In my attempt to make the leap as far in-shore as possible but my accouterments interfered and I landed in the water shy of the shore, and to make matters worse for me I sat down in the water. However, I got my self upright and hurried along with the others.

After we had gotten out of range of the enemy's shelling we halted and prepared and ate our breakfast, and then hurried on up the river after our army which was seeking to intercept Lee from his proposed Northern invasion. Sometime during the day's march we had to ford the Rapidan, which was then considerably swollen by reason of the melting snows in the mountains. It was running quite swiftly and came up to our waists.

By that time we could hear the booming of cannon. The battle of Chancellorsville was then on. We continued to push on towards where the battle was raging. Although our command
was in the line of battle there we did not get into the firing-line.77

That was the battlefield where I saw for the second time whiskey being supplied to troops engaged in battle.

A RECONNAISSANCE

A month or so after coming back from across the river our brigade went out on a reconnoitering, or more specifically, a raiding expedition, which took us down into West Moreland County, some thirty-five miles further South than our command had ever penetrated before.

We were ordered to go into "light-marching order," to carry four day’s rations (as our supply train teams were not to accompany us) and forty rounds of ammunition. Only our infantry was to go. We had been given two days to reach our furthest objective. It wasn’t expected that we would meet up with any armed force of consequence. Nor, did we.

We swung out bright and early the morning that we were ordered to march. It has always been a pleasing sight to see a column of trained soldiers upon the march with the rhythmical swaying of bodies and glistening muskets as if but one as they briskly swing along.

We had reeled off more than twenty miles before going into camp for the night. After we had halted, stacked arms, and began making preparations for our evening meal some of us went out upon a foraging expedition of our own volition. 78 Lieutenant Orr’s March 13, 1862 letter home offers testimony to how efficient the boys of the 19th were at foraging. He wrote, “The boys have killed every chicken, hog, sheep, & cow for 3 miles round."79

We had camped in the woods of a seeming deserted plantation; that is, by all of the white folks, at least. . . . we wended our way in groups of three or four on the hunt of things, and pretty soon visited the mansion house and its contigiments: that is, the barnyard, to see if we could gather the eggs for them. None were in the shells, so we decided the hens must have them, so, we took a dozen or so of them, and we did find that our suspicions were well founded. As we did not have of our camp kettles along we had to borrow some of our neighbors, and took a great large dish-pan which answered to our purpose admirably. When we had bound up the legs of those helpless fowls we discovered that it was a pretty heavy load to pack a great distance, and as I had observed a very nice white mule loafing around in the small pasture adjoining the barnyard. I thought that he, it, or she, I don’t know, would be the very thing for a pack mule. So, I goes after him. He didn’t want to be coughted at all. There was no one at home but an old darkie and his wife, and I knew that he knew the tricks of that mule, and I told him to get him for me. Threetat, he set up an awful howl, and begged me not to take the mule, as his massa has gone away and that was the only critter on the place. I was obdurate, told him it was one of the exigencies of the War. He yield, caught the beauty and put a blind bridle upon his head, and I led the mule out to the bunch (of chickens and appurtenances and we threwed the whole bunch upon his back and trekked back to camp, with tin dishpan and all). Thot the tail might as well go with the hide. As we had aplenty of other good chicken cooks, I washed my hands of the whole matter till the birds were stewed and served.

That episode was not, however, the end of that mule, he had two rather active ends, and some in the middle (as his actions under my management the following day will demonstrate).

The morning of the second day we were off on our errand some miles further into
Westmoreland County, and arrived at our destination early in the afternoon. We stacked arms, unslung haversacks and blanket rolls and went into camp for the night.

It being a few hours before turning in time we scattered about on a prospecting excursion. There was quite a good flourishing mill nearby, operated by a great overshot water wheel. I don't know as any of us had ever before seen anything of that kind, so, we wanted to see it in operation. Some of the bad boys in our command seemed to have an overplus of destructiveness about them, and hooked that mill up with the hoisting ropes, turned on the water, and the big overshot wheel began to turn, and the mill inside began to groan, snort, rip and thunder around inside like as if it was a thing of life. It was a dismantling operation, and its work done quite thoroughly. I don't think of any more meanness that they done that day. And we went back to camp.

WE SHORTEN THE TIME ONE DAY IN RETURNING home, and I, and the white mule help a lot. It was thought that we could do that 35 mile stunt in one day instead of two as was intended, so, just at dawn we were headed for home in that characteristic old vet swing. I had told the boys of our Company that I would transport the bulk of their excess baggage on my mule free of charge. They piled in at our feet and left me and the mule to make disposition of it, and thereby hangs a tale.

To protect Johnnie's back I piled all the rubber blankets that the Company had handed over to me upon his back, then I tied the haversack straps two and two and topped out with them (some of the boys has more stuff in theirs than they had started away from camp with, I know it) and it made rather a top-heavy load for an inexperienced mule to wag along under. I used my musket as a boom pole, and then proceeded in the lead. We, the mule and I, seemed to have the confidence in each other and his shattering of it was my undoing in a few minutes after we had started to catch up to the regiment, which was then foraging right ahead at a terrible gait.

He was ambling along by my side so peacefully, a looking out one eye, a flopping of his "pirty" ears that I, momentarily let go of his tethering fixtures. He never let on that he seen that, but he was wise for his day and generation. He began to act up as we were a skirting of the woods the inner edge of which our road lay, and before I could say, Jack Robinson, he shot from under his burden, dropping it right in the roadway as neatly and compactly as I could have done it, and he never looked back to say good bye nor nothing as he galloped on down the road in the direction of which we were both bound.

Well, good lord. Here was a dilemma, indeed. There, in the morning dawn, in an enemy's country, in the edge of the woods, with all my friends gone on before and out of hollering distance, my companion gone, too. I was left alone with not less than 150 pounds of grub and other things belonging to others to whom I was morally responsible for and to. What was I to do? I kept my nether garments on. No, I just thought I was alone, but not so. Just then the head of the column of the 24th Mich which always followed in our wake after it came into our brigade loomed up in the road not a hundred yards away. Gee, whiz. What was I to do? I couldn't block the roadway with my baggage, so I jumped to it like a pup tugging at a root to clear the track. In my frantic exertions a button came off of my trousers behind me and came near exposing me to the mount at the head of the column.

Nothing was said to me by any of the parties. I think, as that regiment were mostly
Alan Nolan’s maps of the Battle at Gettysburg
college boys, and gentlemen withal, took in the situation and silently sympathized with me in my
distress. I permitted the whole regiment to pass by me and never once asked a favor of any of
them. After it had passed on down the road in the direction that my fellow companion had
traveled down so gaily with his tail up a short time before I gave another look in that
direction. And would you believe it? I saw a white (looking) thing tied fast to a tree along side
of the road waiting for me to come to him. I did. Them college chaps had done him for me.

Well, I untied Johnnie and we hurried back to the camp keeping good step, guide right. I
think that mule was sorry for doing me that measly trick. Anyway, he didn't gain by it. I seen to
it that no slick rubber blankets went next of his back that time, and when I had topped the reload
I synched it so hard about his midships that his eyes fairly bulged out. That was alright I
thought. He should be held tight somewhere, if not at his head. My musket was again used as a
boom (pole). Using that term is suggestive. Then the first stump we came to I mounted atop of
the whole. And we overtook our fleet-footed boys an hour or so afterwards.

We got back to our camp the same day, and if Uncle Sam didn't take that mule right
away from me, and branded his own U.S. on his pretty whiteip, and George Helvie, one of our
regimental teamsters drove Johnnie as lead mule in his six-mule army team as long as I
remember of seeing him.80

Lee was more successful in his second invasion of the North than in his first, and laid
tribute upon many towns and cities in his whirlwind campaign, and the cities of Baltimore, and
Harrisburg, as well as Washington were endangered. His cavalry dashed here and there, and
his main army marched rapidly from place to place and succeeded in collecting considerable
sums of money as tribute.

Our army of several corps were following along after him on different routes expecting
to give him battle at the first favorable opportunity. Lee knew that very well and kept his troops
pretty well concentrated, as stood him in hand, he being in an enemy's country and away from
his base.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JULY, 1863, THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG was commenced early
in the morning of that day, and we were of the boys that opened it. It appeared that it was not
the intention of General Meade, our commanding general, to have fought Lee at Gettysburg, he
had planned elsewhere. It was extremely fortunate for the Union army that circumstances
brought the impending great battle on where it did, else the results might have been different,
and the turning point of the war have been after many more contests between the two opponents.
The position obtained by our army on that battlefield was certainly advantageous to it, which
anyone now studying the battlefield be they either, military or civilian, may readily perceive.

There is no denying the fact that General Lee was an astute and great commander, but,
like other mortals, was liable to make mistakes, or misjudgements. He made two fatal ones
there, which will be referred to further on in telling of that battle.

It was fortunate for us of the FIRST AND ELEVENTH CORPS WHICH OPENED THE
BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG that General Lee seemed unaware that such insignificant numbers
as compared was attacking his magnificent army, the Army of Virginia, else he wouldn't hardly
have left a grease spot of us (and as it was there wasn't nothing to brag of).
It, too, was fortunate for the bulk of our army which were out from ten to fifteen miles but all corps converging in our direction that he hadn't sized up the inferior number of his then assailants, else he would have wiped us out before our main army could have arrived and got in position, and he would have discovered that what we early in the first day discovered and strenuously fought to retain until our army could arrive, the natural advantages of position for battle.

During the weeks that we were following up Lee's army we were marching on the average twelve or thirteen miles daily. On the 30th of June when after our usual day's march our two corps began to go into camp for the night, and we were just a bit disgruntled that we had to continue marching on ahead apast them and go on picket duty that night. We envied them that were untrammled with accouterments of any kind, and were then busy preparing for their evening meal over snappy fires of pieces of chestnut rails, whilst we had to keep a moving.

However, we were not then in an enemy's country, and the Pennsylvania Dutch housewives did make us happy with their unexcelled eatables. Does anyone know of women anywhere that understands the art of devising, preparing, and setting-up an abundance of that which pleases the inner man better than does those same Pennsylvania women? If so, they have traveled further than I have.

The next morning, July 1st, we were called in off of picket duty, and just then we heard some boom, boom, booming down in the valley, which proved to be at or near Gettysburg, five or six miles ahead. It seems that our cavalry had discovered the enemy in his lair, hence the barking of the guns.

We hurriedly got ready for marching, and soon were headed for the direction of the noise of the artillery.

Adjutant George Finney recorded in his diary for July 1st: "Marched at 8 a.m. towards Gettysburg. Heard cannonading and filed off the wall to the left-advanced upon the rebel lines and became engaged at 1 p.m. This part of the fight lasted about an hour, when the rebel lines broke, and we got about 200 prisoners. At 4 p.m. they advanced and drove us back - broke our line. Killing and wounding upwards of 200 of our little Regt. We rallied south of town - Gettysburg - took a position, built breastworks and awaited events."

I, UNCONSCIOUSLY, PASS SENTENCE UPON MY TENTMATE:

At that time we were using dog tents, being composed of two pieces of canvass made so as to fasten together, each one carrying a half of it. My tentmate, Bill Level, and I sort o' divided up our provisions, one of us carrying the ground coffee, sugar, and hardtack, and the other one the other part of the provisions, expecting always to be together at eating time. However, that morning after hearing the cannonading ahead I had a presentiment that my tentmate and myself would be separated, that is, I got it in my head that he would be either killed or wounded in the coming battle, so, without mentioning it to him seen to it that our respective haversacks that morning should have its portion of each kind of our provisions. He was the very first man to fall as our regiment double-quicked into line of battle at Gettysburg. I also had the presentiment that I should, as usual, come out of the battle unharmed. That impression stayed with me up to a certain point, and then I got another impression, and within a minute thereafter the order was filled, a minnie ball took the bone out of the index finger of my
William Level, tent-mate of William Roby Moore
Whether there is anything in such thoughts having their effect I can say that it was not an uncommon thing for members of our Company to single-out certain ones, who, in their opinion would get theirs in the next battle. And I never knew of a single failure of such prediction, or sentence, if you please, to come true. I could mention some who were thus condemned, and without any ill-feeling towards them that suffered by wounds or were killed.\(^{83}\)

That morning that our two corps, the 1st and 11th, brought on that engagement, the morning of the 1st day of July, Major General Reynolds was the ranking officer and had command of us. It was well for us that he did not then know that we were up against the whole of Lee's army [It may have seemed to the men in the 19th that they were fighting Lee's entire army, but they were not. The Rebels did out-number the Federals on the first day of the battle. There were 25000 Rebels and 19000 Federals engaged on July 1st.\(^{84}\)] for we might have become demoralized in the outset (as the 11th corps soon afterwards did). And again it was well for us that Lee did not know that only we two corps was there by ourselves and giving him battle, else he would have used us up before the remainder of our army which were miles away could come up to our support.

When we made a drive at them that morning we drove them back a half a mile or more into the woods, with only a small loss upon our side. We followed up as far as Willoughby's Run and halted there. In that movement the 7th Wisconsin regiment of our brigade swung around and captured a whole brigade (Archer's) of the enemy. One of which done a most dastardly thing after he was a prisoner by raising his gun and shooting down General Reynolds, our commander, which occurred at about ten o'clock that morning, and within three hundred yards of where our regiment then was.

That killing of him put our officers all at sea as it were, and General O.O. Howard, commanding the 11th corps, then by reason of seniority became commander until our army commander arrived upon the field late that evening.

Our brigade lay along Willoughby's Run, and made coffee and ate our dinners.

About two o'clock we observed the enemy coming out of the woods and marching down upon us with three lines of battle which extended a half a mile beyond our left-wings, our regiment in the morning's hurry into position had the extreme left of our lines, which as properly the 24th Michigan's position. They kept coming steadily on, and in as good a line as ever troops did upon parade, and their muskets a glittering. It was an awe-inspiring sight to observe them. I can almost see them yet, as I write this. There was not a man in our ranks but realized the futility of endeavoring to turn back that horde. No support had yet reached us. There was nothing to support us upon our left other than some cavalrymen. Our regimental officers seemed dazed. There was no orders given to fall-in, form-line, nor nothing that seemed necessary. As the enemy's lines kept getting nearer and nearer we formed line of our own accord. We had no command to fire upon them. After they had gotten near enough for our fire to be effective we began firing of our own accord. None of us but that knew that all we could hope to accomplish in resisting of them was that we might be able to hold them back from admirable positions that our forces could occupy when they arrived upon the field.

The slope from the top of the hill to the Run was rather heavily timbered with good sized trees, so as they forced us back up the hill we naturally took cover behind the trees while we
Lt. Col William W. Dudley, who lost his leg at Gettysburg

George E. Finney, Adjutant
fought with over-powering numbers.

During that battle we had twenty different color-bearers killed, or wounded, of our regiment alone, they being near enough and tried to see how often that they could make our colors bite the dust.

We did not cut and run, but, instead, lined up behind the trees four or five deep and kept pecking away at the enemy. Of course, we didn’t try to keep in line, but, reasonably close together.

Finally our national flag fell but a few paces from me. Lieutenant Macy of Co. I called to me to pick up the flag. I didn’t want to, but, did. As soon as I had done so I got the impression that I would be a goner. And it was not more than a minute after that that a minnie ball took the bone out of the index finger of my left hand. Fortunately for me the ball had not come from straight in front, or else it would have passed through the flag-staff and through my body. They were then turning our left-flank which accounted for the direction from which the minnie that hit my finger came from.

Anyway, that waked me up, and when I looked back I discovered that the greater part of our regiment was back upon top of the hill and firing over our heads. Our sergeant-major had the regimental banner and was then standing some thirty paces off to my right. I called to him that we had better get back up the hill to our regiment. He was sort of a pompous kind of a fellow and seemed to pay no attention to my warning, so I swung the flag over my shoulder and wended my way up the hill. The blood was a spurting from my wounded finger about like a chicken with its head severed. Colonel Williams saw me and called to me and inquired if I was wounded. I told him that I had received a little scratch. He said then for me to give up that banner and go to the rear. I insisted that I wasn’t badly hurt. However, I decided to obey the colonel and do as he had told me to. I knew though that going back to the rear was a ticklish undertaking, for the minnie balls would be zipping all around one as they came down.

Sergeant-Major Asa Blanchard was killed at Gettysburg, and his body was sent home wrapped in a flag. Years later his family was persuaded by William W. Dudley, who had been the 19th’s Lieutenant-Colonel at Gettysburg, to donate the flag to the State. Dudley wrote to Blanchard’s brother, George, in 1887, describing what had occurred at Gettysburg.

We were among the first of the advance infantry column, commanded by General John F. Reynolds of the 1st Corps, to engage the enemy upon the field north-west of the town of Gettysburg. We had been on picket duty the night before, some miles in advance of the army, and near Great Round Top, and as we were the first troops of the Union infantry, we found the citizens glad to see us and hospitable to a refreshing degree. In consequence we joined the column and took our place in line of march with full haversacks and canteens and with well satisfied appetites. The regiment never went into action in such good spirits as it did that morning, and when the battlefield was reached the cheerful songs of the men and the sincerity with which they stripped for action betokened ill for any force of Confederates whom we might meet. None were more cheerful and hilarious, and none advanced to the charge that morning with more alacrity than did Asa.

We were formed in line of battle on the double quick, and your brother took his proper position upon the left of the regiment, and, under fire, placed the guides for the left wing as cooley as if on parade, and when the rush of the charge began was then assisting in keeping the line from disintegrating as we pushed forward over fences and across fields...

We were now preparing to receive a charge from the division of A.P. Hill which was forming three lines deep in our front, and extending beyond our left flank at least a half a mile. Every man in the regiment seemed to appreciate the gravity of the situation, and none more so than your brother Asa.

Being upon the extreme left of the Union Line at the foot of the western slope of the above-mentioned woods [McPherson’s Woods], which terminated behind us at the crest of McPherson’s ridge, and having in
plane [sic] view the enormous flanking column away down beyond us and knowing that we should be completely enveloped thereby, we believed that a better position for defence than the one assigned us might be taken by the regiment at the top of the hill behind us where we might intrench our line and chose Asa as our messenger to communicate our views to General Meredith, our brigade commander. He, pleased with the clear statement of the situation made by Mr. Blanchard, sent him to Division General’s headquarters, and he delivered our message and that of General Meredith to General Wadsworth.

Immediately returning he brought us the command to hold the woods at all hazards and to hold the position assigned to us as long as possible. The General remarked to him “that he regarded this piece of timber as the strongest position of the line and of the utmost importance,” as it was in the nature of a redoubt upon our flank, and said “that he hoped it would be held.” Your brother made the reply recorded in history: “General, if that is what you want, and the Iron Brigade can’t hold it, where can you find troops who can?” The General replied: “Present my compliments to General Meredith and say to him that with the Iron Brigade in possession of McPherson’s Woods I have no fear for our left flank.”

Upon Asa’s return and reporting to us what had passed between our commanding officers, we prepared ourselves to receive the terrible charge that was soon to strike us, and to hold the woods and the position assigned us, as long as men were left to do it. Soon the signal gun was fired and down across the slope, our skirmishers retiring slowly as they advanced. Your brother was now sent out to the front to bring Company B which had been deployed as skirmishers.

Every man was need in line to meet the attack. Our line commanded perfectly the banks of the creek in our front. Every soldier was warned not to fire until the rebel line had reached the further bank, and cautioned also to waste no ammunition, but fire low. At our first volley the first line in our front disappeared from view, and while the gap was closing, time to load and prepare for the next line was given us. Not to weary you with the details of the next hour’s engagement, it was sufficient to say that during that time our colors were shot down time and time again until all the color guard had been either killed or wounded; when, by your brother’s request, he was put in special charge of the duty of keeping them afloat, and as fast as the bearers were felled he detailed others to keep them up. Seeing the desperate situation he was in and the almost impossibility of getting men from the decimated ranks to discharged the fatal duty as fast as necessary, I went personally to his relief and, while he was securing another colorbearer held the flag myself long enough to meet the fate of all who touched it that day. As I lay there with the staff in my hand your brother, his voice trembling with feeling, took the staff from my hand and giving it to a soldier he had detailed, assisted me back from the line a few feet and said: “Colonel, you shouldn’t have done this. That was my duty. I shall never forgive myself for letting you touch that flag.” He called to two slightly wounded soldiers and made them get me out of the fire, and as he left he turned and smilingly said, “It’s down again, Colonel. Now it’s my turn.” From where I lay I clearly saw him raise the flag. While he was holding it the order came for the line to retire to the top of the hill behind us, this it did slowly, forming line and frequently facing about to deliver volleys at the advancing enemy until the crest was reached. Here a determined stand was made and I was carried to the Seminary and lost sight of the individuals of the Regiment and their actions but could see the line as it gallantly withstood the terrific front and flank fire of the enemy. I was told by others who witnessed it that on the line, and not a hundred feet from the spot marked as the place where General Reynolds was killed, and immediately south of it, your brother, having seen that capture was imminent, had torn the flag from the staff and wrapped it around his body under his sword belt; and that while moving about, cheering and encouraging the men to stand fast, he received a musket ball to his groin, severing the artery and causing his almost immediate death.

I then went to “Old Joe Carter,” a Virginian, who had been for a long time one of our regimental color-bearers, where he was lying down behind some rails and was busy loading and firing, and said to him that the colonel had ordered me to give up the flag and go to the rear. Oh, he says, I don’t want it, I can do more a shooting, and he declined to relieve me of the flag. A big sergeant of Co. I then came up to me and said that he would carry the flag. I learned that he was afterwards killed or wounded.

I then started to the rear as I had been told by the Colonel to do. The wounded were then
being sent to the Seminary where General Buford's headquarters first was. Before I had gotten back to it a part of the 11th Corps upon our right-wing had began to give away, and ere long that corps was in flight from the enemy. The wounded were then ordered to go to the Court House. Just as I had reached there the 11th Corps went by in a hurry, and bullets were flying every which way. I stepped into the Court House AND WAS A PRISONER. And remained a prisoner during the other two days of the battle, being hemmed in between the second and third line of the enemy. I was in danger more from our own troops than from the enemy, as they were firing down the street towards the Court House.\footnote{87}

As I wended my way back I overtook a member of our Company a hobbing back, too. I asked him if he was wounded. "Yes, by G_d I am" was his reply. "Got it right thru the leg", and he pointed to a bullet hole (?) in his trouser leg a few inches above the bottom. A minnie ball may have made the hole in his trousers' leg. But his record gave some room for doubting it. He always talked thru his nose. The winter we wintered at Camp Craig I find that I have already told of this individual. It was the same one that mutilated himself by chopping off his thumb. It was ascertained that the supposed minnie ball had not injured his leg greatly, mere abrasion of the skin.\footnote{88} That was the last I remember of Ad.

A PAROLED PRISONER

After getting into the Court House I knew that it would be but a short time until the enemy would be after the prisoners to send them back to the rear, and probable destination, in time, Libby Prison. I dreaded the idea of being sent to Libby Prison, and made up my mind to obviate that if possible. The Court House then was full of our wounded. The seats in it were of the old fashioned kind, the fronts being boarded down to the floor. I secreted myself under one of them until after the reb officers had been through and taking out all of the wounded that were able to march and sending them back under guard. I then came out from my hiding-place and was then paroled along with the other prisoners, and then we were left to care for ourselves in the Court House.

The battle raged right along until after night-fall. In the meantime some of the other corps of our army had come on and help check the enemy. That stubborn resistance of the enemy the first day was really the means of saving the battle for us, as it enabled our troops to get in and occupy splendid positions upon the battle-field, from which they could re-inforce weakened lines quickly, and largely under cover of hills and rocks, and that was one reason why the battle eventuated into the glorious victory that it was. It was the first decisive battle of the War,\footnote{And is known as the Turning-Point of The Rebellion.} and is known as the Turning-Point of The Rebellion.

The wounded in the Court House were not having any surgical attention, and our troops were a firing down the street which necessitated that we keep cover from such fusiladings. Awhile after dark there were only now and then a minnie ball coming down the street. My wound had had no attention and had begun to pain me a good deal. At the time that I received the wound it did not appear to give me much more pain than would have a prick of a pinpoint. But, there were many things in battle, particularly when under musketry-fire, to attract one's attention to. I made up my mind that I would go outside upon a tour of investigation and ascertain where I could get my wound dressed. I could not go more than a city-block either way from the Court House, as we were, as I have told, hemmed in between the
enemy's second and third lines of battle. I turned towards the direction of where our lines were and about half way up that block I observed an elderly gentleman who had stepped outside of his front door to have a look-around. His dwelling-house sat right up to the sidewalk, regular Pennsylvania style. When he observed me with my bleeding hand he asked if I didn't want to have my would dressed. I said, yes. He then told me to step in to his house and that "mother would dress it" for me.

They had a pretty daughter and of about my own age, and between them they washed the blood off of my wound and dressed it for me nicely, making much ado of it.

My black hat that I have mentioned of as a brigade distinction led them to think that I was an officer. First Lieutenant Campbell of my Company, who had received a gunshot wound in his sword-hand, was occupying one of their upstairs room. He hearing my voice while the dressing of my wound was being performed sent down to inquire who it was a talking, he having as he thought recognized my voice. When the family discovered that we both belonged to the same Company they insisted that we should remain together in their home. Well, there was nothing else but to do it. We certainly appreciated their kindly invitation and their hospitality to the fullest. They gave us their guest-room. And it had been a long time since we had had the opportunity of sleeping upon real geese-feathers. Each had a bed apiece, but in the same room. They waited upon us as if we were Lords. And, my, what a Pennsylvania woman doesn't know about preparing an abundance of good things to eat isn't worth knowing.

It turned out that there were other ties (To say nothing of a pretty girl and a youngish soldier becoming a bit smitten with each other). The family, named Buehler, had relatives living in the vicinity of where we hailed from the Spanglers, of whom there were none better anywhere. When they discovered that we knew them intimately that made us more welcome guests in their home.

Well, that was one battle that we had and were having a part in that we rather enjoyed. We, however, were not immune from shot and shells from our own batteries. A solid shot struck in the end of a purloin-plate in the house, and a bursting shell splintered up the weatherboarding in it while we were there.

On the second day of the battle the heaviest cannonading ever known in the war was engaged in, both armies having gotten their batteries in position, the enemy some hundred and twenty pieces in a semi-circle so as to rake the whole field, and our batteries, 82 pieces were all in position, and all of the two hundred guns thundering away at each other. It made some noise.

It was rather amusing to us to see the family rush for their cellar whenever heavy cannonading was on. The old gentleman was rather hard of hearing, but, he could hear cannon.

One morning a colored woman came and rushed into their home frightened out of her wits, and hauled up her petticoats to show where a minnie ball had passed through them. She was not at all abashed when exposing her person in that act.

From our view-point we were unable to observe the results of the terrific fighting between the two opposing forces of the last two days of that battle. The ground that we had gained and so desperately struggled to hold in the opening of that battle on that first day had been won over and was occupied by the enemy. In our hasty entrance into an attack of the enemy that morning we of course could only take in but a superficial survey of the field in
general, without a noting of its many strategic natural advantages. Of the Hill bi-sected by one of the turnpikes into which lead other turnpikes, and which now bears a monument, "The Turning Point Of The Rebellion". Nor of Culp's Hill, of Little Round Top, of the Devil's Den, Nor of Pickett's Division in its famous Charge.

Yes, when I awoke that morning [July 4, 1863] I did not hear the usual morning racket of musketry. All was calm and peaceful. The enemy had scurried away during the preceding night. And our army seemed to have gone somewhere, too. In fact, as I remember it now, it was a lonely place. There was no tooting of locomotives or a clanging of engines bells. All railroads were out of commission thereabouts.

Before leaving Gettysburg, Moore took time to write a letter to his sister.

Dear Sister Lizzie

At a private house near Gettysburg P.A.

July 4th '63

I take the present opportunity of informing you of my whereabouts as I have not heard from you for some time and you have not heard from me. I have a slight wound in the left fore finger and I am also a paroled prisoner of war.

I suppose you would like to know how all this was done. On the first day of July we found the enemy in force at Gettysburg on the side of mountains so our division was first to open the battle and the last to leave the field. We drove the enemy at the start and got their position and held them for a while but before we could bring our troops up that lay back of the town the enemy attacked us a long the whole line and after a hard fight took the town. During the engagement our regiment was on the left-flank and their force being larger than ours they turned our flank and compelled us to give way. Our collars bearers was shot down often and while I was a loading and shooting closed to the collars the collar bearer of the banner was shot down. There was no one to pick them up but my self. I threw down my gun, grabbed up the collars, and waived them a few time and I got a shot where I told Shield the collars' for some time as we was falling back and the colonel saw I was wounded and he told me to give them to some one els and I done so and went back to town to the hospital and when I [an entire line of the letter is illegible] the Rebs had come in another way so I was made prisoner. I will give you a list of killed and wounded in our company as far as I can...

I do not remember what became of my fellow guest, Lieutenant Campbell, each of us went our respective ways, doubtless both of us thanked our host and hostess, and took leave of them in a proper manner (I, probably, taking the address of the young lady of the house at least we afterwards corresponded for quite awhile after the war).

Colonel Samuel Williams' report to Governor Morton was printed in the August 11, 1863 Indianapolis Daily Journal. Moore and Lieutenant Campbell are on the list of wounded for Company K. Both are listed with severe wounds.

I don't remember that I had any orders from anyone. I just packed my grip and had to shift for myself. I learned somehow that I was to go to Baltimore, and, too, that I would have to trudge ten miles before I could obtain a train to go even anywhere from Gettysburg.

Before starting out upon that jaunt I had a look over some of the battlefield where some of the hardest fighting had taken place, and also had a look at the place my own brigade had assigned to it during the other days of the battle. Since the recent war I sometimes hear noncombatants; that is, men who were not thought of when the Civil War was fought-out and were beyond the age maximum at the time of the last war who can tell us all about war, and seem to think that the Civil War was a skirmish, a sort of bushwhacking affair as compared. Such fellows in their display of their superior (?) knowledge of war merely show their assininity[sic]
and lack of comprehensiveness of what war really is. The Old Vets of the Civil War regard such fellows with rather a pity for their lack of knowledge of what the Civil War really was. It were a waste of time and words for me to try to herein enlighten such well-informed (?) war-students.)

I went to the place where the 12th Corps had so valiantly held the high point, the place now bearing the marker: “The Turning Point Of The Rebellion,” which stronghold had been taken by the enemy and retaken by our troops, the place where the enemy came over the top and clubbed and bayonetted out again, which acts were repeated a time or two. At that place I saw dead men lying below, where they had been rolled down, lying ten and twelve deep, and hundreds and hundreds of them. That was no skirmish-line. “Trench-fighting” did not prevail during the Civil War to any great extent. It was, generally, up and at it hammer and tongs in long lines of infantry rushing upon their combatants meeting an equally brave foe who came steadily on with their “Rebel Yell,” and grape and canister serrating the ranks. If anyone believes that that didn’t require stout hearts and brave legs, they are simple.

After spending some little time a wandering over parts of the battle-field I then struck out for my ten miles trudge to the little station, the nearest place that I could board a train for Baltimore, where I had been told to go. It was after night when our train pulled into Baltimore, and all of its hospitals were then full to over-flowing, so we had to be sent on to Philadelphia to Satterlee Hospital at West Philadelphia.

CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE

When going on from Baltimore to Philadelphia that night I had my first sea voyage aboard of a railroad train. At Harve de Grace the train was cut up into sections and shunted onto the railroad’s large ferry-boat and ferried across an arm of the Chesapeake Bay, and then linked up again to resume its journey.

Upon the train’s arrival in the Broad Street Depot in Philadelphia it was met by the City’s Fire Ambulances which transported us very smoothly upon the flat and grooved street-car rails over to the Satterlee Hospital in West Philadelphia, which was splendidly equipped for 2000 or 3000 patients.

By the time I had reached there gangrene had set in my wounded finger and it had swollen up terribly and become quite painful. All of the bone had been torn out of it by the minnie ball, leaving but the underside of the finger hanging on. I asked the surgeon in charge of our ward to amputate it. He allowed that he could save the finger for me. I did not want a boneless finger left to bother me with. He then asked if I wanted to take an aesthetic for the operation. I said, yes (I had never been under the influence of one before, nor have I since then).

His assistants saturated a sponge with chloroform and ether and with a napkin clapped it down upon my nose. I then changed my mind about having an aesthetic didn’t like the odor of chloroform and ether. I fought to get the napkin off of my nose but, they beat me to it. I succumb but, they told me afterwards that it required four of them to hold me down. When I woke up I was minus a finger but, had some pain left.

Moore’s hospital stay wasn’t all unpleasant. He wrote home July 12, 1863 and described his situation. “We have what they call sisters in every ward. They are a set of women that never
marryes, all catholics to. They are very good looking to. They tend to the sick and wounded. The one that is in our ward has charge of me. There is a heap of dry fun in them when you get them started."  

After it had practically healed I was put on guard duty at first, but was given a position in the Chief Wardmaster's office, and had the charge of the change of bed linen and towels of the twenty-four wards and offices, and in addition had twenty-five laundry women that had to answer to me at roll-call.

The position took with it special privileges, that of eating at the extra diet kitchen, of a ward for fifty-two clerks of us to ourselves, and a freedom to pass out and in without having to obtain passes, and of the which privilege we certainly used, and were down in the city almost every night having a good time. I loved Philadelphia, and never miss an opportunity of paying a visit to it if I go East.

I remained there almost six months, and then an order was issued that all who were then in hospitals and not in a condition to join their regiments should be transferred to their respective home States.

So, about the holidays, I was en route to Indianapolis. My transportation read via the route that we had gone to Washington on when we left our home State for the front.

I happened to be on the morning express which backed in on the siding of my home town about five o'clock in the morning to permit the Eastbound express [to] pass it. Being then within five hundred yards of my home I concluded to get off of the train and go up to the house and say Howdy to my parents whom I had not seen for two years and a half.

I knew the way, knew the front door would not be locked, knew that none of the family would be up at that early hour, so I just walked up, opened the door, went to the bed in which my parents were asleeeping, waked them up, and said, How de do. They didn't know I was in a thousand miles of them till then. They arose, and in course of time we had breakfast. It so happened that the other members of the family were away from the home, temporarily. But nothing would do but that father should have a dinner for me that day, and he set himself about preparing for it, and while he was up town he invited nearly everybody that he saw to come down and have dinner at his house, for Roby had come home. There was a goodly number that come, so many in fact that there were not room for all to stand around the family board at one time, and I asked to wait, but Col. Sam. Orr said, no, that never would do, that I was the guest of honor, and that I must be at the table. So I was. I had a great deal to learn yet. Army life, I the rank and file, particularly, lets one forget almost what he ever knew about table etiquette.  

EPILOGUE

After spending a few days at home, Moore proceeded on to Indianapolis, where he spent his remaining six months of army service working as a clerk in the "old soldier's home".

In 1866 Moore married Susanna Miller, also of Delaware County. In September of 1916 they returned to Selma to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. As the invitation to their Golden Wedding put it, they were celebrating "the re-tying of a knot that has been strained to the limit these Fifty Years." Moore's autobiographies never mention his wife by name, and he never tells any anecdotes of either their courtship or marriage.
After returning to civilian life, Moore had a variety of professions. He worked for the railroad, on the telegraph (where he received word of Lincoln's assassination) and telephone. He also worked as a "heavy shipper," a bank cashier, and as manager of a building and loan association. He moved to San Diego later in life and died in California on July 5, 1926. He was buried in the Beech Grove Cemetery in Muncie. Susanna Miller Moore died in 1928 and was buried with her husband.
NOTES

1. Moore, William Roby, Autobiography I, chapter 4
   Indiana Historical Society Library

2. WRM, I, chapter 4

   Indiana Historical Society Library

4. WRM, I, chapter 4

5. WRM, I, chapter 4

6. WRM, II, chapter 5

7. WRM, I, chapter 4

8. Moore letter to Sister, July 5, 1861
   Moore Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library

9. Shroyer letter to Family, July 4, 1861
   Delaware Historical Alliance
   Absalom Shroyer was a member of Company K.

10. Hawk letter to Father, July 12, 1861
    Hawk Collection, Indiana State Library
    John Hawk was a member of Company K.

11. WRM, I, chapter 4

12. WRM, II, chapter 5

13. WRM, I, chapter 4

14. WRM, II, chapter 5

15. WRM, I, chapter 4


17. Orr letter to Father, November 15, 1861
William Orr was Second-Lieutenant in Company K, later becoming its captain and finally being made Colonel of the consolidated 19th and 20th Indiana regiments.

18. Benton letter to Father, January 25, 1862
   Civil War Letters of Thomas H. Benton, Indiana Historical Society Library
   Thomas Hart Benton served in Company B. He was fatally wounded at the battle of Gainesville.

19. WRM, I, chapter 4
20. WRM, II, chapter 5
21. WRM, I, chapter 5
22. WRM, II, chapter 5
23. Orr letter to family, August 19, 1861
   Orr Family Papers, Lilly Library, Indiana University
24. WRM, II, chapter 5
25. WRM, I, chapter 5
26. WRM, II, chapter 6
27. WRM, I, chapter 5
28. Marsh letter to Father, August 25, 1862
   Marsh Collection, Indiana State Library
   Henry Marsh began his service with the 19th as a nurse, and was later made a hospital steward.
29. Orr letter to Mother, March 21, 1862
   Orr Family Papers, Lilly Library, Indiana University
30. WRM, I, chapter 5
31. WRM, II, chapter 6
32. WRM, II, chapter 5
33. WRM, I, chapter 5
34. WRM, I, chapter 6


36. Moore letter to sister, February 24, 1863
   Moore Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library

37. WRM, II, chapter 7

38. WRM, I, chapter 6

39. WRM, II, chapter 7

40. Ibid.

41. WRM, I, chapter 6

42. WRM, I, chapter 7

43. WRM, II, chapter 6

44. WRM, I, chapter 7

45. Nolan, 95-96.


47. WRM, I, chapter 7

48. Marsh letter to Father, September 6, 1862
   Marsh Collection, Indiana State Library


50. WRM, I, chapter 7

51. WRM, I, chapter 8

53. WRM, I, chapter 8


55. WRM, I, chapter 8

56. Nolan, 110.

57. WRM, II, chapter 7

58. WRM, I, chapter 8

59. WRM, II, chapter 7

60. WRM, I, chapter 8


63. WRM, II, chapter 7

64. WRM, I, chapter 8

65. Moore letter to Sister, September 18, 1862

66. WRM, I, chapter 8

67. Marsh letter to his father, September 20, 1862


69. WRM, I, chapter 8

70. WRM, II, chapter 7

71. WRM, I, chapter 8
72. Marsh letter to his father, December 15, 1862.


74. WRM, II, chapter 8
75. WRM, I, chapter 8
76. WRM, II, chapter 8
77. WRM, I, chapter 8
78. WRM, II, chapter 7
79. Orr letter to his father, March 13, 1862.
80. WRM, I, chapter 6
81. WRM, I, chapter 8
82. Finney diary, July 1, 1863.
Finney Collection, Indiana State Library
George Finney, originally of Company H, became the 19th Indiana’s Adjutant.
83. WRM, I, chapter 8
84. McPherson, 324.
85. WRM, II, chapter 8
87. WRM, II, chapter 8
88. WRM, I, chapter 8
89. WRM, II, chapter 8
90. Moore letter to his sister, July 4, 1863.
Moore Collection, Indiana Historical Society
91. WRM, II, chapter 8

92. Indianapolis Daily Journal, August 11, 1863.

93. WRM, I, chapter 8

94. Moore letter to sister, July 12, 1863.
    Moore Collection, Indiana Historical Society

95. WRM, I, chapter 8

96. WRM, IV, prologue
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Letters of John Hawk, Hawk Family Collection, Indiana State Library

Letters of Henry C. Marsh, Marsh Collection, Indiana State Library


Moore Collection, Indiana Historical Society Library


Letters of Absalom Shroyer, Delaware County Historical Alliance