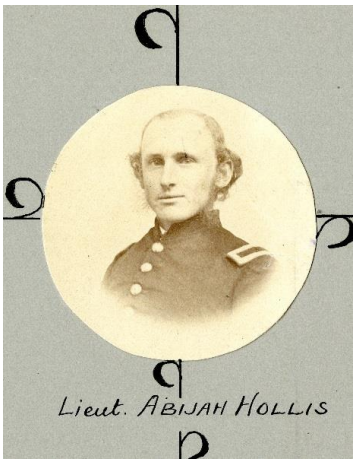
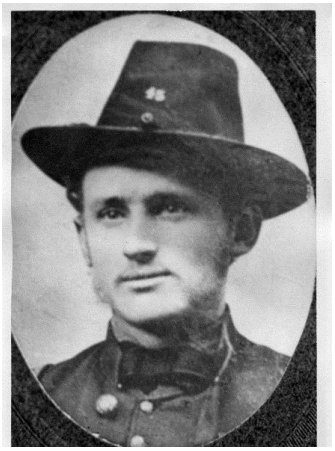
STORIES OF THE WAR
FROM PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS AND DIARIES

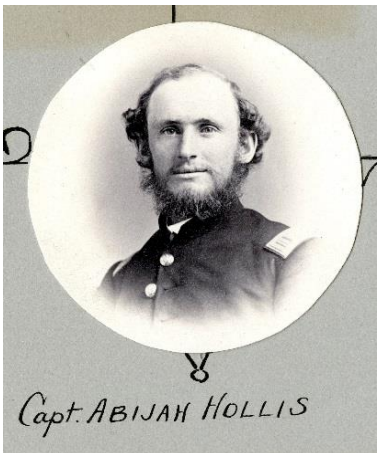
For My Children
Abijah Hollis (1837 – 1932)

West Concord, NH
January, 1884

(Transcribed Draft as of 6/16/2016 by Kimball S. Loomis, Great, Great, Granddaughter)







Left Photograph: MOLLUS Massachusetts Collection, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA
Center Photograph: Hollis Family Collection
Right Photograph: MOLLUS Massachusetts Collection, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA
Group Photographs at end of text: MOLLUS Massachusetts Collection, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA

Whenever a proclamation was issued from Washington – calling for more troops – each state's proportion was mentioned in the call. The state authorities then determined the quota for each town and made requisition upon the town officers – calling upon them to furnish their quota by a certain day. Then the Town officers were busy enough until their men were in camp and mustered into the service of the United States – when they had a breathing spell till the next call came.

Of course, when the call came, there had to be a Town Meeting held, so that money could be raised to cover recruiting expenses, bounties, etc. – and this gave a chance for the talking patriots to do their part in putting down the rebellion. After a while volunteering became slow and the northern heart had to be fired with visions of glory and stories of how beautiful it was to die for one's county, etc. etc. At first the war was looked upon as a grand picnic, the expenses to be paid by Uncle Samuel. Patriotism was stimulated in proportion as the fears were quieted – and many a poor devil was made to count upon a Town's "quoty", who had not courage enough to pass a grave yard after dark without whistling. But he counted one towards staving off a draft, and perchance might stop a bullet intended for a better man.

But there was one honest speech made at a war-meeting, if no more. We happened to have visiting in our town at that time, a Captain in the regular army, a native of the place – who had been a private soldier in the Mexican War, a member of the company, which had for its officers Lee, Beauregard, McClellan and Foster. He happened to be at the meeting and his anger was somewhat aroused at the utterances of the political orators, who preceded him on the platform. Being called upon for a "few remarks", he delivered himself somewhat after this manner – "Boys – I tell you what it is – this war has got to be fought through – and you have got to do your part of it. But don't believe these fellows when they tell you it's going to be a picnic. I know those southern fellows, for I have fought side by side with them, and I know they will fight – they will fight like the devil; but, by God! Boys – you've got to go and lick 'em – and there's no getting away from it." And I think this honest statement – with its quick, jerky style of delivery – from this brave, red-faced, red-haired soldier[1], son of Irish parents, was just as effective as the smooth and graceful periods of the Honorable gentlemen, who know nothing about it except that it was a war of their making and they wanted somebody else to fight it through for them. The time came when they found that talk was cheap and that it took money to buy men.

[1] Edward S. Collins, of Milton Lower Mills, a schoolmate of my sister, Lucy, and brother, Tom. I think at this time he was at home on recruiting service.

But the war meeting of most interest to me was held in the summer of '62 – when it was thought that "nine-months" enlistments would be the thing. Massachusetts was called upon for, I think, twelve regiments of nine-months men, to be raised under the militia laws of the state, which allowed the men to choose their own company officers and the company officers to choose the regimental officers, - that is the Colonel, Lt. Col. and major. This proved a popular device – for there were plenty of men who could make up their minds to this comparatively short term, who couldn't see their way clear to a three-years service, men of families and business – farmers, mechanics and professional men. And among them was your humble servant, who writes these pages – who was very much averse to fighting anyway – and particularly in this case, having hard work to justify the matter – being somewhat tinctured with what was called "Copperheadism"[2].

[2]"Copperheads" were northern Democrats who sympathized with the south to the extent of believing that the institution of slavery was recognized in the Constitution of the United States, had been protected since the formation of the Government by that instrument and laws of congress and decisions of the Supreme Court, and that the people of the north had no right to abolish or interfere with it simply because they had grown strong enough to do it. A man might hate slavery on moral grounds and still believe he was bound to live up to the agreements made with the south when the government was formed.

But the time had passed for discussing those matters – the war must now be fought through till one side was whipped – and I would not be whipped by my own brother, whatever the cause of the quarrel. Besides, I thought the time might come when it would be accounted a merit in a man to have been a soldier. If I lived, I might be the father of children, who should never need blush for shame, when asked by the children of other soldiers, if their father was a veteran. Perhaps there was something in this feeling akin to patriotism – it is all I claim in that line, at any rate – and I have heard many boasts over less. So I attended this meeting with many others of my way of thinking – and when the roll was presented for signatures I walked forward to the desk and the pen and roll were presented to me by the moderator of the meeting. Now this moderator was Joseph N. Churchill – lawyer and farmer – who had trained in the militia for years and had long held a commission in the "Independent Corps of Cadets" – the crack organization of the state – Governor's Guard, etc. At this time he was authorized to raise a company for one of these nine-month regiments, designated as the 45th, or "Cadet" regiment. I remarked to him that I would sign the roll after him, and he could hardly decline the challenge – and after we had signed the roll was quickly filled to the number required by the call – fifty-two in all. I might mention that quite a number of my "copperhead" friends, who looked to me for guidance in such matters, quickly followed my example.

It occurred to me that we might as well all go together to join Capt. Churchill's company in the 45th – so I made the suggestion to the others and they fell in with it. I then proposed that we try to recruit our numbers to a full company to go as the "Milton company", by getting volunteers from neighboring towns to join us – and that it might be done quickly I thought a little money should be raised and I, with two other, was appointed finance and recruiting committee with full power. The townspeople gave freely, and by offering twenty-five dollars a head to out of town men our number was soon large enough for a company, and we met at the Town Hall to organize by choice of officers. Capt. Churchill had associated with him in recruiting two young gentlemen cadets, from Roxbury, named Bond – good fellows both and brothers. They had some five or six recruits to turn in which they had raised in Boston. So, on this day appointed, we all met at the Town Hall – were all examined and passed as able-bodied by the surgeon – Dr. Holmes.

As before stated, Churchill and the two Bonds had been commissioned to raise a company for the "Cadet" regiment – and if they had recruited their company themselves, it would have followed as a matter of course that their men would choose them to be the company officers. For the intention at the State House was that all the officers of the 45th regiment should be "Cadets" – and three members of that corps had been assigned to each company of the prospective regiment, and had been busy recruiting, with more or less success. But our men thought they would be a little independent and exercise the right of free choice which the law gave them, and moreover, some of the ambitious ones were looking after the offices for themselves. So, when we came to ballot, there were two tickets in the field, and a large majority were in favor of making me Captain instead of Churchill. I made them a little speech, and succeeded in convincing them that this would really be a breach of faith and that I would not be a party to it – and then we voted again and Churchill was chosen Captain. Then I had another fight to prevent my name being substituted for that of the elder Bond – William G. – for first Lieutenant. Then we balloted for second Lieutenant and I was declared elected to that position. I was just getting up to decline in favor of Henry Bond, when I felt a heavy hand on my shoulder and a whisper in my ear – "take it". I looked around and found the hand and voice belonged to Dr. Holmes, my intimate friend, and also commanding officer of the Independent Cadets, who was really at the head of the whole scheme, and would have gone as Colonel of the regiment, had it not been for the serious illness of his wife, who had been and invalid for years. He was one of Gov. Andrew's chief advisers in military matters and I knew there would be no trouble about my commission if he wanted me to have one. So I made a little speech accepting the position and the company was formed. In order to make my appointment accord with the original plan of organization, I was voted into the cadet corps and then granted leave of absence for "nine months to accept a commission in the 45th Regt. Mass. Vol. Militia".

Col. Codman had already gone into camp at Readville with one company, and on the 12th day of August, 1862, we marched to camp, escorted by horse-men, fire-men, small boys, dogs and citizens generally. Didn't I feel big with my shoulder-straps and sword!!

(footnotes to previous paragraph: 1) The money subscribed by the citizens of Milton was for the purpose of "recruiting the Milton quota to a full company for the cadet regiment", and I had good reason to suppose that if the plan of organization contemplated at the State house was not carried out the company would not be received into that regiment. 2) On reflection I think Henry Bond was older than William. He was a thoroughly good fellow, served as 1st Sergt. of our company and was afterwards commissioned into the 20th Mass. Inf. and was Adjutant of that regiment. He was wounded in the battle of Wilderness, Va. and killed by guerrillas while in an ambulance, on the way to Washington. The rebels attacked the ambulance train for the purpose of robbery and Bond injudiciously drew his pistol and fired upon them. 3) Dr. Holmes afterwards asked me why I did not take the position of Captain and intimated that it would have been all right. 4) I think there were two other 2nd Lieuts. in the regiment under circumstances similar to mine - that is, they controlled men enough to be able to command the position.)

Arrived in camp, the soldier's life really began. The non-commissioned officers were appointed and uniforms, arms and equipments issued – company drills were the order of the day, and officers and men devoted their time to learning how to become that machine called a soldier. The other companies arrived as fast as they were filled and by the 26th day of September we were ready to choose our regimental officers. Commissions had been issued to Col. Codman, Lt. Col. Peabody and Major Sturgis – of course with the intention and at least tacit understanding that we should choose them to those positions. But some of the line officers had conspired to "break the slate" – and take a certain Lt. McLaughlin of the regular army (who was stationed in Boston as mustering in officer) for Colonel, and two of themselves for Lt. Col. and Major. But the conspiracy failed – Codman, Peabody and Sturgis were chosen and the regiment duly mustered into the service of the United States.

Nothing could be pleasanter than camp life during the beautiful autumn months. Regular drills, regular meals, sound sleep, plenty of visitors, guard-mounting, dress-parade, band concerts – all these formed a pleasant variety and made us grow healthy and strong, and by the time our marching orders came we had become a well-drilled and well disciplined body of men – fully prepared for deeds of glory and valor. Nor had our spiritual needs been neglected. Rev. Dr. Stone, pastor of Park St. Church, was our Chaplain – and no more efficient of faithful officer could be found in the Union hosts.

(footnotes to 2 previous paragraphs: 1) It was a brilliant idea of the faction to take up with a regular army man for Colonel. The argument was plausible that we should be much better off with an experienced officer at the head of the regiment. But I doubt if we should have done any better than we did under Codman. I think Codman was far the superior of any other colonel I saw in the service. Churchill was to be Lt. Colonel and probably supposed the idea of promotion would carry Bond and me into the arrangement. As soon as I learned what was up I got a leave of absence and went to Milton and posted Dr. Holmes and I think he notified Codman, for the movement was effectually checkmated and the conspirators frightened out of their attempt. 2) Before we went south, our good friend, Rev. Dr. Morrison, invited our Milton company to march down to attend church on Sunday and had special services prepared for us. I remember Koener's battle prayer was fine – and the men were much amused at the Doctor's advice about fighting – "strike hard – but strike in love". On our way back to camp we were invited into the grounds of Mr. William H. Davis, where refreshments were served. 3) Dr. Stone was naturally a military man – was a fine horse-man and looked more like a soldier than either of our field officers. He almost always turned out with us on battalion and brigade drills – had the band and drummer boys organized and drilled as stretcher bearers, and in all of our engagements with the rebels was on hand with his corps to succor and carry off the wounded.)

On the 5th of November, 1862, we broke camp – took cars for Boston, marched to the wharf and went aboard the transport "Mississippi" – bound for New Berne, N. C. Besides the 45th one half of the 46th were on our boat – the other half on the "Massachusetts" with the 43rd Regt. We dropped down the harbor and anchored, and immediately encountered a cold, easterly storm, which prevented our sailing for several days. The men were too much crowded and the weather added to their discomfort, and the change from camp life was so great that their complaints were loud and deep. "I enlisted because I thought now I had a chance to help abolish slavery, but now I say, damn the nigger and the Union too, if we have got to be treated this way". And the disgusted volunteer probably voiced the universal sentiment. Of course the officers were all right – nice, large cabin, elegant staterooms – meals at $1.50 a day, smoking, singing, card playing and plenty of liquor. But the men were packed between decks, like cattle going to market. The foul air, darkness, and want of room to turn round, made it a novel and bitter experience for men, all of whom were used to the decencies and many of them the luxuries of life. Col. Codman finally got his back up and declared he would not sail till better arrangements were made. He communicated with Gov. Andrew, who sent down some of his officials to make an inspection – and the end result was, another steamer was added to our fleet and we were relieved of the men of the 46th regiment – which enabled us to clean up a little and get into more decent trim by the time the storm abated.

Our voyage to N. C. was delightful, without any incident more exciting than seeing whales, porpoises and sea fowl. Our fleet made quite an imposing appearance – three large transports, and a gun-boat to protect us from the rebel "Alabama", which was supposed to be in those waters. (footnote: As our gun-boat was one of the slow kind and Col. Codman's instructions were "not to run away from her" our progress was not very rapid, and we began to be impatient at the delay. The day before our arrival, about the middle of the forenoon, a sailing vessel was discovered away outside making signals. The gun-boat went out to speak her and we were obliged to slow up for several hours. The gun-boat had altered her course and seemed to be going out to sea and by and by was lost to view. So the Colonel told the Capt. of the boat that his instructions did not require him to follow the gun-boat – simply not to run away from her – and as the gun-boat had run away from him he would take the responsibility and make the rest of his way to Beaufort. So the two other transports were signaled and we all struck a fifteen knot gait and began a race for port. We supposed the gun-boat had received information of the Alabama and had gone in search of her – at any rate we never saw her again. In the morning we had a great struggle to see which boat would get in first. The "Massachusetts" just beat us into the channel and the 43rd set up a great shout of victory. But their triumph was short, as their pilot ran them aground and we steamed along by them and reached the wharf first, while they had to wait for the next tide to float them.) We made "Morehead City" all right, and as our boat was the first one to arrive at the wharf, our regiment immediately boarded a train of flat cars and by dark were on our way up into the country, on the Atlantic and North Carolina R. R. – our destination being New Bern, about forty miles from the coast. We could see nothing of the country and very little of the city as we entered it, though the railroad ran through the principal street. The 44th regiment which had preceded us from Boston a short time before, was encamped a short distance from the station where we stopped, and on our arrival we found they had made hot coffee for us, which was very acceptable. We passed the night in a huge freight station on cotton bales – the hardest bed I ever slept on. The Captain and Lieut. Bond fared better, as they went down town and stopped at a hotel. In the morning the men were allowed to visit the camps nearby, and they freely patronized the negro quarters, where a meal of coffee, hoe-cake, ham and eggs and trout could be had for thirty cents. At ten o'clock we "fell in", marched across the Trent river and went into camp about three miles outside the city. Barracks had been constructed for the men, of green lumber, which, after awhile proved very unhealthy. The officers were quartered in tents and were remarkably healthy all winter. We soon got settled in our new quarters, and there being no snow to hinder, the regular routine of camp life was resumed, about five hours a day being devoted to company and battalion drills. We were brigaded with several old regiments, which had seen service with McClellan and Burnside, and our new uniforms, bright equipments and full ranks, presented quite a contrast to the general appearance of the "Peninsular" veterans. Our camp was next that the of the 17th Mass. – and of course they were curious to know what sort of fellows we were. They had

heard we were called the "Cadet" regiment, and supposed we must be something mighty fine, as the cadets were known at home as the Governor's guard on all state occasions. So the morning after our arrival, they came loafing around, scrutinizing the camp guard, as they were pacing their beats. On one post was a member of our company (B), a stone-cutter named Bart Rooney – red-haired, red-faced, quick and active, a splendid looking soldier. A brother paddy from the 17th walked up and looked him all over and finally asked - "and be you a curdet?" – Be God, I am" – says Bart. "Ah, sure, I thought them was all rich men's sons from Boston" – said he – and off he ran to tell his comrades his discovery. The old soldiers had been prejudiced against the nine months troops, because the which preceded us, the 44th, had put on airs. They supposed, from the first specimen they saw, that we were all fancy boys – but they found out their mistake in due season. Gov. Ben. Butler has recently stated, on the stump, that Col. Codman's regiment was known as the "seed-cake" regiment. That name was given to the 44th regt. because the men preferred the settler's goodies to hard-tack. But I think all the soldiers had a similar weakness soon after pay day.

Our camp was pleasantly situated on the south bank of the Trent river, which is perhaps thirty rods wide at this place. There was a bridge here, giving communication with the country beyond, towards the enemy, and our regiment had our pickets across the river, about two miles from camp. The road was through a wooded country, and the amount of game in sight was tantalizing to a sportsman. Of course no guns could be fired in the direction of the picket line. Our drill ground, on which cotton and potatoes had once been raised, now grown up to weeds – swarmed with quails and coney rabbits, which made skirmishing quite exciting. There were thousands of ducks in the river, and every night and morning there was a continuous stream of canvas-backs and red-heads flying over the bridge within easy shot. But they were not for us. I knocked over one with a junk bottle, and one morning, finding and old skiff just above our camp, pushed over to a little reedy island, and practiced with my revolver at them while they were fording – but without success. The servant of one of the officers was more successful, by baiting and snaring them. They would have been a welcome addition to our larder, as our Thanksgiving turkey, weight 6 pounds, cost $2.25. We did better in the way of fish. The water was alive with them and the negroes used to draw a small seine – perhaps fifty feet long – and anybody could buy the haul in advance for twenty-five cents, sometimes getting a bushel of good fish.

Dec. 4th the 51st Mass. arrived and occupied the barracks next ours. We had "refreshments" ready for them – each company of the 45th furnishing hot coffee and soft bread for the corresponding company of the strangers, and our officers entertained their brother officers. I guess they had a good time, for I was Lieut. of the camp guard that night, and about midnight Col. Codman sent for me and told me to present his compliments to those gentlemen and tell them it was getting very late. This sent them to their quarters. About half past two in the morning we had our first alarm. A gun was heard up the river on the picket line – the long roll was beaten – men turned out in line to meet the expected attack and a messenger started out to the pickets to see what was up. He returned after a while with word that one of the pickets had challenged what proved to be a stump, and getting no answer, had blazed away! I reckon that poor fellow was responsible for considerable hard language, for he was the cause of keeping the men under arms in the cold night about four hours. But it was good practice. After being relieved in the morning I marched the old guard out to discharge their pieces at a target. The rule was that the three best shots should be excused from their next turn of guard duty. A fine flock of curlews sat on the sand, almost in line with the target; but the bullets failed to frighten them. I tried a shot at them with my pistol and made feathers fly – the fowls went off too.

On looking over my letters home of this time, I find this remark about our regiment, which shows we were making progress. "Have been complimented highly at our appearance on battalion drill. They say that there is a remarkable steadiness and solidity about our movements. Lt. Parkinson, one of Gen. Amory's aids (Gen. A. is our brigade commander) told us today that Gen. Foster (department commander) on witnessing our drill last Thursday, remarked of our Colonel – 'that's the man for me –

he's got some snap to him'." So far as we could judge this good opinion was not changed afterwards. Colonel Codman was a good officer and would have stood high in any department of the army.

And now we were to see some active service. Burnside was in command of the Army of the Potomac, and was making ready for his disastrous movement on Fredericksburg. I suppose Gen. Foster's move on Goldsboro at the same time was either to call off some of Lee's troops to protect his railroad communications or at any rate prevent reinforcements going to him from N. C. We marched from New Berne on the 11th of December, towards Kinston and Goldsboro, having a force of about 15,000 infantry, 500 cavalry and about 40 guns. It was our first march, and of course was quite fatiguing. The bad state of the roads made frequent halts necessary, but by night we had made good progress and were glad when the column halted to go into bivouac. The country was well adapted to our purpose as there were plenty of fence rails for fires and water for cooking. (footnote: the fences were regular Virginia, zig-zag fence, without any posts, so they came apart easily. As the rails were of dry pitch pine they made a splendid fire.) The various regiments were marched into position – forming regular lines, one behind the other, about fifty paces apart – muskets stacked – and as soon as the command "break ranks" was given, every man rushed to the nearest fence and brought in rails for the night's fire. A huge, continuous fire was soon going in front of each line of stacks, each man quickly had his pot of coffee or tea cooking and the supper of hard tack and salt junk was soon over, followed pretty generally by a good solid smoke. I suppose there were some soldiers who went through the war without the aid of tobacco – but they were few. Soon the tired tramps are curled up in their blankets, as near the fire as possible, the most wakeful ones being expected to put on fuel from time to time through the night. As this was our first night on the ground it was rather necessary to keep the fires going. We were in an old potato field – with frequent puddles in the low places - and in the morning we found ice an inch thick! Ther's "Sunny South" for you! But we soon forgot the cold night, after getting a pot of strong hot coffee – and the sun came up bright and smiling, without a cloud or breath of wind. Breakfast over I pulled off my stockings and gave my feet a good greasing with mutton tallow to keep them moist and to prevent chafing. We resumed our march at half past eight, the pioneers having been at work all night, removing obstructions which the retreating rebels had placed in our path. Our road lay mostly through hard pine forests and the enemy had hacked away right and left, and felled the trees across the road for miles. These had to be cut up and hauled out of the way before the wagons and artillery could pass. At noon we halted for dinner where a slight skirmish had taken place between our cavalry advance and the enemy's rear guard. Here were three prisoners – the first "johnnies" we had seen outside of the gaol in Newberne. They looked very much like other people – though their hair was very long, and they looked gaunt and haggard, as though hard worked. Their uniforms seemed odd to us – cotton cloth, butternut colored, which made it difficult to distinguish them from the scrub-oaks which abound in this region. One of these men was wounded and a dead horse lay by the road-side. While we were at our lunch two shots were heard a few rods ahead, and in a few minutes a horseman came riding back, inquiring for a surgeon. It seems a straggler from the 23rd Mass. – just ahead of us – saw a rebel riding towards him from the woods, and fired at him.

"Johnny" returned the fire, hitting him in the foot – and then skedaddled. Our surgeon dressed the wound. As we kept on our way, we came across two more rebels mortally wounded and one prisoner under guard. About the middle of the afternoon we came to a house, the owner of which claimed to be a Union man. The soldiers were making free with his bee-hives, sweet potatoes, etc. He was remonstrating with our Col. – "I've had a good many people here from your country and I always treated them well and charged them nothing – now your men have taken my potatoes, taken my honey, spoiled my hives, torn the weather boards off my meat-house, and it makes me feel mighty bad." The Colonel rather doubted his Union professions, but ordered the men out from his premises. This foraging was continued all along the route, and there must have been short commons there the rest of the winter. There were some ludicrous scenes connected with it all. The bee-hives were of primitive construction a board placed on posts and on the board a row of "bee-gums", made of sections of a hollow gum tree, placed on end, with another board for covering. Every house had its row of "bee-gums". The men would rush up and uncover the hives,

ram in their hands and grab as much of the comb as possible, and scamper off with it, the honey dripping along on the ground. Although it was midwinter the sun was so warm the bees could fly, and they charged quite vigorously upon the invaders. Every house had its sweet potato heap – the potatoes being thrown up in a pile at the end of the house and covered with sand, just enough to keep out the frost, a rail fence about them to keep out the pigs, which seemed to run wild in every direction. These pigs were small, mostly black and red, and many a one was pinned to earth with a union bayonet, while his tongue was cut out and put into the soldier's haversack, to be boiled for his supper. Of course geese and ducks were an easy prey, while the hens, peafowl and guinea fowls were shot from the tall shade trees in which they took refuge at the first alarm.

Well, we marched along, pretty well tired, till 7 o'clock, having made about twenty miles that day. We avoided Trenton, as the enemy had destroyed the bridge across the river. This second night was pretty rough – we were very tired, encamped late, rails were far away and rations were getting low. But we foraged some pigs and a yearling and managed to get along. Saturday morning we started off at 8 o'clock and marched pretty steadily till towards noon, when artillery firing was heard ahead. Pretty soon a battery came tearing along from behind and we opened "to right and left" to let them through. "Close order – march!" – and we again poked along, expecting soon to be in the midst of the conflict. At noon we came to a large open plantation and found the troops in advance of us drawn up in line of battle, while we could hear the artillery pounding away about half a mile in our front. We lay down in the warm sunshine and had a good rest. Towards night we learned that the retreating enemy had destroyed a small bridge and had been disputing the passage of the stream – having a two-gun battery in position. The 9th N. Jersey had been ordered forward, had "deployed to right and left", forded the stream with a rush and captured one of the guns, the other having been hauled off.

We staid where we were that night and had quite the comfortable quarters, as during the afternoon we got boughs and made quite a tent. Some of my men foraged some pigs and some salt and our wagoner brought me some honey. The fresh pork and honey didn't agree very well, and sometime in the night I awoke in terrible agony, and was very ill with both nausea and diarrhea. I was so sick and weak when we resumed our march in the morning that it seemed impossible for me to keep up with the regiment – and what if it should go into its first fight without me! But I kept along and the roads were so bad that frequent halts were necessary, on account of the wagons and artillery getting mired, so I had chances to catch up and rest, and was able to go into the battle of Kinston with the rest of them. This was Sunday, the 14th day of December, and a splendid day too. The road we were travelling crossed the Neuse river at this place, and the enemy had determined to make a stand. By the middle of the forenoon quite a brisk engagement was going on both sides of the road, on our side of the river. The city (?) of Kinston was on the other side of the river , about half a mile from the bridge, the railroad to Goldsboro passing through it. The approaches to the bridge were masked by heavy woods and the ground was quite swampy. The enemy were posted on both sides of the road, between the woods and the river, there being a little cluster of houses here, with a small church. They had thrown up breastworks and mounted several pieces of artillery. As we approached the neighborhood of the conflict, being on comparatively high ground, we could form some idea of position. The guns on both sides were barking away – shot and shell were screaming over the woods, and bursting in the air, while the musketry firing was plainly heard on both sides of the road. We had listened to the din perhaps half an hour, when a staff officer rode up to Col Codman and said – "You are to go in and relieve the 17th Mass." So we fell in – closed up the ranks and went to meet our fate. We went by the flank till we entered the woods, then deployed into line, marched up to the line of battle, passed through the intervals in the ranks of the 17th, and became ourselves the front line. And what a place for a green regiment! Thick trees and bushes – a black alder-swamp in front, the higher ground beyond covered thick with scrub oaks – beyond that the enemy – shot and shell flying overhead and knocking off the limbs from the trees – and here we were to make our reputation. And even under these circumstances there was something to laugh at. The rebels were firing high and as their bullets passed over head, with their zip, zip, zip! – it was amusing to see the heads duck and dodge. We

had not learned that a bullet resembled lightning in this, that if you can hear it is harmless to you. Once in a while some man would become demoralized and show an inclination to turn back, only to be pricked up from behind by the point of an officer's sword. I remember to have seen our Captain grab one such by his coat collar and spank him into his place with the flat of his sword! Soon came the command from the Colonel – "fire by company – commence firing!" We were the right company, and our Capt. immediately gave the command, in clear tones, "first company, ready, aim, fire!" – and Co. B. let drive its first volley through the trees. The other companies followed in rapid succession, and a regiment of veterans could not have done it better. We were a full regiment, with long company fronts, and if our aim was good the effect must have been bad on the enemy – but of course we could see nothing of it. My attention was entirely taken up in trying to keep the men in their place – the rear rank well up, so as not to blow off the heads of the men in front, and to keep them cool. By and by came the order from the Col. – "cease firing – forward – fire by file as you advance". So we waded slowly through the swamp, each man loading and firing as he had opportunity – then we went a little way by the right flank and by that time our line had got to be rather irregular. But the firing continued, and I heard no more commands till the fight was virtually over. Owing to a cross fire, coming from the other side of the road (we went in on the right hand side) some of our men got the impression that our left wing was firing into us, and manifested a great desire to get back into the swamp – and I am sorry to write that quite a majority of Co. B. did leave in that direction before the fight was over – not from fear of the enemy though; but from fear of our left wing, which they imagined had swung round towards us. (footnote – Capt. Churchill always claimed that he heard an order to retreat.) By the time we had become well accustomed to the noise and danger and were about out of ammunition, two veteran regiments – the 10th Conn. and 9th N.J. were sent in, and they immediately charged ahead of us and the rebels broke and skedaddled across the bridge – all but about four hundred who were captured. Our light batteries rushed to the front and shelled the retreating forces till they were beyond the city. In fact they were closely pursued by cavalry and artillery till after dark.

As the firing ceased I heard an order – "rally on the colors" – and fell back with what men I had with me to the regimental line. (footnote – When the battle was over and we "rallied on the colors", I found myself in command of company B what there was left of it. After the line was dressed the Colonel came along to take account of stock. "Where's Capt Churchill?" he asked. "I don't know sir" – I answered. "Where's Lieut. Bond?" I don't know, sir." And didn't he look disgusted. It appeared afterwards that Bond was carried away with the enthusiasm inspired by the 10th Conn. and 9th N.J. when they charged the enemy's lines and broke them – and went along with them, having forgotten all about his own company. "Grandpa", as we called him, didn't lack for courage.) We then marched down to the bridge, where all was hurly burly – dead men, wounded, prisoners, captured guns, shouts of victory – and what was better for me, my illness had entirely disappeared. In half an hour or so our stragglers had all reported – some having been sent to the rear with killed and wounded, and many of them had charged with the regiments which gave the finishing blow. I had supposed that we were under fire about twenty minutes and was much surprised to learn that it was nearer three hours from the time we went in till the enemy broke. It was said by men in the old regiments to have been a sharp engagement, sharper than at the capture of New Berne. (footnote – After the battle I heard Gen. Amory tell Col Codman that our going into the battle was a mistake – that his staff officer misunderstood him. It was a pretty rough place for a green regiment; but I was always glad the mistake was made as we made an honorable record and it was really the only chance we had to show what we were made of. The casualties in the 45th exceeded those in all the other nine months regiments put together – Mass. Regiments, I mean.) Well, we had got through it with credit and made for ourselves a good name. I think we all did well, and the veterans praised us greatly. For my part, I was astonished at my own coolness and I have been more excited in a football match at Exeter. What went on on the other side of the road I don't pretend to know. One thing all agreed on – the enemy had a strong position and left it in a hurry, leaving their guns behind them. Gen. Evans was in command – his brigade being present – the same troops which cut our forces up so at Ball's bluff – also some troops from S. Carolina, which, with N. C. conscripts, gave him about 7,000 men. We probably had engaged about 5,000 men besides the artillery. They tried to fire the bridge and had it

covered with cotton and pitch, but the poor devil who lighted the fire was shot in the act, and was burned to a crisp. Somebody had kicked him overboard, and he lay on the rocks, below the bridge, on his back, his arms and legs sticking up in the air – presenting a horrid appearance. The bridge was saved, and towards night several regiments marched over and took possession of the city – quite a pretty place – about the size of a smart New England village. The streets were wide and straight and some of the buildings very neat. Considerable cotton was burning in the streets and the depot was on fire, with the evident intention of destroying the military stores in it. We saved some of the molasses, corn and bacon. Foraging was pretty lively for a time, and the haversacks were well replenished. (footnote – I mean men of other regiments. The discipline in the 45th was of the strictest and not a man thought of leaving the regiment without permission.) During the evening many of our men roamed through the streets, pillaged houses and stores, got excited with liquor and finally started a fire which threatened to destroy the whole city. The 17th Mass. had been detailed for provost guard, but they were so inefficient that five companies of the 45th were detailed to clear the city and preserve order. There were a few people in the city professing to be "Union", whose property was protected.

Monday morning our march was resumed – not by the road the enemy had taken – but back across the river – our rear guard burning the bridge behind them. I suppose Gen. Foster thought it best to keep the river between us and any possible reinforcements from Virginia – a wise decision, as the sequel proved. The day was very warm – but we made a long march – and turned in very tired – within a few miles of Whitehall, also on the northerly bank of the river. We saw fires in that direction all night, and concluded the bridge was burning, which proved true the next morning. We were on the march by eight o'clock – and about ten heard cannonading ahead, and in half an hour were under fire. The engagement was more of an artillery duel than anything else. The enemy had thrown up breastworks on their side of the river, manned by infantry and artillery, and also had two small gunboats. As near as I could make out the attack here was for the purpose of destroying the boats. Several of our regiments were marched down to the river, and they kept up a heavy fire from the woods, which concealed the river and enemy from our view. Our artillery took position on rising ground and exchanged shots with the enemy about three hours and it was warm work as the range was short. As our regiment had been marched down in front of our batteries all we could do was to lie down under the fire from both sides and take it. It seemed to me a foolish piece of business – for we could do no possible good – and while lying there inactive lost eleven men, including our color-sergt. – whose head was shot completely off. Immediately in front of me one man was killed and another wounded. The man who was killed was lying on his face and a shell came down and struck him plump in the bank, passed through him and exploded underneath, tearing him pretty much in pieces. Another shell exploded just overhead, and a small piece struck the ground and rolled towards me, so that I reached out and picked it up, thinking to keep it as a souvenir. But it was too hot to hold long and burned my hand quite severely. I remember seeing three grape shot come along together – and one of them struck the trunk of a large tree just behind us, and bounced back and rolled along on the ground. One funny thing happened here which made us roar. A big, brindled bull-dog came trotting along the road in front of us, head and tail erect, with an expression on his face of "who's afraid?" He was on his way down to the river. Suddenly a projectile of some kind came along and struck one of his forelegs. The change was sudden – he whirled about and hurried off on three legs – his steady "ki-yi" answered by shouts and cries from the whole regiment. After awhile our batteries succeeded in destroying the gun-boats and silencing the enemy's guns, and as nothing more could be done, the column started along for Goldsboro – in fact I believe the main part of our army had not stopped at Whitehall at all. We marched till 7 o'clock and spent a cold night afterwards.

Wednesday we started at 8:30 – our regiment in the rear in charge of the wagon train. Heavy cannonading was going on in front. Towards noon we received orders to "about face, for home – as the object of the expedition had been accomplished." The advance troops had destroyed five miles of the Wilmington and Weldon R. R. and burned the railroad bridge across the Neuse. We marched towards home till dark and were just going to encamp for the night, when the order came to turn back – and back

we went for nearly four miles at a terrible rate – then halted and turned homewards again. The reason for this countermarching we learned to be this – when our forces destroyed the railroad bridge they overlooked a foot bridge, a short distance off, and when the retreat began the rebels thought they would strike a blow. So they came across this bridge, being concealed behind the railroad embankment, and a brigade of them made a dash at a six-gun battery which was in position. Their attempt was a rash one, and they suffered severely from grape and canister, and several regiments coming up on their flanks they fell back in confusion and many of them were captured.

This finished the fighting of the expedition. We returned to New Berne by way of the Kinston fight and had a chance to see the havoc and destruction of a battle-field. We made quick time on the return trip, it being rumored that the rebels were trying to cut us off, which was probably true, as Burnside was repulsed at Fredericksburg, and two divisions of Longstreet's Corps started immediately for North Carolina. But we got back all right and found our old quarters all ready for us. We had got to be a hard looking crowd – clothes fearfully soiled and hands and faces almost black from the smoke of our pitch-pine fires. The casualties in the 45th regt. numbered seventy-seven – in the whole force about five hundred. The rebel loss must have been larger – besides about six hundred prisoners. My loss consisted of a pipe and a towel. Lieut. Bond gave his overcoat to a contraband to carry, and never saw it again. The weather, for the time of year, was perfect, no rain except one short shower. North Carolina roads are miserable – nothing but sandy cart paths, just wide enough for a regiment to march by the flank. There are many mud-holes, and the roadsides are lined with puddles and little streams. Water is abundant and quite good. Towards Goldsboro the country appears much like home, quite hilly and covered with oak and pine wood, except where it had been cleared for cultivation. Large cornfields lined the roads at frequent intervals, though houses, and those hardly better than shanties, were hardly near enough to be called neighbors. As a general thing the country seemed deserted by God and man. The conscription had made a clean sweep – and hardly a house was inhabited – save by a few negroes. One thing is certain – the road we travelled, both going and coming, was cleaned of everything valuable – cattle, pigs, poultry and potatoes – all confiscated and consumed – while rail-fences and many buildings were committed to the flames. The cavalry acted badly – rushing along the road, their horses covered with bed clothes and wearing apparel which could be of no earthly use to them. I shall never forget one scene – when they had just raided quite a fine house, some distance from the main road. I happened to be riding beside the Colonel – being acting quarter-master at the time – when a drove of these rascals came tearing down the avenue. Codman turned to me with his nose well in the air and remarked – "Hollis, war is a respectable kind of business – isn't it?" It must have been hard for the women and children, especially when their buildings were burned over their heads, as was often the case. The johnnies seemed to be comfortably clothed, well fed, and well enough armed. Their ammunition seemed to me to be superior to ours. And they fought like men who believed in their cause.

We got cleaned up and resumed the routine of camp life, and the time would have passed pleasantly enough but for the terrible sickness among the men. (footnote: When we started on this Goldsboro expedition the camps were left in charge of sick men, convalescents, etc. When they heard the cannon roaring at Kinston they knew we were fighting and of course were somewhat anxious. One of our companies had for a pet a big, black Newfoundland dog, who became demoralized and struck out for home, where he arrived about dark, pretty well played out. This worried our friends terribly and they supposed we had been whipped and stamped. So they had an anxious night of it. Corporal Merrill, of Co. B., who was lame and had been detailed to assist in the quartermaster's department, was one of the camp guard left behind and he was stationed at the bridge. About midnight he thought he heard the rebel cavalry approaching the bridge and his challenge not being answered, at first foot-fall upon the bridge he pulled up and let go at them. Then there was a great turmoil, and after awhile they proceeded across the bridge with a lantern to see what created the disturbance and found nothing but a small and aged mule, which Merrill drove every day in a little cart, to deliver rations, and which had been turned out to browse across the river that afternoon. Poor Merrill never heard the last of his gallant defense against the rebel

cavalry.) A new disease appeared among them – I suppose new, for the surgeons didn't seem to understand it – and about the time New Year opened we had certainly two hundred and fifty men in hospital. It seemed to attack the most robust – men would be found in their bunks in the morning perfectly helpless, almost frozen, bent all out of shape – would be taken to the hospital and before night would be dead. Many of our best men had to be discharged and sent home to save their lives. None of the officers were attacked but on the contrary were remarkably healthy. The latter lived under canvas, while the men were quartered in wooden barracks, made of green pitch-pine lumber.

About this time our quarter master was promoted to be Brigade Q. M. – and our Colonel selected me to be regimental Q.M. This appointment would relieve me from all duty with my company, and would make me a mounted officer. But I concluded to stick to my company and requested the Colonel to excuse me. He replied that I had no choice in the matter, that he had simply ordered me to do a certain thing and it was my duty to obey. But I kept at him and as he saw it was a matter of deep feeling with me, finally said he would relieve me if I would find some other Lieutenant, acceptable to him, who would take the position. I was fortunate enough to find one who was tickled with the idea of having a horse to ride, and at dress parade an order was read, relieving me, and I was rewarded after parade by three rousing cheers from my company. Such things tell with the men.

About new years we received our first pay from Uncle Sam. To show the character of the men in Co. B. I will state that out of their first six weeks' pay they sent home to their families and friends $1150. No other company sent so much by $400. The Sutler said he "wouldn't give a damn for such a company". Adam's Express Co. took the money to Boston at a charge of 2 ½ per cent. – not excessive, considering it was an insurance. I quote from a letter written home Jan. 10, 1863. – "This sandy soil is very easy on shoe leather, my buckle shoes do not yet show any signs of wear. It is also impossible to get clothes soiled by dirt, the sand brushing off without difficulty as soon as dried. In fact, since getting back from Goldsboro, we have come to the conclusion that Camp "Amory" on the Trent is not a bad place – for the officers. The weather is magnificent – the "rainy season" a myth – while it costs but six dollars a week to feed myself and servant, and pretty good living at that. I duly rec'd the troll hooks and lines from Tom, and have tried them with but indifferent success, catching but three pickerel. The ducks are the great temptation – the river full of them. The trouble is to get ammunition. I cut some lead into pellets and made a number of shots with an old musket, but something was wrong and I killed but one though I crippled several. I can give you but little reliable information about the hospitals. As regards the ambulances, I saw the water barrels attached to them, but should not be surprised to find them leaky. There certainly is a great deal of carelessness in the army, and I doubt not the hospital department had its full share. The water here has one quality – peculiar to gin, and from the same cause – juniper – that wood abounding here to such an extent that the water seems to be impregnated with it. But I can tell you one thing – well men are of more account in the army than sick or wounded ones – the former are necessary, the latter are attended to as a matter of duty. I don't desire to get into the hospital. An officer pays six dollars a week while an occupant – imagine yourself a private soldier without the benefit of the six dollars. But there are some fine men here among the surgeons, and I am inclined to the belief that Massachusetts soldiers are better provided for than any others. Marching orders were read tonight at parade. As near as I can make out, our Brigade, comprising the 17th, 43rd, 45th, and 51st Mass. – is to go out on a scout towards Wilmington. We are to take but five days' rations so we shall not go more than forty miles.

Owing to bad weather this little tramp was postponed till the 17th – when we started about eight o'clock in the morning. It was an unimportant scout – but served to vary the monotony of camp life. Perhaps by threatening Wilmington the attention of the enemy may have been diverted from some more important movement. The first day our regiment led – Co. B. being thrown out as flankers. About noon the cavalry went to the front. The travelling was quite good and we proceeded very comfortably. About 3 o'clock we came up with the cavalry, who were halted, waiting for the pioneers to rebuild a bridge over a small

stream, the destruction of which gave us the first notice that the enemy were aware of our coming. The bridge was completed by 4:30 and the cavalry crossed and pushed ahead, soon discovering some mounted rebels who declined to wait to be spoken to. We were going towards Trenton, and about sunset we arrived at Pollocksville, a small village of about twenty houses, mostly deserted. As we advanced into the large field where we were to bivouac, I was ahead in command of the skirmish line, expecting every minute to receive a volley from the pine woods beyond, and while busily engaged wheeling my skirmish line towards the woods, walking backwards, all at once I nearly stumbled upon an unseen foe, concealed in the rank growth of weeds and cotton plants. There I got the greatest scare of my life. A flock of wild geese started up from almost under my feet and you may imagine the commotion they created with their wings and throats. I think if a mine had exploded I should have not been so scared. Rabbits and woodcock were also kiting about in every direction. You would have laughed, as I did, to see one of our darky servants run down a black pig! He finally caught him, threw him down upon his back and when I came up was trying to kill him by choking. As orders were strictly against foraging, I released poor piggy, who went off, grunting the thanks he could not speak.

Pollocksville was at the crossing of two roads – one leading south towards Onslow and Wilmington, the other west, towards Trenton. We reached the latter place the next afternoon, without opposition, or other obstruction than felled trees. The only object of interest on the way was an old man with a flag of truce who gave us the valuable information that the retreating enemy consisted of one company of infantry and two of cavalry. As our regiments outnumbered their companies we were very brave and patriotic. We found Trenton on the south bank of the Trent – an ancient looking place – in peaceful times of perhaps five or six hundred inhabitants. We burned what bridges there were, so our rear was safe on our retreat. The next morning we retraced our steps to Pollocksville. One soldier made himself noticeable by carrying a skeleton on his back, which he had stolen from a doctor's office. His bayonet was thrust through the skeleton's mouth – and as the heels rattled along on the ground, the effect was quite picturesque. The same man carried under his arm a big, leather-bound, medical book and looked as though he were going to set up business for himself when he got back to New Berne. Several houses and a mill were burned at Trenton. We halted at Pollocksville for the night, the 51st and part of the 43rd Mass. going towards Onslow to support the cavalry. Tuesday morning we followed them. This road, like all the others, was through pine swamps, with occasional clearings and houses. One poor woman came out and appealed to the Colonel for a horse which the cavalrymen had taken. All the response she got was – "How many sons have you in the rebel army?" We pushed on about eight miles from Pollocksville to "Young's Cross-roads" – where we joined the other infantry forces. Here we bivouaced, while the cavalry, with one section of a battery, pushed on towards Onslow, to destroy some bridges. As the weather looked squally we made a hut of boards and rubber blankets which served well against the rain which fell in torrents. We had splendid fires all night, using the dry pine logs from some deserted negro cabins. We had to get up in the rain and make a flooring of fence rails to keep our bed out of the water, the ground being flooded. The cavalry came in about midnight, having done what they went for, with the loss of but two men. In the morning we found the muskets completely soaked and it was quite a job to draw out the wet charges and make them ready for use. If the enemy had come down on us in that condition, it would have been bayonet work or a skedaddle. As we were twenty miles from home, if the weather had been good we should have made a two days' march of it – but as it looked like continuous rain we all wanted to make Camp Amory before we turned in, so the Col. started us for home – and I tell you we made quick time through the mud, getting back to the camp by 5 P.M. – covering the twenty miles in eight hours – with only three short halts. It was awful travelling – rained all the time – the roads were flooded and in some places we had to wade through slough holes three feet deep – but we pushed along, singing and laughing, all order forgotten – the mounted ones ahead and the rest of us doing our best to keep up. Within half a mile of camp we halted – closed up the columns, and then marched into camp in shape – the band leading. After a good wash and putting on clean clothes I found myself fresh as a lark, and sat down to a supper of stewed oysters and hot chocolate with a great deal of satisfaction. Capt. Churchill had been left behind in command of the camp, having about one hundred invalids and

convalescents for a guard. He had suffered greatly on our expedition to Goldsboro, particularly when the nights were cold. I recall his disgust one night, when he had procured a barrel, into which he imagined he was going to get shelter from the cold wind. He lay down on his back, in front of the fire, and tried to pull the barrel on for a night-cap. But it was no go – the captain was a broad shouldered man, and the barrel ought to have been a hogshead. I fear the captain spoke some words unadvisedly on that occasion. At any rate, he looked mad, and threw the barrel away in disgust, much to the delight of his 2nd Lieut. – who was a much smaller man. The captain met with quite a loss on that same expedition. Quite a number of the officers had brought out with them a patent life preserver, in the shape of a steel vest, which was claimed to be bullet-proof, and would protect the body from the throat to the navel. It was in several pieces and packed in a leather satchel. As the weight of the machine was from eight to ten pounds, it could hardly be worn except in time of imminent danger. The Captain had hired a tremendously stout darky to tote for him, and this armor was part of his load. We got into the Kinston fight so suddenly that there was no chance to gird on his extra armor, so Richard concluded that is was a useless addition to his pack and quietly dropped it into a stream we were crossing, doubtless to puzzle some future antiquarian. I guess the idea was suggested to him though by some wag.

Soon after this Onslow trip the 45th was ordered into the city of New Bern to do provost-guard duty – relieving the 17th Mass. We marched in to the music of our band – dressed in our prettiest – and created quite a sensation amongst the colored population – who adorned the streets on either side with rows of shining pearl. The various companies were quartered in different parts of the city – in houses formerly occupied by "Secech" – who left when New Bern was captured. Co. B. was quartered in the aristocratic part of the town, near Gen. Foster's headquarters. Our house was pleasantly situated on a corner – a large, square house – and very convenient for its present uses. On the first floor above the basement were two rooms and a wide hall for the use of us officers. We used the front one for dining and living rooms, the other for our beds. The men were quartered in the two upper stories – the sergeants having a room to themselves. Some furniture was left us – in the front room a large, round, maple-wood table – a large, old fashioned sideboard and a hat-tree, in the back room a large wardrobe and a nice, roomy cupboard, with sides of fine wide netting, to keep out the flies and let in the air. In this room was a fire-place and in the front room a set grate, in which our predecessors had left a nice hard coal fire burning. Mr. Bond, our guest and a great friend of the regiment, presented us with a sofa, so we were quite comfortably situated. The house was lighted entirely with gas, furnished by government. Access to each story was by means of outside stairs and verandas. Across the back-yard were two cook houses – and the basement furnished a comfortable mess room for the men. As provost guard we were the police force of the city – preserving order – arresting all evil doers and enforcing all orders of the Provost Marshal. One regulation was that no-one, except commissioned officers, should be allowed in the streets after 9 P.M. without a pass signed by the Provost Marshal, and commissioned officers could not pass a sentinel without the countersign, which was announced to each company commander daily from regimental headquarters. Our life here was very pleasant, and as one half the regiment was on guard at a time, there was not much drilling. Some of the officers had their wives along and there were pleasant evenings at Gen'l headquarters for those who were invited. Sunday was our great day, when we marched to church, fully armed and equipped, and worshipped God in the finest meeting house in town. The regiment occupied the front seats and what room was left was free to a general congregation of all ranks and colors. Dr. Stone gave us good sermons and we had the Park St. church quartette, accompanied by a fine organ – and altogether it was quite a swell affair.

Under date of January 28th, I find in my diary an account of the capture of a rebel picket-post by some of our cavalry. The post was out about twenty miles – on the road from Trenton to Kinston. One Cavalryman in some way got in rear of the station and came down the road towards it slowly. The johnies, supposing the visitors to be some of their own officers coming to visit the outposts, turned out the guard and stood at presented arms! Of course they surrendered as soon as they saw the joke. A few days afterwards another batch was gobbled – who were so busy, playing cards, that they were taken without

firing a shot or striking a blow. Shortly after, the rebel pickets came near squaring the accounts – catching a Lieut. of our cavalry alone, some miles out from Kinston. They made a dash at him, exclaiming – "Now we've got you". "I guess not", replied the Lieut. – and putting spurs to his horse, he rode through them, receiving their fire, which only resulted in putting two buck shots through him, causing only flesh wounds however. These little skirmishes are about the only excitement we have now, and furnish subjects for camp talk. To show the difference in climate between N. C. and Mass. – I will state that peas were planted in New Berne by the first of February and by the 13th everybody was busy, planting gardens, the buds on the trees were swollen and the grass green by the road-side.

I will now quote from a letter written to my sweetheart about the middle of February –

" About eight o'clock in the evening a train arrived from Morehead City, bringing Gen. Foster, who has been to Washington to settle his imbroglio with Gen Hunter" (Foster had taken quite a force into Hunter's department to help attack Charlston and it was understood by us that the two generals couldn't agree – at any rate, Foster came back to New Berne in high dudgeon and thence to Washington.) "As I was standing by the train, as conspicuous as my sword and sash would make me in the dark, being on duty at the time as officer of the guard – two officers approached, and one of them asked me – 'did the general come on this train?' I answered – 'Yes'. 'Has he gone to headquarters?' 'No,' I replied, 'He's aboard the train now – well, I'll swear this is George W. Atherton.' 'Well, my gracious! Hollis? – Dr. Newton, let me introduce my old friend, Abijah Hollis.' Now for the explanation, you know I informed you some time ago that Atherton had resigned his Captain's commission in the 10th Conn. last August, and that a private soldier of that regiment had informed me that he was forced to do so, because he had abused his men. I did not believe it – for in my four years' comradeship with him at Exeter I had formed a high opinion of him and considered him a true christian man. My faith in my old friend is fully confirmed. You know how hard he has worked for an education and what a struggle he had in making up his mind to leave his class in Yale College and go to the war. Well, last August, as he saw no probabilities here of active operations, he resigned his Captaincy, went back to New Haven, rejoined his class, made up all his back lessons and would have graduated with his class this summer, had it not been for this move of Foster's against Charlston. He conceived the idea of rejoining his regiment, wrote to the Colonel to see if there was a vacancy, found he could have a Lieutenant's commission, to which he was recommended by every officer in the regiment – got his commission from the governor and started immediately for New Bern. He has been waiting for transportation to his regiment and thought he could accompany Gen. Foster to Port Royal, on his return from Washington. He did not know I was in the service and was quite surprised to find me here. He dined with us next day and after dinner saw Foster's Adjut. Gen. who told him Foster was not going back to Port Royal – had been outwitted by Hunter – had lost all his old troops that he carried down there – that he was consequently very mad and would not send any officers into Hunter's department – and that he (Atherton) and several other officers whose regiments were there, might as well make themselves comfortable here. But about nine o'clock he came rushing in and said the General had thought better of it and that they were to take the cars the next morning for Morehead City."

Atherton survived the war – is now President of Penn. College – has called on me at my home (in 1885) and is a fine looking man.

I quote further from the same letter. "A steamer has arrived, bringing many friends of the regiment – among them the wives of Chaplain Stone, Surgeon Kneeland, Capt. Wales and Lieut. Hardy. Also Mr. Emmons and Mr. Wales. Our dress parade that night reminded us of Readville, there were so many familiar faces among the spectators. Rather an amusing thing occurred here yesterday. A large flag-pole had been erected in front of Gen. Head-Qu. and yesterday morning the stars and stripes were flung from it. A large crowd was in attendance and four regiments were paraded on either side of the street. A Sergt. of the 158th N.Y. had been furnished with a bottle of champagne to smash against the pole when the flag was run up. Up went the colors, the troops cheered – crash went the Sergt's. bottle and soon the crown

dispersed. Towards night the christening Sergt. was picked up in an intoxicated condition – was arrested, and the discovery made that he had substituted a bottle of water for the wine and had been having a little private celebration of his own.

Another pleasant occasion was the firemen's parade. We have a fire department regularly organized with offices and men of the Quartermaster's department – with a nice looking engine and two hose carriages. It was a fine show – the "machines" being tastefully decorated with bunting and evergreens, drawn by a big crowd of fine looking men, in red shirts, black pants and glazed hats, forming a striking and pleasing contrast to our eternal blue uniforms. They had our band and one other – marched through the principal streets and finally past the quarters of Gen. Foster, who stood on the porch, surrounded by his staff – returning the salutes of the red-shirts, while Mrs. F. stood at one open window and her sister at another. It was a very pretty and pleasant affair and I stole some violets from Mrs. Foster's garden, which I enclose."

About March 8th there was much excitement in our department, caused by the investment of "Little Washington" by the enemy, while Gen. Foster was there. They undoubtedly expected to bag him. Little W. is situated about 30 miles north from New Bern – at the head of Pamlico river. How many troops we had there I never knew – but it had been occupied for some time and was considered of some importance as a strategic point. The troops besieging it were under Hill and Pettigrew, and as they had boasted that they were going to clean Foster out of North Carolina, we supposed this was the first sweep of the broom and were naturally anxious for the result. Of course we know nothing of the real situation – the city was full of rumors – and there were marches and countermarches, all of which kept up the excitement. In the evening of March 7th all the troops here, except our regiment and the 5th R. I. were ferried across the Neuse. There were about 8,000 men, infantry, cavalry and artillery. The relief of Gen Foster was the object. As the enemy were reported to number about 15, 000 we expected a big fight. One result of the scare was to send most of our lady friends north by the first boat. But Foster did not wait to be rescued – but ran the blockade in his little steamer and got back to New Bern in safety – though the boat was pierced by nineteen shots from the rebel batteries. The relieving force immediately returned without seeing the enemy.

After this there was quiet till the 13th when there were reports of the enemy approaching from several directions. As the 14th was the anniversary of the capture of New Bern, preparations had been made for a celebration by our side and it looked as though the other side were going to help us. On the afternoon of the 13th, as we were returning from brigade drill, we met the 3rd N. Y. cavalry dashing out on the Trent road, where our pickets had just been driven in and some of them captured. About dark an order came from headquarters for us to issue extra ammunition. The company was paraded for this purpose, and one poor fellow, who had been absent sick on former occasions of real danger, fainted dead away and fell to the ground as though shot. His name is probably on the pension roll now.

The next morning before sunrise we were awakened by the booming of cannon. We started out and found the enemy were shelling a little earthwork on the opposite side of the Neuse, a little above the city. There had formerly been a ferry there – and a road came down to the river, and furnished an approach to the city, within easy shelling distance. The 92 N.Y. had been over there a short time, throwing up entrenchments to meet just such an attack as this, and were now encamped there, the tops of their tents rising above the works. The enemy appeared before them early in the morning with a demand to surrender. Time was asked to communicate with Gen. Foster – and a Lieutenant immediately started across the river in a row-boat. But the johnies opened fire with six guns at short range. As the New Yorkers had no artillery, they made no resistance, simply lying close behind their sand walls, reserving their fire for the infantry charge which they supposed would soon be made. I mounted the top of one of our chimneys and with a field glass had a good view of the scene. And it was a pretty sight – the morning was lovely, just enough breeze to ripple the surface of the river, here about a mile wide, and our bank of the river was lined with interested spectators, watching the unequal combat. The enemies' guns were

served very rapidly, the hope being to breach the works or frighten the garrison into a surrender before succor could arrive. But Foster had signaled them to hold on at all hazards and they seemed inclined to do it. We could see them plainly, hugging their earthworks, the dirt flying over them at every discharge, many of the projectiles striking the river and bouncing along like foot-balls, finally exploding and throwing the water in little fountains. This state of things lasted for two mortal hours and "where are the gunboats?" was heard from all lips. Sure enough – where were the gunboats? – the principal defense of New Bern, as we had always supposed. As soon as the attack began Foster had communicated with the boats and ordered them up to attack the enemy. The reply came back that one boat was aground! – one had no rudder!! Another had her machinery disabled!!! and it would be impossible to go into action without steamtugs. Fortunately there were tugs which could move – and after awhile two of them were hitched to a gun-boat and towed her up stream. This is a fact – a rebel battery came within a mile of New Bern and shelled a camp for two hours before an answering shot could be fired. But when the gun-boats did open the effect was instantaneous – one-hundred pounder parrots were too much for the field batteries – and at the third shot they limbered up and skedaddled. My impression was and is that it was a mere piece of braggadocio and that they had no infantry supports. One good regiment would have captured the place with a rush and with but little loss and then, with the eighteen guns they were said to have, they might have riddled camps, city, gunboats and all. But they disappeared and the gun-boats amused themselves all the forenoon, practicing at an imaginary foe. One regiment was sent across to reinforce the 92 N. Y. During this exciting sport the rebel infantry approached on the Trent road and our batteries opened on them – but our forces were withdrawn, as Foster had chosen ground nearer the city, where the guns of fort Totten and of the gun-boats in both rivers could be utilized. We awaited the attack all day, but it did not come. During the evening the city was full of rumors and the "secech" residents evidently expected that their outside friends were going to do great things. Our fire brigade was on the alert to prevent all attempts on the inside to burn us out and special instructions were issued to us, who were doing the guard duty. A deserter came in from across the river who stated that the force attacking the 92nd N. Y. comprised one brigade of infantry and eighteen guns, that the forces on the Trent road were three brigades and forty guns – while 20,000 men were advancing from Kinston – that we were to be attacked from three directions at once and that Longstreet was in command. I suppose there were some who believed in this yarn. What my views were at the time is shown by a letter written that night, from which I quote. "But I put little trust in deserters – and if the Rebels do attack this place, unless they bring rams to operate on the river, I shall consider it a mere feint to cover a real attack on some other place – say Plymouth or Washington. I see no chance for them to attack us successfully without the aid of a naval force. Feeling thus secure, though somewhat excited at the prospect of a fight and the busy preparations going on, I have put about two quarts of whiskey punch on the fire, that our sleep may be made sound so that we may awake in the morning fresh and strong."

As I have before stated, New Bern was situated at the junction of two rivers. One line of defenses was out about a mile, where the distance between the rivers was about two miles. Fort Totten had been built at about the center of the line – a large earthwork, mounting many heavy guns, protected from assault by every known contrivance, and only approachable over perfectly level ground, without woods or other shelter for miles. This fort had been recently enlarged and strengthened – the hundreds of contrabands who had congregated here being used for such work. The Emancipation proclamation had been read to them by their preachers and the day after they had had a grand strike – taking the ground that if they were free they could not be obliged to work. But the General had the advantage of them as he controlled their rations and they were soon brought to terms. No further trouble was had with them till recruiting officers came down with authority to have them applied to the quotas of certain northern states. The darkies were rather shy about enlisting and I fear some deception was resorted to arouse their patriotism. A big, black fellow would be rigged out in officer's uniform, covered all over with gold lace and red sash – and with drawn sword marched about the streets, preceded by the drum and fife – and this was quite effective. But all's fair in love and war. The great trouble was, the rascals began to feel their importance, and would jostle white soldiers and even officers when they met on the sidewalks. There were some commissions

given to northern colored men and as one of the duties of our sentinels all over the city was to salute all officers when they passed – the race prejudice was aroused – and there was danger of a conflict. I don't think Gen. Foster was in sympathy with the movement. In our regiment, when I was the only democrat commissioned, I think I was as friendly to the negro as any officer – and I certainly have done what I never saw any other officer do – shared my blankets at night with my colored servant.

It seems the johnies took my views of their chances against New Bern, for no attack was made. From across the river we learned that the 92nd N. Y. had but one man killed and three wounded, while the third shot from the gunboats struck one of the enemy's guns – knocking it in pieces, killing no men and wounding twenty-two. It is a fact, perhaps remarkable, that wherever our gunboats have been able to bring their huge guns to bear upon field troops, they have quickly decided the contest – notably Pittsburn landing and Malvern Hill. Ordinary field pieces are demoralizing enough – but projectiles the size of a common half barrel cannot be withstood by men, simply the windage being sufficient to prostrate a whole regiment if it passes close enough. As the battle of Kinston, one of the stoutest men of my company was knocked down by the wind of a twenty pounder and picked up for dead without a scratch on him – and it was hours before he recovered his senses and during the whole time it was impossible to get his musket away from him so tight were his muscles set. I doubt if the man ever fully recovered from the shock. That there had been a real intention to attack New Bern would appear from the fact that the natives between that place and Morehead City undertook to co-operate by tearing up the railroad track. It was a bad move for them, for they were summarily driven beyond the lines and their buildings burned. The operations of guerrillas seem to be inconsistent with modern ideas of warfare. You will remember they played quite an important part in our revolutionary war.

I had received an invitation from a friend – a civilian employed in the quartermaster's department – to visit the plantation of the rebel General Evans, which was being run by our folks for the purpose of getting a supply of lumber. There were acres of splendid pines, a good saw-mill, grist mills,etc. – and my friend had charge of the operations. He offered to mount me and we had agreed for an early start on the morning of the 14th. The attack on the 92nd N. Y. had delayed us – but when that row was over the Colonel let me go on my promising to hurry back if there were any signs of fighting. So I spent some pleasant hours inspecting a southern farm. It was about nine miles south of New Bern and I enjoyed the ride very much, though not much of a horseman. Just before we reached our destination we ascended quite a hill from which we looked down upon the buildings and orchards. One of the prettiest sights I ever saw was the peach orchard of several acres, every tree in full bloom. I had never seen a cotton gin before and was surprised to see the immense pile of cotton seeds, which up to that time were considered a nuisance but which, since the war, have proved of more value than the fiber itself.

Another pleasant occasion was a visit from Lieut. Wells of Roxbury, Mass. Who belonged to the navy, had been a prisoner, paroled and just exchanged. He was a friend of the Bonds. He was captured somewhere on the N. C. Coast, having swam ashore with a line in order to rescue some of the crew who had been capsized from their boat in attempting to land through the surf. He, with the rest, was captured and taken to Richmond. He said he had received the best of treatment, while a prisoner, and not the least abuse. He with five other officers, had a large room to live in with plenty of food and a good cooking stove and plenty of wood and water brought in by black servants.

At this time I weighed more than ever before or since – 176 pounds, without overcoat. Be we all discovered before long that our flesh was not healthy tissue. It would doubtless have been better for us officers if we had been confined to army rations – but our kind friends at home kept us supplied with luxuries and we didn't get sufficient exercise.

April 3rd notice was given to different companies to keep close to their quarters till further orders. The cause of this, as near as we could learn was as follows. After the threatened attack of the 14th ult. –

General Foster expected the enemy to make an attempt further north and had sent the 44th Mass. to little Washington and two other regiments to Plymouth, to strengthen the garrisons of those places. Foster went up there himself to put things in order. New York papers of the 30th gave an account of a rebel attack on Wingfield, a place a little above Plymouth, which Foster helped repel. It seems that Foster then went to Little Washington, and finding that the enemy were advancing on that place, sent to New Bern for reinforcements. Spinola's brigade of Penn. drafted men were put aboard transports and started. But one of the boats soon returned and reported that the other boat was aground – that the enemy had surrounded little Washington and planted batteries on both sides of the river, below the city, so that transports could not pass up till the gunboats had preceded them and shelled out the batteries. It happened that a strong west wind had prevented the tide coming in to such a degree that our gunboats could not move and the boats further up the sound could not ascend the Tar river for the same reason. To complicate matters, our pickets were driven in on the Trent road, and for awhile things looked quite serious in the department of North Carolina. Two days after a boat arrived bringing the following news from little Washington. About 2,000 of the enemy had surrounded little Washington – while about 8,000 commanded the opposite bank of the river – the side towards New Bern. Some N. C. union troops, who had garrisoned a block house on the south side of the river had withdrawn and crossed over to the city, losing four killed and eight wounded. Wednesday night Foster called for a volunteer to run the blockade with dispatches to New Bern. A lieutenant of the 27th Mass. responded – got into a small sailboat with two negroes for crew, and started down the river. It was bright moonlight and the rebels were watchful. He was hailed – but kept right on. Bang! Went a cannon – and the shot struck within three feet of his boat. The helmsman began to show fear – but the Lieut. covered him with his revolver and ordered him to keep on. Crash! Came a second shot – right through the boat this time – but the wind was strong and favorable and they got through, reached a steamer and arrived at New Bern the next morning. Fortunately the wind shifted to the S. E. and the depth of water soon allowed the gunboats to move. They got off that night and the next morning we could hear the hundred pounder parrots talking. For the next two days we heard occasional firing, and about dark, the night of the 5th April a dispatch boat arrived and as Mrs. Foster was seen to clap her hands on the receipt of the news we concluded that the attack on Washington was over. But we were mistaken – for another force was ferried across the river and started towards the scene of conflict – who met the enemy, had a fight and came back with thirteen wounded men. Things began to look serious again and we were all excitement in New Bern, the city being full of rumors of all kinds.

On the 14th, Gen. Foster, having become disgusted with being cooped up in little Washington, and concluding that his subordinates were not plucky enough to relieve him, thought he would again run the blockade and relieve himself. That night he did it successfully and appeared at New Bern, much to our surprise and delight. He immediately started all his available forces toward little Washington, and a brigade joining him from Charleston he was able to take the field with twelve thousand men. But the enemy got wind of the new state of affairs and did not wait for his approach, again leaving little Washington in safety. Foster expressed great disapproval at the way Spinola had mismanaged. It seems his batteries engaged those of the enemy nearly two hours, and Foster expected the infantry to attack and ordered the gunboats to cease firing, from fear of their hurting the succoring party. When he found Spinola had retreated he made up his mind it was time for him to do something himself. It looked to me as though the force of johnies on the south side of the Tar ought to have been bagged. Foster said there were only six thousand of them and I doubt if there were so many.

About this time the troops which had been holding Virginia City, at the head of Albemarle sound, where the dismal swamp canal enters, where recalled to New Bern, bringing with them four schooner-loads of contrabands – men, women and children, with their baggage – a motley crowd. I had for a servant a nice looking colored boy named Emanuel, a former resident of Virginia City, having been a house servant to a widow Waite. His old mother came down with this crowd bringing with her a great lot of silver forks, spoons, sugar-bowls, cream pitchers, etc. which Emanuel had captured when he left his mistress. His mother told him to see if I would buy the lot and I might have had it at my own price. But I was not in

that line of business and advised him to keep it and dispose of it to the traders as his mother's needs required. I asked him if he thought it was right for him to rob his mistress in that way. He was a little staggered at first – but soon replied – "Well, Lieutenant, dat's all I ebber got for from my services." Emanuel was as good a negro as I ever saw – but they were a bad lot. We paid them good wages, but it was hard to get anything out of them. They were generally to be found in the sunniest place – piled up like a lot of striped snakes in the spring – fast asleep. I've often heard the officers damning them – good abolitionists too – and telling them they didn't wonder their masters used to lick them.

On the 24th came the order relieving us as Mount guard and complimenting the "officers and men for their fidelity, discipline and efficiency". We were quite proud of the reputation we had gained in the city and were the recipients of many compliments. Capt. Howell, of the 3rd N. Y. artillery, who had been under McClellan in all his Virginia campaigns, said to me – "what a splendid set of men you've got – I never saw such a regiment". Major Giles of the 2nd artillery in the regulars, who had served under nearly every General in the east said – "before our regiment was changed to artillery we thought we were about as good as anything – and we were with your crack Mass. regiments in Virginia – but I never saw anything there that would compare with the 45th in appearance, discipline or drill". I have always been sorry we were not in for the war – but one reason for the superior quality of our material was the very fact that we were "nine months men" – and then again, one good serious campaign would have spoiled some of our good looks.

Having been relieved by the 44th Mass. we marched out to our new camp, about a mile and a half, across the Trent and on the south bank of the Neuse – towards the old Newbern battle-field. This time both officers and men were quartered in tents. Some of the men put empty boxes on top of their tent poles for bird houses and they were immediately taken possession of by Martins – which caused the other men to follow suit – and soon every tent had its colony of birds, whose twittering at morning and evening was almost deafening. It was at this camp we saw and heard the mocking-bird in all his glory. They seemed to be on every bush and tree – and would sing all night long if the moon were shining.

We were hardly settled in our new quarters when we were sent out on a scout towards Kinston, the object being to threaten that place and make a diversion for the relief of Suffolk, Va. – which at that time was closely besieged by the enemy. We posted a picket guard, left a small camp guard under command of a Lieut. – marched into the city, where we mounted a train of flat cars. The 17th Mass. was with us. About noon we started towards Kinston and made our first stop at Bachelor's Creek, out about eight miles, where the 58th Penn. was doing picket duty. Here we stopped about half an hour and unloaded some wagons from the train. Then we went on towards Kinston – proceeding slowly – every eye on the watch, as we might come upon the enemy's pickets any moment. It seemed strange, riding into the enemy's country on a train of cars. In front of the locomotive was a box car, covered with sheet-iron, while inside was an ordinary field-piece, which could be fired through holes cut in the end and sides of the car. We went along about five miles further when the train was stopped and Cos. B and F. left the cars and went in advance, the object being to secure the bridge over Cove Creek. The bridge was reached without seeing anything of the enemy and we advanced beyond the bridge about a quarter of a mile and halted. Much to our disgust a company of the 17th Mass. passed on ahead of us and formed the advanced guard for the night, while the main force bivouacked, the cars being run back some distance. We had a quiet night, hearing nothing but frogs and owls. I neglected to state that I was detached from Co. B. for this expedition and served with Co. F. Capt. Daland. The railroad from Newburn to Kinston is about as straight as can be, gradually ascending, through swamps and pine woods, plenty of briars and underbrush, making skirmishing and flanking very tedious. The track had lately been repaired up as far as the point we had reached – but from that point on wards was impassable for cars. For about a mile chains or rails were missing, and beyond that, as far as we went, the rails and ties had been bodily turned upside down into the ditch, leaving a splendid hard road bed to travel on.

The next morning we were up bright and early, ready to go on with the picnic. There was a highway crossing the railroad about a mile ahead and two companies of the 45th were sent ahead to scout on this road to see if they could find any signs of rebels. About noon the Lt. Col. came along and told us to draw in our pickets, as the regiment would be right along. So we prepared for the advance and before the rest of the regiment arrived were once more on the march, Co. B. ahead, supported by Co. F. the main body about 500 yards behind. When we reached the cross-road mentioned above, we found a breast-work of railroad ties thrown up and indications that it had been lately occupied, in fact, the two companies which had been sent ahead to reconnoiter had frightened the johnies out of it. We went along and soon saw, a long distance ahead of us, two mounted men, slowly retreating. As we advanced the enemy's pickets fell back, and as we could see that their number kept increasing, the experience began to be exciting. Pretty soon they made a halt, behind a breastwork of ties and began firing at us. Co. B. replied – but the distance was too great for muskets and as we continued to advance steadily they soon retired. Here Co. F. took the advance, which made me the foremost officer. I sent a sergeant in advance, with four men, and we kept on till the rebels disappeared behind breastworks, thrown up right across the track and extending into the woods on either side. We found out afterwards that the highway leading to Kinston crossed the track at this place and their earthwork obstructed that as well as the railroad – also that we had some kind of a force advancing on that road. Well, we kept on slowly, watching the woods in every direction and expecting every moment to be ambuscaded. Some way off to our left, across a clearing, I discovered a house, and saw two men saddling a horse – and started six men off to try and secure them. We had just passed this house, when suddenly came a volley from the woods on our left, which caused some ducking of heads. My men returned the fire and for awhile we made quite a noise and the bullets whistled merrily. But no one on our side was hit and the firing soon ceased. We were within six hundred yards of the earthwork when we received the fire on our left. We could plainly see that johnies looking at us over the top of their works and the question was how many were they and had they a masked battery. I halted my men, told them to get what shelter they could and not fire unless they saw a good chance. I then went back to report to the Col. what I had seen. He came back with me and was surveying the position through his glass when an orderly came up and told the Col. that Gen. Palmer wanted to see him. Then we learned that Gen. Palmer was abreast of us on the highway, with the 5th, 27th and 46th Mass. regiments and was really in command. Hearing the firing, he had halted his column and come over to see what was up. The plan of attack was immediately formed – the 27th Mass. to advance up the road and draw the enemy's fire, Co. E. and one company of the 17th deployed on the left of the railroad, my company (F) to push on up the track. (footnote: Company E. was marched to the left of the railroad and formed line at a right angle thereto. Then Colonel told the captain to deploy forward and to advance firing. The poor captain, who understood his business thoroughly, couldn't think of the necessary orders and stood fingering his sword knot, completely demoralized. Codman immediately took command of the company, deployed it, set it to firing and then turned it over to the captain. No man knows what a coward he is till he gets under fire and then, if he wouldn't prefer to run, he's a fool.) The word was given and all hands advanced, firing and cheering. The companies on the left advanced as far as a rail fence, within easy range. With about a dozen men of Co. F. I worked my way along the fence running parallel with the track, a Virginia zig-zag – making the men fire and then fall into an angle to load, while others advanced still further and fired. The great trouble was to make the men in the rear step to the front to fire and there was danger that the more daring ones would have their heads blown off by those in the rear. One of my men being killed, I took his gun and ammunition and showed them just how I wanted it done. Well, in about half an hour I was within a hundred yards of the enemy and all at once their fire slackened and I could see their heads bob up and down as they ran away. I was just going to call on my Co. F. men to charge when I heard Capt. Daland sing out "Co. F. men lie down". I dropped and looked around to see what the order meant, and saw Co. H. coming up the track and they immediately opened fire by sections, that is half platoon front, or fourth of a company. As soon as each section had discharged its volley they took the double quick and charged upon the empty works. As soon as I saw the game I called to my men to come on and though we were in the ditch they did not get in much ahead of us. Co. A. climbed up on the deserted works and gave "three cheers for Captain Donny". Before they had finished they were interrupted by a

volley from up the road which caused them to drop suddenly. But the fight was over and the enemy retreated to Kinston. In the trenches lay three johnies, one killed, one nearly dead and one shot through the thigh. The latter said they carried off some and that the force engaged was three companies. We had five companies engaged and lost but one man killed and four wounded, and one man was killed in the 27th. The rebs aimed miserably, in fact there was such a fire concentrated in that little earthwork that they dared not expose themselves, simply holding their guns up and pointing them over the breastwork without aiming at all. I suppose we might have gone into Kinston that night – but the object of the expedition seemed to have been accomplished – so we retraced our steps to our last night's encampment through a pouring rain. The next day we remained quietly in our camp, simply throwing our pickets. A train of cars came up from Newbern, bringing rations and mails. An old fellow named White, a native, living off about half a mile and claiming to be "Union", came over and I had quite a long talk with him. I bought some milk of him and gave him some meat and crackers as he said provisions were scarce with him. Learning that he had a daughter, seventeen years old, I sent her one of my tin-types. By and by the old fellow came back and said the young lady returned her thanks and would like to have me come over to the house – that she thought from the picture that I must be handsome! But I did not care to dispel the illusion, so declined on the ground that I could not leave my company. I rather suspected the old fellow and it will appear further on that I did well.

We remained here two days longer, awaiting an attack – but the enemy made no sign – and May 1st found us back in our camp on the Neuse. Nothing occurred to break the monotony of camp life till the evening of the 23rd when orders came for the 45th to take cars and proceed again up the railroad towards Kinston. We knew something had been going on in that direction, as a brigade of troops had been sent out and we had heard cannonading at intervals through the day. The messenger, who brought us marching orders, informed us that our folks had made quite a haul of prisoners, but had been driven back by a superior force and Col. Jones of the 58th Penn. killed. We were soon aboard the train and rolling through Newbern, towards Bachelor's Creek, where was the camp of the 58th Penn. whose Col. had been killed. This point was the outpost of our forces towards Kinston. We ran quite slowly and about four miles out from Newbern halted at a kind of crossroads, where we found some infantry, cavalry and artillery. There were also false camp-fires burning on both sides of the track to deceive the enemy with regard to our numbers and prevent a night attack. After learning that all was quiet ahead we again started on and proceeded slowly till we arrived at the camp of the 58th Penn. Here all was quiet and not a fire burning, though the fires of the enemy were distinctly visible over the trees. We quietly left the train and formed in line of battle, ready to repel and attack. The story we heard here was as follows. The expedition under Col Jones had advanced some miles towards Kinston, made a night attack upon and surprised a regiment of johnies, capturing 108 prisoners, some forty horses and mules, several wagons and one piece of artillery. The enemy came down upon them from Kinston with a mixed force and compelled them to retreat. The rebels amused themselves all day shelling the deserted block-house at Bachelor's Creek and that was the firing we had heard. The 46th Mass. had thrown out pickets, which had been driven in sometime in the afternoon, and Col. Jones had gone out with two companies of his regt. to reconnoiter. While crossing a bridge over the creek the enemy had fallen upon them in force, driven them back in confusion, killed the Colonel and wounded several of his men. Here it was I learned that the old man White, who wanted me to go and see his daughter was a noted guerrilla.

No attack was made on us during the night and we were up and in line by daylight, ready for them. We ate our scanty breakfast, inspected the captured gun – a twelve pounder, and played with an immense black bear – a pet of Col. Jones, who had brought it from Penn. with him. Before long our cavalry scouts brought in word that the enemy had returned to Kinston – so the dead Colonel was put aboard the train and with the 45th for escort, was carried to Newbern. We got back to our camp at noon, just in time to attack the Sunday baked beans, which had been prepared to send out to us. And thus ended the last advance of the 45th towards the enemy. We never heard the sound of their guns again and were pretty much occupied after this in thinking of going home, though the regular drills were kept up. The climate

began to tell upon most of us and by the 1st of June the sick-list was formidable. On June 3rd I wrote home the following letter from Beaufort:

Hammond Hospital, Beaufort, N. C.

My dear Mother.
Don't be alarmed – its' only a little bilious attack, which everybody has down here. I began to run down about two weeks ago – but kept at work, hoping to regain my strength. But it was of no use, so last Friday I reported myself unfit for duty. That evening the Col. called on me and advised me to come down here. So Saturday morning, with Capt. Homans and several men of the regiment, I took the cars for Moorehead City, where we arrived about noon and took a boat and came across to Beaufort and reported to Dr. Ainsworth, in charge of the military hospital here. We have comfortable quarters and are doing well. This is a splendid place – on the bay – the open sea in plain sight. In the harbor are several gun-boats and nearly every day some of the Wilmington blockaders run in. I learned from one of the captains that a large, full-rigged man of war ran the blockade last week – supposed to be the "Virginia", a powerful craft, just fitted out in England. He said two or three steamers got into Wilmington every week. This hospital was formerly a huge hotel, built upon piles, right over the salt water. I think I shall go back to camp about the 6th."

But I was too sanguine and did not rejoin the regiment till they came down to take passage for home. Before that time we were joined by several other officers of our regiment, all attacked with the same disease – bilious, intermittent fever, and a sorry lot we were. My condition was such that I have no recollection of the date of my departure – simply remembering that I was helped aboard a boat and carried across the bay and got aboard the transport. I remember very little about the voyage home and think I must have been out of my head – for I know I contemplated jumping overboard and was only restrained by the thought of the folks at home – what an awful thing it would be for them not to know what had become of me. I remember being put into a hack with Sergt. Leavitt when we arrived in Boston – and the sense of rest and relief I felt, when I found myself riding through the familiar streets of Dorchester and especially the fragrance from the hay fields. I think I fully expected to die and was perfectly willing to so long as I could die at home among my friends. I must have been very weak when I reached home – for I remember falling down on the old familiar lounge in the sitting-room and weeping like a woman. But my time had not come yet and the southern disease quickly yielded to the skillful treatment of Dr. Holmes and the home climate and attentions – though I was not able to be present with the regiment when it was mustered out of service of the United States on the 7th day of July, 1863.

This would seem to be the natural end of the 45th regiment – but as we had been organized under the militia laws of Massachusetts and had not yet been disbanded when the draft riots occurred in July, in New York and Boston, we were ordered into camp at Readville about July 15th for service in Boston. As both Capt. Churchill and Lieut. Bond were sick in bed I thought it my duty to respond and consequently reported for duty and found about three hundred of the men there, Co. B having thirty-eight present for duty. Many of the men were not satisfied that they were obliged to turn out in answer to the summons and there was considerable grumbling – but the Colonel had the men paraded in line and read and explained to them the laws bearing on the case, and there was no further trouble. The men seemed to see the point and we proceeded to drill a little in such evolutions as might be required in street fighting – rations and ammunition were issued, and just before sunset we marched to the Readville depot and took cars for Boston. We marched directly to Fanueil Hall, where we were quartered for the night, portions of the regiment being on guard in the vicinity. Other troops were on duty; but there was no disturbance, and the next forenoon the condition of my health caused me to return home. And that is all I knew of the draft riot and the last I ever saw of the regiment. I suppose we were finally disbanded – but know nothing of it.

I think there were eleven regiments of nine-months troops sent from Massachusetts, and their terms of enlistment all expired during the summer of '63. The state authorities supposed that a good proportion of the men would re-enlist under the inducement of high bounties, state aid, etc. and the attempt was made to raise four regiments, to be called "Veteran Volunteers", the condition being that no man should be accepted for these regiments who had not seen at least nine months' service and been honorably discharged. But the nine months men had had enough of it and very few responded to the call. A Milton young man opened a recruiting office at the Lower Mills, expecting to secure most of our Co. B. men of the 45th – but not one of them could be had, though the pay and bounty for the first year's service amounted to about seven hundred dollars. I had been loafing about all summer, recovering from my sickness and trying to throw off the malaria contracted in North Carolina. One day in November the chairman of our board of selectmen came to see me and asked me if I would take a Captain's commission in the 56th – first veteran regiment. He said they were anxious to fill the town's quota under the last call for troops that the men didn't seem inclined to reenlist – that they had talked the matter over and come to the conclusion – that if I took a Captain's commission in the 56th regiment some of my old men might be induced to go with me. As I had already made up my mind to rejoin the army to see the thing through I accepted the offer and succeeded to the recruiting office – but with little better success. The nine months men had made up their minds to stay at home as they had no fear of the draft. Only one of my old comrades joined me and he was induced by my offer to make him 1st Segt. of my company. But the regiment was being recruited by somebody – men were sent to camp as fast as enlisted – and when a sufficient number for a company had been gathered the three officers were assigned by the Colonel and the company mustered in. In due time I received the orders to report at Readville, and on the 27th of January, 1864, was again mustered into the service of the U. S. – this time for the war.

I think there were just three men in my company I could call by name – the men having been forwarded to camp by the various recruiting officers, and having had all sorts of promises made to them, soon began to make their claims for performance. Nearly every man had been promised something – that he should be a sergeant, corporal, company clerk, company cook, etc. etc, - while one old man from Cape Cod, a whaleman, had been promised the position of regimental wagon –master! All the Cape Cod men – about thirty of them – had been told that they could get transferred to the navy if they found they did not like the infantry service. Some men had been enlisted by "bounty brokers" – those rascals who took contracts to fill town quotas, receiving themselves the town bounties – and complained that they had been drugged and shoved into camp without getting their money. This was a pleasant state of things for me, and my tact and ingenuity were taxed to the utmost to satisfy the men of the hopelessness of their cases. Of course I could not yield to their demands and must be governed by my own judgment in organizing my company. I told them that every many must stand on his own merits and that all would be treated by me with justice and square and honest dealing. I think they saw the difficulties of the position and became willing to trust me to do the best I could for them, and we soon settled down to the routine of camp life. I think I had the best company in the regiment – but the contrast between the 56th and 45th was great. I have no hesitation in saying the 56th was the poorest regiment sent from Massachusetts. Volunteer enlistments had ceased – and the ranks were filled from the lowest classes, such as could be drugged in saloons, enlisted in police courts and even pardoned from the penitentiary for the purpose of counting one on some town's quota. Some of the men had been drafted and many of them were substitutes – foreigners, who could not speak or understand one word of our language. Nearly all who could be called "veterans" had been discharged for disease or wounds. One of my sergeants had but one eye, having deceived the mustering officer with a glass one. And we had a good deal of fun with this same glass eye afterwards. He always took it out when he turned in for the night, and as he had no mirror for toilet purposes, the glass eye would appear one morning turned to the right, another morning to the left, sometimes cocked up and sometimes drooping, just as it happened. One day it dropped out and was lost in the mud – and the men patched up and raised money enough to furnish a substitute – they couldn't get along without that eye. At this time bounty jumping was practiced as a regular profession. A fellow would enlist in a town on the condition that he should receive the town bounty as soon as he arrived in

camp. The town committee would deliver him at camp, get a receipt for him and then pay him his one, two or three hundred dollars – and the next morning the recruit would be missing and on his way to repeat the operation in another part of the state. Parties were ready outside for a consideration to furnish him with citizen's clothes. One of the fellows happened to get into our camp the second time and the Colonel swore he should go out with the regiment anyway. So he was put into the guard house and kept there till the day arrived for mustering in the last company. When the company was paraded for inspection the mustering officers' attention was called to this particular man, as it was supposed he would feign some kind of disability so as to be rejected. When his turn for inspection came he quietly put his thumb and finger into his mouth and pulled our an entire set of false teeth and holding them up, quietly remarked to the Colonel – " I guess I've got you now." Of course he was rejected – but the Colonel got what satisfaction he could – the fellow's head was shaved, his clothes turned inside out, a gag put into his mouth, a big placard "bounty-jumper" hung on his back – and he was marched about the camp several hours, preceded by a drum and fife playing the rogue's march, and finally kicked out of camp.

We received marching orders for the 20th of March – but this was kept a secret from the men, as it was expected there would be a grand skedaddle from camp the last night. The Colonel, having a pretty good opinion of me, selected me for "officer of the day" for the 19th and none but supposed reliable men were detailed for camp guard. The night was dark and cold – a regular March night. Just after "taps" I made the round of the camp and found everything quiet and orderly and returned to my quarters to get warm. I had not been in five minutes when the Lieut. of the guard came in and said "the devil was to pay down at my company barracks" and that I must hurry up. I rushed down after the Lieutenant – went in at the front door of the building and saw that all the men were huddled together at the other end, where one solitary candle was burning. There was no noise and I feared some awful thing had happened. I was just going to demand the cause of the disturbance when my first Sergt. addressed me as "Capt. Hollis" and proceeded to deliver a presentation speech, asking me in the name of the company, to accept a complete outfit – sword, belt and revolver, a splendid silk sash and officer's field-glass. The sword had two scabbards, one of steel for the service, the other ornamental and gilded for parade. The whole thing cost one hundred and twenty dollars – a perfectly foolish expenditure of money, as I needed none of the articles and could not take them with me. But of course I had to accept them – so I thanked them in my best style; but gave them to understand at the same time that they must not expect any different treatment from me because of their gift. On the whole it was a pleasant affair. We had a quiet night, though quite a number of the bounty-jumpers were missing in the morning. My company lost one, a man who had been so dirty and lousy that he had been taken down to the river, under guard, stripped and washed by men detailed for that job. The next day, Sunday, we took cars and left the state. The most stringent orders were issued to prevent the men from leaving the cars, and from having any communication with any one through the windows. They were rotten with money, and would pay any price for liquor and at every stopping place there were plenty of people ready to supply them. At every stop we made during the day every officer was on duty, with cocked revolver, to keep these demoralizers away from the train. This is a hard story and a curious way to put down a rebellion – but it was the way Massachusetts took at that time. We arrived at Croton, Conn. about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and went aboard the steamer Plymouth Rock, where officers and men were comfortable till Monday morning, when we found ourselves at the pier at Jersey City. Many of the men had spent the night gambling and early in the evening it was discovered that the men were getting liquor. A watch was set and soon the rascal was discovered in the purser of the boat who was coining an honest penny at the rate of five dollars a pint for very poor whiskey. He was immediately tried by drum head court martial and strung up by the thumbs till the end of the voyage. About ten o'clock we took cars for Philadelphia, which place we reached early in the evening. Here we were hospitably entertained for an hour or more at the rooms of the "Soldiers' Relief Association", and well warmed and filled. Again we took cars, common box cars this time, and the next noon found us in Baltimore. We marched about mile through the streets of Baltimore, in search of a reported collation – but finding said collation in a dissolving view in its nature, countermarched, and went aboard the steamer Columbia, and started down the bay in a driving snow storm. We arrived at Annapolis about dark and

marched directly to the "College Green barrack". The storm still continued – as hard a snow storm as I ever experienced – and as the men were pretty well fagged out the Colonel told them that if they would go quietly to bed he would dispense with camp guard for the night. So we turned in on the bare boards. Some of the company officers took precautions to prevent their men leaving their barracks – but in the morning it was discovered that more than one-half of the men were missing! The fact was the men were bound to spend their money, and while we were marching through Annapolis from the steamer had laid their plans for the night. And the Colonel's kindness fallen in with their plans. So all that day was spent in hunting up the missing ones and getting them back to camp. Of course they were more or less drunk – most of the more. The guard house presented a curious sight – about three hundred culprits, all drunk, some lying asleep, some bucked and gagged, some tied up by the thumbs, all who could shouting and swearing. I was "officer of the day", and had a pleasant time of it. But I was quite proud of my company, as not one of them was drunk and but one of them in confinement. As I was passing through the guard-house, an ugly devil, named Casey, who was tied up to a post, with a gag in his mouth, kicked at me. Lt. Col Weld was just behind me and pulled out his pistol and put a ball through Casey's arm, just above the elbow. I thought it a foolish act; but that was his idea of discipline. Casey, when sober, was one of the best soldiers I ever saw – was a giant physically – a college graduate – but was too fond of the ardent. The last time I saw him he had a peanut stand on Boston common. We managed to get our men sobered off and the next day marched out some two miles from the City and pitched our camp. We were to form part of Gen. Burnsides' 9th Army Corps, rendezvousing here preparatory to taking part in the coming campaign against Richmond. About a dozen regiments were here when we arrived and through the month of April the encampment increased rapidly. Our time was spent in perfecting our drill and preparing for the great move. I will quote from a letter written home March 27th, to give an idea of our situation at that time.

"As I sit in my tent, facing south, no fire, the front open to the sun, I look down my company street, the tents on each side, I see various sights familiar to a soldier and perhaps interesting to you. On the left is a stack of four muskets, placed outside to make room while the occupants of the tent clean house a little. Opposite, on the right, is a soldier, examining the contents of his knapsack. Further along, on the left, is another stack of muskets, covered with coats and hats hung out to dry. Near them is a man making his toilet, having just shaved. Near him is a man blacking his boots, apparently having an idea that there will be a dress parade by and by. Here comes one of my corporals, James Carlysle, a fine fellow, who wants to get a pass to the city tomorrow "to buy some shirts". Can't grant it, as the orders are very strict, from fear of drunkenness. In other parts of the street are various men loafing about – while beyond the parade ground paces the sentinel, probably wishing he had nothing to do this fine day but loaf. And above all this lazy, lounging lot of men, shines the warm sun, knowing nothing and caring nothing of all our troubles.

I am sorry to write that I am losing faith in my company. Three of the privates are in the guard-house and one corporal under arrest in his tent for stealing a pass to the city yesterday and using it. Two other privates are absent without leave. They have too much money – the result of the bounty system – and the attractions of the city are too much for them – "wine and women". And this leads me to speak of Annapolis. You know it is an old Town. In it is quite a celebrated brick edifice – the State House – occupied for a time, I think, in revolutionary days, by the National Legislature. There, I think, Gen. Washington resigned his position in the army. Throwing out rum shops and houses of ill fame, Annapolis is a slow place – of little account – a long way behind Newbern. The country around is mostly cultivated land and the farms appear to be well laid out and I suppose productive. In one cornfield were many barrels lying about, containing some kind of fertilizer. The morning we left College Green barracks, to come out here, a steamer load of paroled prisoners arrived from Richmond – a motley looking crowd, I tell you. From their looks, I should judge that clothing was scarcer than food in the rebel capital – though it is possible the rebel authorities send only the most healthy looking ones. Some of them showed me what they said was a day's ration of bread – a junk of solid, heavy, corn bread, about half as large as a

brick and weighing about as much." (I saw just the same thing taken from the haversacks of dead rebels afterwards.) "Seeing some of the prisoners looking sleek and fat I made inquiries and found that these fellows had received better treatment on account of their assisting the prison authorities. It was told me that some of these favored ones were permitted to select the men to be paroled, by paying authorities five dollars a head, making themselves whole by selecting such men as were willing and able to pay with watches and jewelry for their release. Some of these brokers were near being lynched on their arrival here."

When my company was mustered in at Readville, the Col. had assigned to it as 2nd Lieut. a young fellow who was entirely incompetent and worthless and I had expressed my opinion of him to the Colonel at the time. He agreed with me but said we must wait till we got away from home and then we would get rid of him. He had too much political influence behind him to make it advisable to drop him then. So I waited till we were settled in our camp at Annapolis and then watched for my opportunity. It soon came, as the fool gave one of the men an order on the Commissary for a canteen of whiskey – his idea being to carry favor with the men. I happened to discover it and gave him his choice to resign or stand a court martial. He wanted to know on what ground he could base his resignation. I suggested that he was sometimes a little hard of hearing – so he went to the surgeon and got a certificate of "chronic trouble in his ears, resulting at times in almost total deafness" – and with this for a basis, sent in his resignation, which was accepted. As my other Lieut. had been left behind in recruiting service, I had my company all to myself and my time was pretty fully occupied in attending to my various duties. To give you an idea of camp life, I will copy a general order issued at this time – "Head Quarters 56th Regt. Mass. Vol. Inf. Gen. Order No. 52 – Gen order No. 2 – depart. 9th A. C. of the 23rd inst. prescribing the general routine of duty in the corps, is so far modified as relates to this command, as to read as follows:

Reveille	6 :00	A. M.
Surgeon's call	6:30	
Breakfast	7:00	
Guard-mounting	8:30	
Squad –drill	9:30	
Police-call	10:00	
Company drill-		
Heavy Marching order	10:30	
Recall	11:30	
Dinner	12:00	
1st Sergts. Call	1:00	P. M.
Squad-drill	2:00	
Co. or Bat. Drill	3:00	
Recall	4:30	
Dress-parade	5:00	
Retreat	5:30	
Tattoo	8:30	
Taps	9:00	at which time all lights will be extinguished and all noises cease in camp"

The part of the order with regard to putting out lights did not apply to the officers, they being allowed to waste midnight oil to any extent. The sutler furnished us with tallow dips at five cents apiece – but it required a half dozen of these to make one of them visible. Prices at Annapolis were awful – white sugar 31 cts. a pound – butter 60, cheese 25, eggs 50 cts. a dozen – and other things in proportion. We bought common boards for tent floors for 5 cts. a foot. We had to send our servants to the city to purchase our supplies. My servant was a curious specimen, Jeremiah Sullivan by name – an Irish lad of nineteen, who had enlisted at Readville without his father's consent. The old men would not allow him to be mustered in so I hired him. He spent most of his time with the hardest characters in the regiment and was constantly a subject for discipline – not being ugly or cross – but full of the devil. I sent him into the city

one day for a saw – price 1.50 – and gave him the exact amount. Returning with the saw, he proceeded to deposit on my table 13 tin plates, one bottle French mustard, one bottle sweet oil, one padlock and key, a pipe and paper of tobacco and some apples! He said he thought we were in the enemy's country and it was right to forage!

In due time the 9th Corps was recruited and organized, our regiment assigned to the 1st Brigade, 1st Division – all the other regiments in our Brigade being from Mass. viz – 21st, 24th, 57th, 58th, and 59th – the brigade being commanded by a Mass. man – General Stevenson. Before we left for the front we were reviewed by Gen. Grant and soon after our marching orders arrived. We broke camp on the 24th of April and started across country for Washington. Many of our men tried to play off sick – but our surgeon was a sharp-eyed fellow, who had had much experience with soldiers and was not to be deceived. Every man not excused by him that morning must fall in when the line was formed and strict orders were issued to the rear guard to arrest every man on the march who fell out without a written permit from the surgeon. One of my men, Milray, who had always been a good soldier, was flat on his back that morning and said he could not possibly get up. The surgeon examined him and said he was feigning. I told the man I could only be governed by the surgeon's opinion and ordered him to take his place in the ranks. He replied that he would do the best he could but that he should fall out immediately. Well, we started off, and every little while Milray would send word to me that he must fall out and stop. I told him he would do so at his peril. Pretty soon he dropped in a heap beside the road. The surgeon was riding at the rear of the regiment and as soon as his eye lighted on Milray he jumped from his horse – rushed at him with his pocket knife opened – stabbed him in the arm near the shoulder and exclaimed "there, damn you, join your company." The doctor was right – the man felt better at once and was soon back in his place, and he kept it without further complaint.

The march to Washington was quite hard for most of the men, as carrying a full load was new to them and the spring weather quite warm. It was surprising to see the quantities of clothing thrown away on that march – the people along that road must have been supplied for generations to come. The first day we made thirteen miles – the second, Sunday, eighteen miles, halting for the night near Bladensburg. The next forenoon the dome of the capital appeared in the horizon and in the afternoon we passed in review by Willard's hotel, where "Old Abe" was blessing us from one of the balconies. We crossed the Potomac via Long Bridge, and bivouacked near Alexandria. I remember but few things connected with the march. There was much grumbling and swearing among the raw recruits, and remarks like the following were frequently heard – "Joe" – "What in hell you want?" "How much bounty did you get?" – "God damn the bounty" was the answer. The bounty began to look smaller as we approached the front – especially in cases where it had been fooled away. I remember seeing a big, white bull dog, dead, hung in the fence beside the road – the top rail having dropped and pinned him down to the next one. Also at one place a Maryland member of Congress sat of the fence and made uncomplimentary remarks as we went by. While our regiment was marching in review the men sang – "Oh, Abraham Lincoln, what are you about? Oh, stop this war, for it's all played out". By the time we had crossed the Potomac I think we had made up our minds as to our destination. After supper ammunition was issued and I wish to make an emphatic statement about it.

Here was the army of the Potomac about to make a final attempt to reach Richmond. The General of all the armies was to go with it and no care or expense was to be spared to make this the final campaign of the war. The 9th Corps was to join the army in time to participate in the campaign, and had been preparing all winter for its part in the struggle. Here we were in Virginia, near enough to the front to be considered part of the active forces, and not knowing how soon we should meet the enemy. I was resting before my fire when my 1st Sergt. came up with a hat full of cartridges and exclaimed – "I say, Captain, what kind of cartridges do you call these?" I examined them and found the powder was caked so hard that it could not be crumbled between the thumb and finger and resembled, more than anything else, a short stock of black liquorice. Of course they were good for nothing as they could not be loaded into a

musket so as to be fired – unless by accident – and if the cap happened to ignite the powder, the force would hardly be sufficient to drive a bullet home. I asked the Sergt. if they were all so and learned that there was an occasional one, wrapped in yellow paper, that seemed to be good. I went at once to see the Colonel and took some of the cartridges for his inspection – but he had no time to attend to the matter, as all mounted officers were about starting off to Washington to make a night of it. I was referred to brigade headquarters with the same result and was there referred to the division commander. To him I went – but he couldn't be bothered with so small a matter as cartridges – he was going to Washington right away and couldn't be hindered. And that was the kind of ammunition we went into the battle of the Wilderness with. Whether our regiment was an exceptional case or not I don't know, but if our ammunition was a fair sample of the whole amount issued to the division there is no need of wonder at the rough handling we received in that engagement.

On Wednesday, April 27th, our corps got under way for the front and at night bivouacked at Fairfax Court House, having marched fourteen miles. Here we began to see traces of former campaigns in Virginia. Houses were scarce. Mere ruins and blackened chimneys – fences all gone and not a tree in sight big enough to furnish fuel. Thursday we marched through Centreville, by Bull Run and Manassas Junction, to Bristoe station, making eighteen miles. Friday our regiment guarded wagon trains. Saturday we made but four miles and it was evident we were getting within supporting distance of the main army – and pickets were thrown out at night. At Bealton we halted three days to give us a chance to make out muster and pay rolls, go through with inspection and get all odds and ends fixed up, ready for active work. On Wednesday, May 4th, we had our hardest march. The army of the Potomac had left its winter quarters and the great movement had begun. Soon after crossing the Rapidan river they had encountered Lee's army and our corps was ordered to join Grant without delay. We had halted at Brandy Station but at 5 P. M. were started on a forced march for Germauren ford, where we were to cross the river. Such a march! – dark as Egypt – roads rough and hilly and full of rolling stones – no wonder the tired men fell out at every halt. We kept it up till midnight, when the order came to halt and stack arms. If one could see through the darkness and had been up in a balloon that night the 9th Army Corps would have presented a ludicrous spectacle. When we halted, there remained with our regiment about four men to a company – and I suppose we were as presentable as any of them. The road we had passed over, though the darkness, must have been lined on both sides, for miles, with men who had fallen out and dropped to sleep in the bushes and mud. My boy Jerry was missing, with my rations, so I looked around to see what chance there was for a quiet snooze. I found a big pine stump standing where it had been left by the chopper long before, and as it was dry and pitchy I soon had it burning – but the ground was wet and muddy and anything but inviting to slumber. So I poked off in the darkness to see if I could find anything which would answer for a bedstead. I had not gone far before I heard a dog growling. I followed the sound and soon butted my head against a building, made of rough boards. I felt along one of the boards and found that one end of it was loose – so I got hold and ripped it off and dragged it to my fire. Placing the board endways to the fire I wrapped by blankets about me and was about to lie down to pleasant dreams, when the Colonel appeared on the scene, attracted by my fire, which he thought he would share with me. I remarked to him that he looked pale and he said he had been sick all day. He seemed so miserable that I took pity on him and insisted in his taking my comfortable bed and in five minutes he was fast asleep. I took the cold end of the board - also a good drink of whiskey from the Colonel's canteen for a night cap. Soon after sunrise the stragglers began to come up and before long we were crossing the river. The remainder of the day was passed on the high ground beyond. All the afternoon we could hear the battle raging several miles to the southward – but we turned in at dark, determined to get all the sleep we could. We were routed out about two o'clock on the morning of the 6th and told to make drink and our coffee as soon as possible, as we were to start for the battlefield by three o'clock. Our march was rather slow that morning, though we could hear the constant roar of the battle, as the road was blocked with wagon trains, some going and some coming, and the ambulances were a steady stream, bearing back the wounded. But we kept jogging along, with frequent halts, getting nearer and nearer the awful noise which came from the big woods plainly in sight as we descended from the higher ground. Near Grant's headquarters I told my boy Jerry

he'd better wait behind till he found out the result of the battle. By nine o'clock we were in the wilderness. Next to the awful noise in front, the appearance of the trees was most noticeable. For about a mile we marched over ground already fought over, and the effect of the terrible musketry fire was plainly visible on the trees and undergrowth – everything small being shot away, while the trunks of the trees were completely skinned and battered. The ground also had been burned over. We were marching down a plank road and soon passed two brass pieces, placed right in the road, so as to rake it if need be. Arrived at the battlefield we were marched in on the right hand side of the road and formed in line of battle at right angles to the roads to await our turn to go in. As I understood it, our forces were formed in four lines of battle, the instructions being for each line to keep up within plain sight of the line in front, which in the Wilderness was about four rods. The front line was to hammer away till it was used up or its ammunition expended, when the next line took its place and kept up the little game. Of course the rear lines could not fire and were allowed to hug the ground so as to let the passing balls go overhead. This battle, owing to the nature of the ground, was fought almost entirely without artillery and I suppose there was never heard, before or since, such a continuous war of musketry as raged in that Wilderness for two days. Of course, as we were in the fourth line, all we could do was to listen to the noise and possess our souls with patience till our turn to go in came. I must say that, knowing what I did about our ammunition, I had my suspicions about our ability to make our full share of noise. It was nearly noon when the line in our immediate front stepped forward and opened fire. While I was wondering how long it would take them to fade away in that awful storm and also wondering why more men in our own line were not hit, all at once the firing ceased and it seemed as though both sides had agreed to hold up for dinner. The battle in our neighborhood had entirely stopped, only an occasional shot from some sharpshooter being heard. The men began to get out their hard-tack, details were started off for water, and it really seemed as though we were to be allowed to spend the heat of the day in peace and quietness. But I remember I had my suspicions and the accounts I had read of flank movements came into my mind. Suddenly, away off on the left of the plank road, a noise as though ten thousand devils had broken loose – and we knew the trap had been sprung. Above the noise of the musketry could be plainly distinguished the cheers of the 2d corps men, while the wild rebel yell added to the din. Longstreet was turning our left flank – and while we were wondering what would come next, the staff officers came riding through the bushes and I heard one of them say hurriedly to Col Griswold – "March your regiment out on to the road as quick as possible and form lines up and down the road." Away we went by the left flank and got into position as soon as we could – and none too soon – for the johnies were doubling up the 2d corps at a fearful rate and driving them in upon us like sheep, and so close were they behind them, that we were obliged to open fire upon friend and foe alike. And now what do I remember of my fifteen minutes experience on that plank road? It was an exciting time. The veteran 2d corps had been flanked and doubled back – the victorious men of Longstreet's corps rushed upon us with all their force. We were a new regiment, more than half the men under fire for the first time, and not one gun in ten fit for service for want of proper cartridges. I got my men into the ditch on the side of the road next to the enemy, so as to shelter them as much as possible and did all I could to make them do their duty. One of my sergeants came running to me and cried in my ear – "what shall I do? My gun wont' go." "Throw it away and pick up another one" – I replied – and just then down I went, all in a heap, with a sensation in both my thighs, similar to what I had experienced in boyhood, when a kettle of boiling water had been poured on to my legs. Of course I could not tell how badly I was hurt – but it did not take me long to make up my mind what to do. I saw that we were whipped and that the enemy would soon have me if I stayed there. My legs seemed completely benumbed, and I couldn't use them in the least. As it happened, the ground behind me fell off into an alder swamp, so I began rolling myself down the hill as best I could through the trees, and kept doing so till I got to the water – a small brook, straggling along through the black mud and alder bushes. Arrived here, I got hold of the bushes and pulled myself up and found I could stand, so I know my legs were not broken. Though I was quite faint by this time, the water in my shoes revived me somewhat, and I managed to work my way along in the bed of the stream. I knew by this time that the enemy had secured the road, for the two brass pieces, before mentioned, were now pounding away at a great rate, and they must have raked that road with fearful execution. A couple of stragglers, or rather skulkers, happening

along, I pressed them into my service, and guiding myself by the sound of the two cannon, after awhile managed to reach the road, about a quarter of a mile to the rear of the cannon. By this time I was pretty weak and was glad to drop by the road-side. Just then a surgeon came along on horse-back, who immediately dismounted and administered a dose of "spiritus frumenti", which proved quite refreshing. Of course the ambulances were busy enough and it was not long before I was picked up and started for the rear. Before I reached the field hospital I was surprised to see the head of my boy, Jerry, looking into the hind end of the ambulance and shall never forget the grin on his face as he saluted me with "hullo, Cap." – He had been examining the ambulance ever since we went in and would probably have been greatly disappointed if I had remained safe at the front.

In due time I was dumped out at the field hospital and in course of time one of the attendants examined my wounds and found that the bullet had passed through my right thigh and gouged out quite a piece of flesh from the other – evidently neither the bone or artery was injured, just a comfortable wound, which would send me home for five or six weeks – in fact I had been lucky. So there I lay quietly on the ground, perfectly comfortable myself, and really one of the most fortunate of men. But what sights and sounds surrounded me! Men wounded in every possible manner and degree, from the slightest flesh wound to entire disfigurement. Of course the mortal cases were left to take care of themselves till death came to relieve them – but where it seemed possible to save a life the attempt was made. But I will not dwell on this part of war – such scenes would tend to do away with all fighting, did they not at the same time make people familiar with suffering and thereby deaden and blunt the finer sensibilities. It takes but a short time for men to get used to such things so that they have no more sympathy for a wounded man than they would have for a bird or rabbit. Surgeons will laugh and joke over the operating table as freely as when enjoying their dinner. Of course the battle was raging all this time and we were so near that we could hear the awful din. Some time that night there was much firing and yelling and the wounded were hurriedly put aboard ambulances and wagons to be ready for flight – but after waiting awhile the alarm died away and we were again removed to the tents. Our base of supplies was at Belle Plain, on the Potomac, via Fredericksburg, and as the wagons were continually bringing up supplies, when emptied, they were loaded with the least seriously wounded men and started back again. We halted one night at Fredericksburg, the wounded being moved into houses, of which there seemed to be plenty of vacant ones. I sent Jerry out to see if he could get my pants and drawers washed and he found and old negro woman who agreed to do it. The next morning he went after the clothes and found that they had been stolen from the line by a cavalry-man, one of our escort! So I started for Washington bare-legged, with nothing but stockings on my feet, as I had lent my shoes to one of the surgeons attending us and he had forgotten to return them. He had a pair of boots which hurt his feet, so I had lent him my shoes. But the weather was warm and I had my blankets, so I didn't suffer. The day we left Fredericksburg was Friday and I had been wounded just a week – dressing my wounds myself every day – and I was surprised to find how little pain I suffered.

When we arrived within a mile or so of the landing at Belle Plain we were told we could not go aboard the transport till nine o'clock the next morning – so we prepared to spend the night in the wagons. How it rained and thundered that night! and how the roads had improved by morning!! No one can form any idea of such roads without having the real experience. We got started for the landing about nine o'clock and made the best progress we could. But such a jam! - acres and acres of wagons and ambulances – all struggling to make the same point, through mud which was next to impassable for a foot passenger. By the middle of the afternoon I was rather hungry, having had nothing to eat all day, and was wishing for the advent of some Christian commission, Sanitary Com. or something of that kind, when along came an old white-hatted Penn Quaker wading through the mud, with a pail in one hand filled with huge slices of bread and in the other a pan of old-fashion cider – apple sauce. He was gladly welcomed in my neighborhood and passed on.

Well, it had got to be nearly night and I had not moved a peg for two hours and it began to look like another night in the wagon. All at once it occurred to me that something might be accomplished with a little encouragement, so I sang out as loud as I could that I wanted to get aboard the transport bad enough to pay five dollars for the necessary assistance. This offer soon brought two stalwart fellows with a stretcher, and after vigorous wading they got me and my traps aboard just as she was starting for the steamer – "she" being a kind of flat-boat, forming communication between the landing and the steamer, which drew so much water that she was obliged to lie off in the stream about a mile. This proved to be the gunboat "Connecticut", aboard which I received good treatment. I was put into a nice little stateroom, furnished with a pair of red-flannel drawers and a pair of slippers, and after having something nice for supper I went to sleep – the first civilized sleep I had had for six months. The next thing I know we were at the wharf in Washington and it was early in the morning when I was loaded into an ambulance and treated to a rough ride through the city to the "Seminary Hospital" at Georgetown. This was a hospital for officers, and when I arrived was so crowded that I was obliged to take a bed on the floor. But it was comfortable and I felt that I was in a good place. The hospital was constantly besieged by visitors – but no one was permitted to enter except near relatives of the patients. I had been there but a short time when Major French and Mary Ellen called to inquire for me, and sent up a note saying they would do anything they could for me. I also had calls from a Mr. Allen whom I had met at Bradford, N. H., a friend of my sister Sarah – also from Miss Emma Ware, of Milton, and old acquaintance, who was serving her country as nurse in one of the Washington hospitals.

We were made comfortable as possible in this quiet hospital – the surgeons were attentive, the nurses pleasant, the food various and well cooked, and everything was done for us that our good required. How many wards there were or how many patients I never knew – but my ward was a large room in the upper story – attic I might call it – as the heads of the beds were close under the sloping roofs – and I should say contained about eighteen beds. The poor fellow on my left had been hit by some projectile across the top of his head, and his brain was evidently affected. A captain on the opposite side of the room was shot in the shoulder, and was very anxious to go home, pitching into the surgeon every day and blaming him for not bringing him his leave of absence. One day the surgeon told him that he would give his wound a careful examination next day and tell him how soon he should be able to travel. So the next morning the surgeon appeared with two assistants, with a big bottle of ether, sponge, case of instruments etc. and the Captain's bed was hauled out into the middle of the room, just opposite my bed, so that I had a fine chance to witness the operation. I think the Captain was rather inclined to smile at the arrangements, as it had not occurred to him that his hurt was at all serious. They were not long in getting him under the influence of the ether and then dressing was removed from his shoulder, exposing a pleasant looking hole enough where the bullet had evidently entered. Then a long cut was made, up and down, and the muscles separated from the bone – then the surgeon pushed in his fingers and deliberately unjointed the arm and pushed the head of the bone out into plain view. Then the extent of the injury could be seen. The ball had struck the head of the bone, cracked it in every direction, and remained firmly inbedded and of course flattened. There was but one thing to be done and that was done quickly. About three inches in length was sawed off the end of the bone – the bone replaced in its natural position, the cut carefully cleansed and washed and then sewed up skillfully. By this time the patient recovered consciousness and was fearfully exercised when he learned what had been done and that he would have to take a discharge from service instead of a short leave of absence. I asked the surgeon if his arm would ever be any good to him and he replied to this effect – that it would draw up and be shorter – it would lose the rotary motion peculiar to a ball and socket joint, but could be moved forward and backward and up and down as well as ever. This was the only operation performed in our ward while I was an inmate. In another ward a poor fellow died after having one of his little toes amputated – simply faded away for want of a little pluck – probably more from home sickness than anything else – and the case was particularly sad from the fact that his wife was on her way to meet him from one of the western states and arrived about three hours too late. My wound was a simple one – the only danger being from its closeness to the artery. Of course it was tedious business, lying flat on my back, only resting myself by sitting up in bed – but we had plenty

of newspapers, with exciting accounts of Grant's campaign – and my friends in Washington kept me supplied with books. I read nearly all night, and one night, my candle having given out, I thought I would get up and go across the room and borrow a candle from another bed. I managed to get across and got the candle, but on my return, all at once my strength left me and I fell flat on the floor, doubled up like a wet dish rag. But I soon recovered and made my way to bed again without help. About this time I had touches of the shakes, which yielded readily to hot whiskey punch.

I must not forget to record the visit from home of my sister Priscilla and her husband, Dr. Webster. I was indebted to them for many deeds of kindness and sympathy. They went home the 21st day of May and the next day found me hobbling about on crutches. Jerry had bought me some pants, so I was quite presentable. My Washington friends kept me supplied with books, flowers and delicacies for the palate. In fact, being in a Washington hospital, comfortably wounded, surrounded by every comfort and visited daily by the kindest of friends, was not a bad condition of things, when contrasted with what might have been my case – and what was really the case of many of my brother officers. My regiment was pretty badly cut up at the time I was wounded and some of the details had reached me. Col Griswold was killed with the colors in his hand – Capt. Adams was wounded and captured and taken to Richmond. Capt. Reading was seriously wounded and I never saw him again – Capt. Keenan, a splendid looking Irishman, was shot through the throat and I had seen him in the hospital at Fredericksburg. His wound was such that he had to take nourishment through a rubber tube, inserted in the hole in his throat made by the bullet. I never saw him again with the regiment; though I dined with him several times in Boston, during my leave of absence. These were all the casualties among the officers that I knew of at that time – but they were pretty much all knocked out before I got back.

As I was responsible to Uncle Sam for the arms and equipments of my company, and the chances seemed to favor my never seeing many of them again, I couldn't help feeling some anxiety on that account. When a company is equipped, the commanding officer is charged with every article and must account for the same to the government before he can get an honorable discharge from the service. What he cannot account for he must pay for. In due time I shall show that my anxiety was not groundless. Another thing that weighed on my mind was the fact that my men had been left with a very poor officer. My 1st Lieut. Atkins had been seriously wounded the preceding year while serving in the army as a private soldier; had been discharged and afterwards commissioned by Col. Griswold and was active in recruiting service – in which business he was engaged when we left the state. He afterwards joined us and was appointed acting quarter master, as he was too lame to do duty with his company and was obliged to walk with a cane. My 2d Lieut. had been discharged for deafness, as before stated, and another commissioned from outside – named Severson – who had never seen any service. Severson had joined us on the march to the front, and being an entire stranger, would have found his position difficult after my being wounded, even had he been a competent man. But he was entirely incompetent and careless and many a poor fellow is suffering today because of it. A private soldier's claim for pension generally needs the statement of the officer commanding his company at the time his disability was incurred in order to be successful.

I left Washington for home on the 27th, having exchanged my crutches for a cane. I have not mentioned the fact that one of the daily visitors at the hospital was the young woman who had agreed to marry me sometime before, and who had been visiting at her Uncle's – B. B. French, commissioner of public buildings. Of course she concluded to accompany me home and we took the cars at sunset and had a pleasant trip enough to Boston – a run of about twenty-four hours. At South Boston we took a horse car for Milton Lower Mills. As usual the car was crowded – and though it must have been plain to everybody that I was a wounded soldier, just from the front, as I was encumbered with all my traps and leaned on a stout cane, not one patriotic individual offered me a seat and I rode the entire distance – six miles – on my feet. But wounded soldiers at that time were too common to be noticeable. And now you can see that that rebel bullet was the messenger of peace to me. Just contrast the condition of those poor fellows down in Virginia with mine! Marching and fighting every day, toiling through the heat and dust on that weary

road to Richmond, while I was quietly enjoying the beautiful month of June in my father's house – surrounded by friends and nourished by every luxury.

The 4th of July found me nearly well and I concluded to report to Washington at the expiration of my leave of absence. On the 9th Hattie and I were married (footnote: in Cambridge) and started for the Capitol together, as she wanted to finish her visit there. At New York we learned of the raid upon Washington by Early's forces – of the rebel victory at Monocary and the continued advance upon the Capitol. There seemed to be great excitement in New York and everybody expected Washington would be captured and we were advised not to proceed on our journey. But I thought it my duty to go as far as the cars went and my wife was bound to go through if I did – so on we went and arrived the next morning in Washington, safe and sound, though we had a narrow shave of it, as the train we met between Baltimore and Washington was captured and the passengers robbed. The abundant supplies the rebels found in Maryland demoralized them – and instead of going right into Washington, as they might have done, they turned their campaign into a drunken picnic, and the loss of time was fatal to their hopes. But there was a devil of a scare in the Capitol, probably a repetition of the Bull-run experience.

After leaving my brave little wife with her friends on Capitol Hill and taking a hearty breakfast with them, I proceeded to the headquarters of Gen. Augar, who commanded the department, expecting to get transportation to City Point so as to rejoin my regiment as soon as possible. But much to my surprise I was ordered to report to Lt. Col. McElvy, commanding "camp distribution" – a convalescent camp on the Virginia side of the Potomac between the long bridge and Alexandria. Here were barracks and accommodations for quite a large army – and the practice was to send here all men belonging to the armies who had been absent from their commands from any cause – sickness, wounds, furloughs etc – where they were formed into provisional battalions and kept till there was an opportunity to send them to the front. Officers were put in charge of them and I have no doubt some of them preferred this detached service to being at the front with their own regiments. At this time there must have been some ten or twelve thousand of these men assembled here, and the attempt was made to make them of use in this emergency and officers were in great demand. On reporting to Lt. Col. McElvy, I received orders to report to Col. Thompson, who had gone to the northern defenses of Washington with a "provisional brigade" of these convalescents. So I poked back to Washington on foot and took a horse car for Georgetown which helped me on my way to the front. In course of time I found Col. Thompson, who placed me in command of a battalion in his brigade, and I had my command paraded for inspection. And what a command! infantrymen, cavalrymen, light artillery men, heavy artillery men, all mixed together, all strangers to me and to each other, the majority of them evidently bummers and dead-beats, and not a commissioned officer to aid me. The highest rank indicated by their motley uniforms was that of sergeant. I looked them over and made up my mind that when Early made up his mind to come into Washington, we would undoubtedly come. The forts would not amount to much in a night attack and the intervening breastworks were manned by such forces as I have been describing. But the Rebs. didn't know as much about the real condition of things as I did and did not improve their opportunity. Of course I did the best I could to organize my command and make it efficient. I selected the smartest looking Sergt. for my Adjutant and he proved a treasure. His name was Harry Hall and he was a red-legged Zouare from N. Y. I think. We managed to divide the men into companies, placing Sergts. and Corporals in command, had company rolls made out and kept up as good discipline and order as possible under the circumstances. If they had had money and had not been dependent on our regular organization for their daily rations nine-tenths of them would have been missing the first night. A night attack was what we expected and it was simply impossible to keep the men in position after darkness set in. But the Lord didn't seem to be on the side of the strongest battalions this time, and by the time the enemy had got over their drunk, the sixth corps and other troops arrived from the army of the Potomac, and immediately advancing upon the enemy convinced them that they better go home – which they did, carrying much spoil with them. The provisional battalions were marched back to camp Distribution and there the men were organized into divisions, preparatory to being forwarded to their respective departments. Luckily

for me, the men belonging to the Army of the Potomac were placed in charge of Capt. Collin, of the 17th regular infantry – a Milton man – before mentioned as having made a war speech in aid (7) of recruiting – who happened to be present – and who was well acquainted with my family, having been a schoolmate of my older brothers and sisters. As I came under his command and he was disposed to favor me in every possible way, he appointed me acting Quartermaster – and as he had with him two men of his own regiment, who belonged to the quartermaster's department, by appointing them to the proper positions, I was relieved from all the work of drawing and issuing rations and supplies and had nothing to do but sign the daily requisitions. This arrangement allowed me to spend most of my time in Washington with my wife and her kind friends. This condition of things continued till the 10th of August – and might have been satisfactory enough to me if I had only known when it would end – but we were really under marching orders all the time and hourly expecting to go aboard transports for City Point. It was rumored that we were detained on account of another expected raid on Washington – but various hints and innuendoes satisfied me at the time, that Camp Distribution was a paying investment for those who had the running of it. Here were thousands of men lying about camp, perfectly idle, only waiting a visit from the Paymaster to pour a perfect flood of greenbacks into the Sutler's shops – and the fact is just this programme was carried out: the men being paid off and then detained till most of the money had changed hands. It was perfectly well understood that the Commandant had an interest in the Sutler's business and his son ran a billiard saloon which was well patronized. It was also stated that the men were pinched in their rations, so as to make them dependent on the Sutler for a square meal. Another thing Capt. Collins told me he knew to be a fact – the coffee was made in the cook houses in huge boilers this way. A barrel of coffee would be unheaded, holes bored in the bottom, and the barrel suspended over the boiler. The boiling water was poured through the coffee and the grounds were spread on the roof of the cook-house to dry and afterwards barreled up again and sold to somebody, probably the Washington grocers. I don't think this coffee found its way into the quartermaster' department again, as the coffee in the army was always good – that is, strong. But the Camp Distribution cider beat all. It was manufactured by the Sutler every night and placed on draught the next day and sold for ten cents a glass to the amount of ten or twelve barrels a day. The men swarmed about the cider counter all day like flies about a molasses hogshead. What it was made of I don't know. An old man with whom I boarded said it was "ingredences" and cost just two shillings a barrel. I tried it and found it good to the taste – but I doubt if the effect of the bowels was beneficial.

But enough of Camp Distribution. On the afternoon of Aug. 10th, Capt. Collins told me that the transports were at Alexandria and that we were to go aboard the next morning. He advised me to go over to Washington and say good bye and gave me a pass for that purpose. I was to meet them at Alexandria next morning and Collins took charge of my traps. The next morning I took the first boat from Washington to Alexandria, and arriving there learned that the troops went aboard in the night and were on their way to City Point. Here was a go! I got a hack and drove to camp and asked Col McElvy if he could give me transportation for City Point on the mail boat which was to leave at two P. M.? The old fellow was mad as a hatter, or pretended to be, and threatened to do fearful things – but I made up my mind he was playing for a bribe, so I sat down and waited. Along towards noon my tormenter relented and gave me the desired order, and the middle of the afternoon found me racing down the river, my only hope being that we should overhaul the transports before their arrival. I watched hard for them while we ascended the James River – but they got in before us and the men were already on the cars on Grant's military railroad, when we arrive at the wharf. I had just time to get my traps from Capt. Collins, who was on the look-out for me. I found City Point a poor place for a hungry man and the only thing for sale which appealed to my appetite was a big watermelon, for which I paid nine shillings. That night I spent of the wharf, and the next day I took cars for the front. I will not try to describe that railroad – it is a matter of history. If the train happened to stop with more of the wheels in the low than in the high places, something besides steam was required to overcome the dead-point. Bad as the road was, it made successful the siege of Petersburg. I left the train at the station nearest of Brigade headquarters, where in due time I reported. I have neglected to state that somehow, while I had been on detached service, I had

got lost – had been reported absent without leave – and an order had been sent to Milton, from the war department, ordering me to report to the regiment under arrest. When this order, forwarded from Milton, reached me at Camp Distribution, I was somewhat alarmed – but Collins said it was only a matter of form, and would be made all right when I reached the regiment. So I reported at brigade headquarters under arrest and was informed that a Court of inquiry was then in session at Division headquarters, of which Lt. Col. Jarvis of the 56th was president – so I proceeded thither, when I was warmly welcomed and presented to Gen. White, who kindly invited me to lunch with them. I left my papers with the Court, and as I had been careful to preserve all the orders placing me on detached service, my case was plain enough and a hearing ordered for the next day. Of course I would not be on duty till this matter was disposed of, so I had a hut put up in a safe place in rear of the lines and spent my time in acquainting myself with the condition and present position of the regiment. I spent about two hours with the regiment in the trenches and got my first ideas of what might be called regular warfare. From Brigade headquarters to the front line was less than quarter of a mile. Beginning about half way between, a zig-zag pathway had been dug, so that by stooping a man could reach the front line in safety from the enemy's sharpshooters, who were always on the watch. The front line was a simple breastwork of dirt high enough to conceal a man standing in the ditch, made by throwing up the dirt. About three hundred yards in front were the works of the enemy, similarly prepared. Behind this breastwork the men lay, smoking their pipes and making their coffee, perfectly safe while they kept their heads down – but just as soon as a hat was exposed, along came the bullets till it was withdrawn. The men had become accustomed to the whiz of bullets and only cared for a comfortable place to eat and sleep. The officers lived in "bomb-proofs" – holes dug in the ground and covered with logs and dirt. As the ground was low and the season rainy the position was far from comfortable. Some rods in rear of the men were the mortar batteries and there was a nightly duel between them and the rebel batteries, generally beginning at 5 o'clock and lasting till bed-time. The afternoon I was there – Sunday – the enemy threw one shell, but as our side did not respond, they remained quiet all night. Where our regiment lay was within easy rifle range of the rebel works and the picket lines were between, so close to each other that they could easily converse – but our pickets kept snug in their pits, without exposing themselves, on account of a spite against the 9th corps, because of the presence of colored troops in the corps. In front of the other corps there is no picket firing and the men sit up on their little mounds of dirt and talk to each other and carry on quite a trade in coffee, tobacco, etc. When I was there that Sunday, our men did not fire a shot – while there was a constant whizzing of rebel bullets over our works. Just after dark our men were relieved by part of the 18th corps, and the firing ceased within an hour. Coming out from the trenches, the 9th corps relieved the 5th corps, on the extreme left, and the latter started on the expedition against the Weldon R. R. This left the 56th the extreme left of our line – in the air as it were – nothing outside us but the cavalry outposts – in the direction of the Weldon R. R. over which troops and supplies came to Lee's army. As I had not reported to the regiment for duty and did not intend to while under charges, I located my quarters about a mile in rear of the regiment, so as to be handy to the cook-house. One of the men of my company was cook for the regiment and took good care of me. I found that the army was being well fed – the military railroad from City Point bringing daily supplies right up to the lines. Salt fish and mackerel were issued some days in lieu of fresh meat – while there was no want of soft bread, coffee, beans, onions, rice, etc. etc. The Sutler also was within reach. The men seemed glad to see me and welcomed me back with tears in their eyes. They expressed great pleasure at the idea of my taking command of the regiment, which was then under command of Capt. Lamb, who had been recently commissioned in from outside, much to the disgust of officers and men. He had seen no active service but was a friend of Lt. Col. Jarvis. My short acquaintance with him showed me he was a gentleman and I was truly sorry to lose him soon after. I found two of our officers loafing in the rear, pretending to be sick, because they would not serve under him, who immediately returned to duty when I took command. There were about ninety men – including the sick – present with the regiment, and twenty of these had just returned from hospitals. Besides Capt. Lamb there were Lieuts. Severson, Fletcher, Jeffrey and Horrigan. Severson had been my 2d Lieut. – afterwards promoted to be Adjutant – and Horrigan had been color bearer and since commissioned from the ranks, was a jolly, fighting Irishman – and anxious to get a leave of absence so as to go home and

procure his officer's uniform and outfit. He soon got it as well be seen. That Sunday night, while I was lying awake in my tent, I could hear trains running on the Weldon road, it seemed continuously for two hours – while the frequent cheers indicated the arrival of troops – and I suspected there would be work for us soon.

On the 17th my case was heard by Lt. Jarvis's Court – a mere matter of form – and I expected every moment to be ordered to take command of the regiment. The delay was welcome to me though, as it gave me a chance to overhaul my valise, which had been at the bottom of the James river for a week, while the army was crossing that stream in June – and to straighten out my papers and accounts with the government. During my absence these things had been left to run themselves and I found I was sadly in arrears.

About noon of the 19th we were amused by a tremendous uproar out towards the Weldon R. R. – where it was understood the 5th Corps had gone to cut Lee's communications – and it was soon evident that the enemy were making a determined effort to hold the road. Orders were soon received for our division to start for the battlefield. At the same time an order came from Division headquarters for me to relieve Capt. Lamb of the command of the regiment and ordering him to report to division headquarters for staff duty. Before we got under way Lamb came back and said he wanted one of Col. Weld's horses. Col. Weld had been a prisoner since July 30th and his two horses were in charge of the regimental hostler. I thought I had no right to lend one and declined to do so, telling him that if they wanted him at headquarters they must mount him. Off he went, but soon rejoined the regiment which was then marching to the sound of the cannon at a high rate of speed. Before we got under fire, Lieut. Horrigan informed me in a joking way that he was going to get his leave of absence this afternoon. Just as we had got under fire I heard him sing out – "by God, Cap. I've got it" – I looked around and saw a man helping him off the field. A bullet went through the calf of one leg. He never rejoined the regiment, being dishonorably dismissed the service for drawing pay twice for the same two months. But he will turn up again by and by.

We found the 5th Corps in a bad way – the rebs. had come down on them in force, turned their right flank, whipped them all to pieces and captured several thousand of them, when our little division arrived. Our line was quickly formed and a furious attack opened upon the enemy, who fell back into the shelter of the thick woods, leaving us out in the open. It was give and take for about two hours, our line gradually approaching the woods, till about dark, when the enemy's fire ceased. What took place on our left I don't know as my attention was given entirely to my own men. I think Wilcox's division of our corps came up on our right but I don't know. It was a smart little fight and I was much pleased to see the coolness with which my men loaded and fired. They had become veterans during my absence and seemed to understand their business thoroughly. My loss was two officers wounded, one man killed and seven wounded – about one tenth of my force. Poor Capt. Lamb! It was his first fight and his last. As soon as the battle was well begun he came up to me and asked me if he should stand up or kneel down and I replied that he could do as he pleased – only watch his men and see that they kept up to their work. Shortly after, I happened to be looking his way when a bullet struck him in the lower jaw, passing through and breaking both sides of the jaw bone and carrying away several teeth. It was a bad wound and I thought I should never see him again – but I was mistaken, for I called upon him, not long after, at his father's residence in Boston – Somerset St., I think – while I was at home recovering from typhoid fever. His jaw had been wired up, so that he could eat and talk with but little difficulty. I remember one little incident of this battlefield – a wounded rebel – shot through one thigh so as to be disabled who wanted nothing but "a chaw ev tobarker" – the best I could do for him was to give him a couple of cigars and some matches, while we hurried on to a more advanced position.

I was told of another scene by an eye-witness. After the main body of the enemy had been driven into the woods, a young rebel, not more than 16 or 17 years old, who had stood his ground and refused to retreat,

was ordered by a mounted officer to surrender. Instead of complying, he raised his musket and tried to shoot the officer – but his gun missed fire. The officer immediately shot him dead with his revolver – justifiable, I suppose – but I should not care to have it on my conscience.

That night was a most uncomfortable one – cold and rainy. We lay on the bare ground, as best we could, occasionally changing our position – now by the flank and again forward in line of battle "rectifying the alignment", as it is called, so as to be prepared for an attack. About midnight we settled down, pretty well advanced into the woods, which had been vacated by the enemy. It was a horrid night, rendered more so by the cries for water of the wounded johnies in our front. But we got through it somehow and by daylight I found I was hungry. The men were busy with their coffee and hard tack – but I had nothing and had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours. My black servant had not yet made up his mind that the front line was a safe place. Long-legged Tim Wixon, a Cape Cod fisherman, had been poking about in front, among the dead johnies, and came back with a small piece of salt pork found in one of their haversacks – which he proceeded to slice up and cook on his tin plate. The odor was wafted to me on the morning air and if ever I was tempted to beg in my life it was then. He would willingly have shared it with me – but I did not ask him – for which act of self-denial I was always sorry – as the miserable scamp not long after borrowed some money of me and never repaid it. But "Tidd" soon came with my breakfast. I might add, that I had tried to eat the contents of a dead reb's. haversack – but found I was not quite hungry enough for that – a solid brick of sour, mouldy cracked-corn. And that was what Lee's army called Bread! Rations dispatched the next thing was to throw up temporary rifle pits. We had just finished them when we were ordered to fall back, which we did, about quarter of a mile, to the edge of the woods, where we threw up more mud. In our rear was the open ground, over which we had fought the day before. The ground ascended gradually in our rear, and about a quarter of a mile behind us we could see our reserves busy, constructing breast-works and placing artillery. About 3 P. M. we of the front line leveled our entrenchments and fell back about half way to the rear line, leaving our pickets out, well in front, to give us timely notice of the approach of the enemy. Gen. Warren had set a trap for them. The 5th Corps was on our left, their left flank well reposed and strongly entrenched – our division on their right – the line still prolonged by other forces of our corps. Our division was in low ground with the artillery in our rear, on higher ground so as to fire over our heads. The johnies were expected to come through the woods, drive in our skirmish line, advance into the open ground, see our batteries and charge upon them, as was their custom – the batteries to give them grape and canister as rapidly as possible, while we fellows in the low ground were to keep down out of the way of the fire till the enemy were close upon us, then rise up and give them hail Columbia. A good plan – and looked so promising that I really wanted to see it carried out – but the enemy did not come that day and we had a quiet night.

Early on the morning of the 21st the ball opened away off on the left. The enemy came through the woods, drove in the 5th Corps skirmishers, and advanced across the open. We could see nothing, but knew by the noise that they were making a determined effort to crush our flank. After awhile the firing ceased and we know by the cheering of our men that the attack had been repulsed. Then followed a time of ominous quiet which we knew was being used for making dispositions for another attack. Pretty soon came the artillery fire, from front and left, from about twenty pieces, the flank fire especially annoying. Our batteries replied and for two long hours the air seemed full of screaming shot and shell. We poor devils in the low ground were right under the fire of our guns and it seemed as though every discharge would blow us away. Twice the enemy tried to advance against the entrenchments of the 5th Corps – but it was of no use – and they gave up the job and retired into the woods, severely punished. Their lost must have been fearful in killed and wounded, while about 1500 of them surrendered rather than try to fall back – among them one general officer, Wm. F. H. Lee. Prisoners stated that Beauregard was in command. In our immediate front the johnies drove in our skirmish line, advanced a short distance into the open field, but took in the situation and retreated, though a few of them succumbed to our artillery fire and surrendered. Poor devils! it was the easiest thing they could do, and many of them were about sick of it,

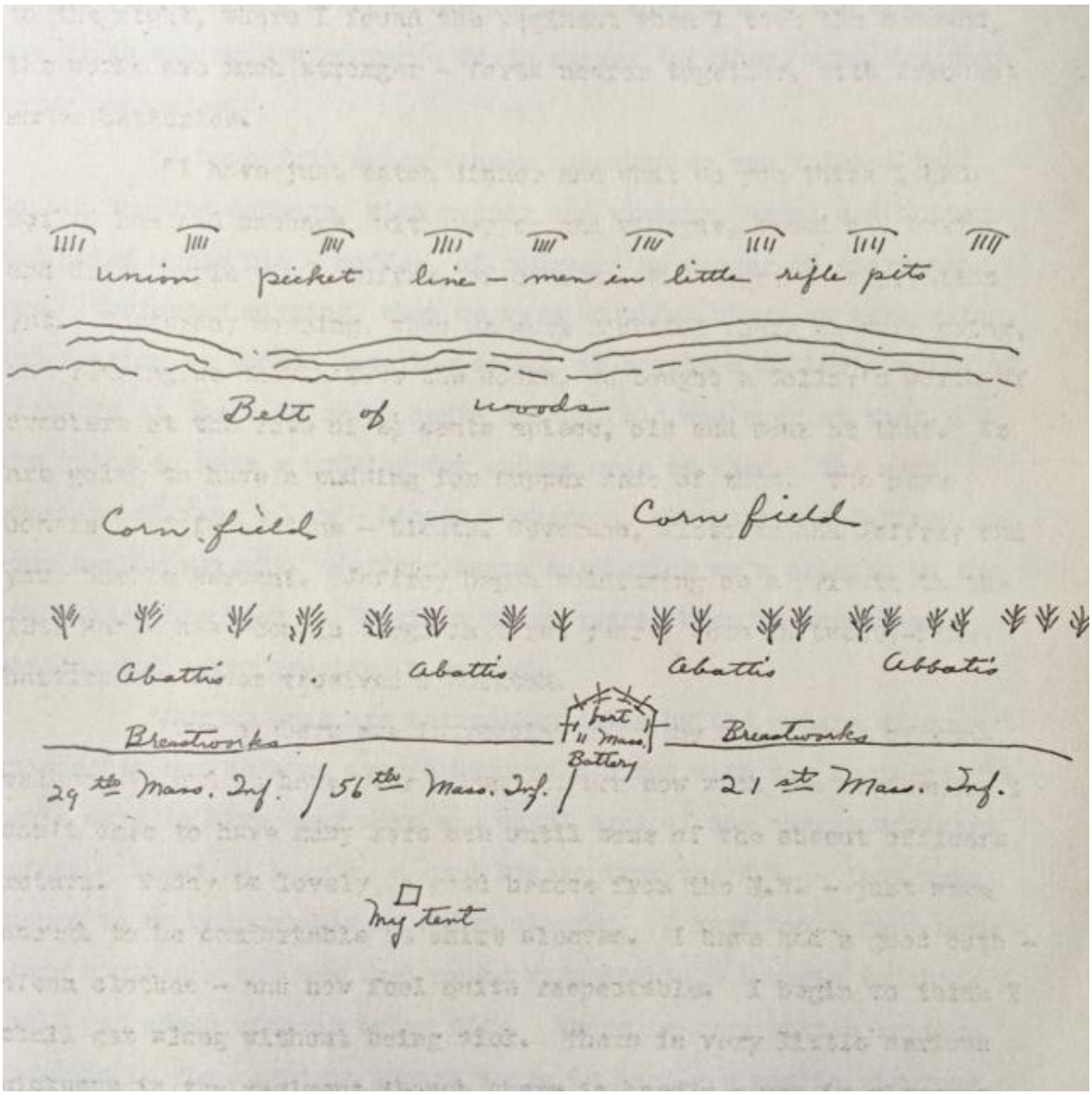
and I have no doubt that if Lee's army, at this time, could have voted on the question, a large majority of them would have said - "let's give it up and go home".

Thus ended the battle of the Weldon R. R. - It was a victory for us and the 5th Corps retrieved their losses of the 19th. I don't think our losses were heavy – I had but one man seriously wounded, on the 19th , though the shot and shell struck all about us and threw dirt all over us. We were just out of the line of fire of their enfilading batteries. Sergt. Murphy lay next me on my left, Adjt. Severson on my right – and the former was struck on the foot, without breaking the leather, the latter on the hand without breaking the skin – by cannon shot, too! Probably 20 shot and shell passed within a rod of our line.

We expected another attack in the afternoon – but it did not come – and towards night our pickets and skirmishers followed the enemy away back into the woods. The loss of the Weldon road was a serious one for Lee and that he did not make more strenuous attempts to regain it was a confession of weakness. But he knew, what we knew, that our position was a strong one, defended by plenty of men and guns. The days following the battle were spent by us in making our position impregnable to direct attack and making connections with our lines on our right, thereby extending our works of investment and obliging Lee to extend his – following out Grant's plan, which evidently was to draw Lee's line out so thin that its cohesion would in time be destroyed and a successful attack upon any part of it be feasible. As nothing was done, of importance, on our part of the lines for quite a while, I will copy here from a letter written home at that time, which gives a good idea of the situation, Aug. 28th, 1864.

"The news of operations of the 2d Corps on the left last Thursday was too good to be true. I wrote you of rumored success. Although we have received nothing official, the impression prevails that we met with quite a serious reverse, losing a number of guns. You see the 1st Div. 9th Corps was not there! - and I am glad we were not – for here we were much safer, and we get no credit for what we do. All the correspondents in the army seem to be in the interests of the other corps – and the doings of the 9th Corps are only mentioned when a disaster is to be shouldered by somebody. It is a fact, though, that the only real successes before Petersburg are due to the 9th Corps. On June 17th our division charged and took the rebel works after the 2d Corps men had been twice repulsed at the same place – and on the 19th inst. our little division of less than 4000 effectives saved the 5th Corps and enabled them to occupy a position from which they cannot now be driven. But the 9th Corps has always had hard luck.

"Our division was on the alert for twenty-four hours after the fighting commenced with the 2d Corps, on the left, ready to move at a moment's notice. I believe I wrote, two days ago, that we moved some distance to the left and then back again. There we remained, awaiting orders, till yesterday morning, just after breakfast, when we removed by the right flank, along the works, half or three quarters of a mile, and relieved the 4th div. of our corps – 'smokes'. Where they have gone I know not. We settled down behind the works, fixed up our quarters as comfortably as we could, and here we are, taking it easy. Here is a slight description of our position. This you may take for a section of our position before Petersburg. It is simply repeated the whole length of the line, only at intervals and at strategic points are larger and more powerful forts, mounting heavy guns and mortars. The breastworks are about five feet high, a good road running along behind them for the passage of troops. About two rods in rear of the breastworks the men pitch their shelter tents. The line officers' tents are just in rear of their companies, while the commanding officer's quarters are in rear of the center of the whole. The brigade commander is still farther to the rear, opposite the center of his brigade and so with the division and corps commanders.



And here we wait the enemy's attack. If he should come on, the first intimation would be the fire of the men in the picket line, who would hold their position as long as possible and then fall back at the 'double quick' – some of them faster. By that time we should be drawn up in line behind the breastworks, every man ready to draw a bead on the first 'grey back' who appears in the open. Then – but we will wait till they come and then give you the result. Of course, somewhere in the rear, is a reserve – or should be – ready to move to the support of the point most seriously threatened – and when the ground in our rear is elevated, field batteries are posted to throw shot, shell and shrapnel over our heads into the ranks of the approaching or retreating foe.

"There are no rebs. in our immediate front, I mean out here on the extreme left. They have thrown up entrenchments about two miles in our front and are waiting for us to advance. Further to the right, where I found the regiment when I took the command, the works are much stronger – forts nearer together, with frequent mortar batteries.

"I have just eaten dinner and what do you think I had? Boiled ham and cabbage, with pepper and vinegar, bread and butter and dried apple pie – coffee, of course. No danger of starvation yet. Yesterday morning, when we were doubtful where we were going, and fearful we should lose the cooks, we bought a dollar's worth of crackers at the rate of 2 ½ cents apiece, old and sour at that. We are going to have a pudding for supper made of them. The mess consists of four of us – Lieuts. Severson, Fletcher and Jeffery and your humble servant. Jeffrey began soldiering as a private in the 12th Mass. has been in Virginia three years, been in twenty-nine battles and never received a scratch.

"Our numbers are increasing daily by the return of convalescents and we have over a hundred men now with the regiment. I don't care to have many more men until some of the absent officers return. Today is lovely, a good breeze from the N.W. - just warm enough to be comfortable in shirt sleeves. I have had a good bath – clean clothes – and now feel quite respectable. I begin to think I shall get along without being sick. There is very little serious sickness in the regiment though there is hardly a man in vigorous health."

August 30th we were busy making our muster and pay rolls, and a hard time we had of it – three of us to make out fifty copies – and as the men had not been paid since we left home it was a matter of importance to have the rolls correct. I don't remember whether we were paid off at that muster or not. About this time there were movements in our front on the part of the enemy – who advanced their picket lines, and we expected they would attack us – but they didn't. I copy now from a letter dated Sept. 2nd.

"I went to bed last night expecting we should fight today. The advance of the rebel pickets, the orders from headquarters to be watchful and ready, the peculiar stillness along the lines, everything betokened a struggle. At five o'clock this morning I went out to the picket lines and sent out patrols. They reported that the enemy had withdrawn their picket lines and had felled trees across one of the roads, as though expecting an attack from us. I think they mean to abandon the Weldon R. R. to us and connect it from a point below with the Danville road. If the fall reinforcements come in as they should we will probably occupy the latter road also."

"A change has taken place in the 9th Corps – our division being broken up and the regiments assigned to the 2d 43rd divisions. We are now of the 2d Brigade, 2d Division. The order, making the change, directed me to report with my regiment to Gen. Griffin, commanding 2d brigade, 2d Division. So I marched my men over to Griffin's headquarters and reported to his Adjutant General, who stepped into the General's tent and announced our arrival. Griffin came out in his shirt-sleeves and I recognized in him a red headed law student who was in Gilman Marston's office at Exeter while I was in the Academy there. He came out in the 6th N. H. regiment and had worked his way up to brigade commander. I had been introduced to him at Exeter – but had no acquaintance with him – so did not make myself known. He assigned us our place in line and we pitched our tents in a good position and proceeded to make ourselves comfortable." Great care was taken at this time to provide against sickness in the army. From rebel papers we learned that September was considered a very sickly month in those parts and the enemy thought we would not be able to hold our present position from sanitary reasons. We had no surgeon with our regiment, our surgeon being, I think, on duty at the field hospital. Regiments were so small that one surgeon would attend to the sick of a whole brigade. Of course if a man were really disabled he would be sent to the field hospital and kept there. I remember that one morning a young surgeon came to me and told me that at "sick call", if I would have my men, who needed treatment, sent over to a certain place he pointed out, about quarter of a mile to the rear, he would attend to them! I asked him if he did not think it would be better for him to come to the regiment and not make sick men travel so far, and he said he thought not. I quietly remarked that my men, if sick, would not be allowed to run after a surgeon, and if no surgeon appeared in the morning I should report the fact to headquarters. He was on hand in the morning.

About the 10th of September I was obliged to succumb to the climate. I kept up as long as I could – but one morning my brother officers found me in such a condition that they were alarmed and sent for our own surgeon, who immediately had me loaded into an ambulance and carried to the field hospital. Typhoid fever was the trouble with me as with thousands of others. I was next removed to the hospital at City Point – then placed upon a transport and sent to a hospital on Bedloe's Island in New York harbor. I was miserable enough – hardly able to raise a hand and entirely dependent upon strangers. The steamer arrived at Bedloe's Island towards morning and I judged by the commotion that I should soon be sent on shore – so I raised my head and looked around to see what was going on. In the next bunk to mine an officer was sitting, putting on his clothes. It was pretty dark and I could not see distinctly, but it seemed to me that I had seen him before. So I beckoned to him, and he came over to me, and imagine my delight when I found it was Walter S. Davis – a Milton man, an old playmate and classmate of mine – one of the first to leave home for the war, and now 1st Lieut. and on the staff of Major Gen Griffin, the 5th Corps commander. He told me he had been "under the weather" for several days and that the General had advised him to take a run up to New York for his health. He thought I ought to be sent straight home and said he would try and get me a leave of absence. My courage revived and I began to hope of pulling through. But if I had not met with Lieut. Davis I should not now be writing this book. I can't describe the miseries of Bedloe's Island. A contract hospital for officers, where patients were treated at so much a head, the government paying the bills and stopping the amount on the next pay rolls. I was put into a room with several others and fed on beef tea, which my stomach repelled. I didn't want it and my stomach loathed it. A young surgeon made the rounds every morning and I have indistinct recollections of a nurse in the shape of a common Irish man. I remember I hired him to go out and buy me some apples and I ate one. I wanted something acid and begged the doctor to give me some lemonade – but he said it would kill me. I think I was there three days – lying flat on my back, staring at the ceiling, begging for lemonade and receiving nasty beef tea. I remember one night with absolute horror. The partitions between the rooms in the building were very thin, so that speaking in an ordinary tone could be distinctly heard from one room to the other. During this evening my nerves were quieted by a squeeling baby on one side and a brass band practicing - drum and all – on the other. The band kept at it till near midnight and the baby all night. As I was alive and sane the next morning I concluded I should live through it somehow. Davis was at work all the time trying to get me a leave of absence which the head surgeon opposed with all his might. One afternoon – most night – Davis came rushing in with the announcement that he had succeeded in getting me a leave from Gen. Dix, the department commander, and that he had telegraphed to Milton for someone to come on and meet me in N.Y. city. Glory be to God! didn't I feel good – but the surgeon was raging, declared it would kill me to move me and that he would have nothing to do with it. So Davis went out and found and Irishman, who was at work on the grounds, who brought his wheelbarrow up to the door, carried me out and put me into it and wheeled me down to the wharf where I was carried aboard a tug boat which plied between the island and the city. Davis had made all necessary arrangements and an ambulance was in waiting which took me to the New England rooms, under the management of Col Howe, and here I found friends and the best of treatment. The next morning I was driven to the railroad station to take the hospital car for Boston and my good luck still attended me – for I ran against my brother-in-law, Dr. Webster, as I was going through the door-way to take the car, he having just stepped off the incoming train. If either of us had taken a different door he would have missed me. I was quickly placed in a berth in the hospital car and the first question I asked "Joe" was - "can't I have some lemonade?" "Just as much as you want", he replied – so he rushed into the refreshment room and procured a supply of lemons and sugar, just in time for the train. There was plenty of ice water in the car and Joe was kept pretty busy mixing drinks for me all that day. How much lemonade I drank on that trip, I don't know – but I kept at it pretty much all the time and I have no doubt it saved my life. We arrived in Boston towards night and found my father and my wife also judge French anxiously awaiting our arrival. Once at home, under Dr. Holmes' care, I had no further anxiety.

I must record here what I consider a most remarkable coincidence. One of my sisters had been sick at home for several days and another one had been brought home sick about an hour before my arrival, from the mountain region of New Hampshire – all three of us sick with the same disease – one in Virginia, one in New Hampshire and one in Milton, Massachusetts. I shall never forget that period of convalescence at my father's house – but your mother (Hattie French Hollis), who nursed me most faithfully, must tell you about that, if you care to hear.

The 27th of December found me on my way to Washington, where I arrived on the 28th. I was cordially welcomed by my wife's friends on Capitol Hill – but I had only two hours to spend with them – so Mary Ellen refreshed me with a nice oyster stew, kissed me and started me for the front once more. The most interesting thing about the passage down the Potomac was the immense flocks of ducks of all kinds. As the steamer started them up they flow in clouds across her bows, often within easy gun-shot – but there was no one to molest them. It was so foggy on the river and bay that we made slow progress in the night and instead of making City Point at 3 o'clock, the next afternoon, as we had expected, it was midnight when they routed us out of our beds, on the little cabin floor and informed us that we must leave at once. We tumbled out and got aboard the train, which had been waiting for the mails, at one o'clock, on the morning of Dec. 30th. I found myself alone, dumped at Hancock Station on the military railroad. I knew the country well enough to find my way, through mud and stumps, to my destination – and soon had the pleasure of finding myself at home. The officers gave me a cordial welcome, the more so, perhaps, because I was not expected. The regiment was near the place where I had left it in September; but the face of the country was much changed – and everything has the appearance of regular winter quarters. The 56th Mass. and the 9th N. H. formed the garrison of fort Hayes. This was my first experience of winter quarters in the field but I soon accustomed myself to the situation. We lived in little houses built of logs, chinked up with mud – with chimneys made of sticks and mud laid cob-house fashion, topped out perhaps with a keg or barrel. Canvas formed the roof and kept out the rain very well. We got along comfortably enough by keeping the fires going all night, the green pitch-pine wood burning quite freely. About every night somebody's chimney caught fire – making it necessary to knock down that corner of the house in order to save the rest – but it could be rebuilt in an hour, Virginia mud making very good mortar.

I had just got settled down to my soldier's life again, had been in temporary command of the regiment and was hard at work on muster rolls etc – when I was much surprised at receiving a letter from home, Jan. 2d, stating that an order from the war department had arrived at Milton, honorably discharging me from the service for disability. Here was a go! There I was, a mere, civilian, wearing a uniform and pretending to be a man in authority, and liable at any moment to be under the enemy's fire. If the order of discharge had arrived before I left home, that would have been the end of my soldiering – but it seemed kind of mean to be kicked out in that way, after I had got back to duty. I chewed the thing over and concluded I would do nothing till the order arrived at the regiment through the regular channels, but keep right along as though I knew nothing about the matter. Jan. 4th the order arrived and I was no longer of any consequence. I talked with my brother officers and as they all expressed a desire to have me stay, I concluded to send a statement of the facts to the war department, with the request that the order be rescinded and that I might be restored to my place without loss of rank or pay. This document was favorably endorsed by regimental, brigade and division commanders and forwarded to Washington. Gen. Griffin was commanding the division and gave me the following flattering endorsement.

"Respectfully forward, with the request that the order for discharge be rescinded. Capt. Hollis commanded his regiment, part of the time, last summer, with distinguished ability, and I consider him one of the best officers in my brigade."

This was particularly gratifying to me, as Lt. Col. Jarvis had made some statements about the regiment on his rejoining it not at all flattering to the officers who had commanded it during his absence.

My petition was granted in due season – but for a time I was a loafer in camp and had plenty of time to write up my company records and square up my accounts with Uncle Sam. Everything was quiet on the lines, except picket firing, at night, which was continuous, to guard against a surprise. An occasional alarm would cause us to turn out in the night under arms – but on the whole it was pretty comfortable soldiering. The picket lines were very strong, the men being in pits about twenty yards apart, five men in a pit, some of whom were to be awake all the time. There was no picket firing in the day-time – but at night one gun was fired from each pit every ten minutes, to insure wakefulness and guard against desertions, which at this time were quite frequent. Gallows for hanging of deserters were erected at intervals along the lines. I copy from a letter written at the time.

"The last execution was yesterday. These three men were retaken in a curious manner, with forty-seven others. They were taken into Richmond at the same time with a lot of prisoners from Sheridan's command, and one of the prisoners was sharp enough to transfer himself from one squad to the other without being noticed. They were then sent to Tennessee and turned in with a lot of prisoners sent to Sherman to be exchanged. After they were exchanged and put aboard a steamer, Sheridan's man, who had in the meantime made a list of the deserters, handed the list to the Provost Marshal, and the whole lot were secured and forwarded to their respective regiments for punishment. Those belonging to the 179th New York have just paid the penalty"

"Three recruits for my company arrived today, one of them a Scotchman, two months over. He thought he was enlisted for three years; but his papers said only one year – and I so informed him, much to the disgust of Jarvis, who would have altered the record."

Jan. 17th, about noon, a heavy cannonading within our lines announced good news and soon a dispatch was sent along form headquarters, informing us of the capture of fort Fisher, at Wilmington, N. C. – Of course there was great rejoicing, and the men on the picket lines made a great noise over it, returning the taunts of the johnies a few days before, at Butler's repulse at the same place. This closed a most important blockade – running port and helped shut off supplies greatly needed by the enemy. The rebel pickets could be seen daily hunting about and picking up the spent bullets, the reward for bringing in certain number being a furlough!

Jan. 19th came the order from Washington, reinstating me without loss of rank or pay, and I immediately went on duty as Captain of the brigade picket, having charge of the line for about a mile in length. Any kind of active duty was welcome to relieve the tedium of camp life. For us the whole winter was exceedingly monotonous – the weather and conditions of the ground most of the time preventing any drills. Occasionally little affairs would occur on the picket lines to give us something to talk about. For instance one day two prisoners were brought in under the following circumstances. The men on the lines had got to be quite friendly and traded considerably. By and by one of the 179th N. Y. men disappeared behind the rebel line and did not return. So our men, thinking he had been treacherously seized, watched their chance, and retaliated by seizing two "butternuts". They were sent in to the brigade headquarters protesting against their capture and declaring that the 179th N. Y. man had deserted and had requested to be sent to the rear. The Lieut. of the guard was a fool for sending them in, as there were strict orders forbidding any communicating with the enemy's lines. I never learned what became of the "johnies" – but the Lieut. was summarily dismissed the service. Soon after this three deserters came in from the rebel picket lines who said that only reliable men were put on guard now and they knew about ten more reliable fellows who were waiting for a chance to change sides.

One night we were routed out by a tremendous explosion and we thought at first the magazine of our little fort had been tampered with – but an examination showed that some funny fellow had dumped a lot of cartridges down the chimney of the Sergeant's quarters. Jarvis had the regiment paraded in the

moonlight, under arms, and made a few remarks appropriate to the occasion, the effect of which was enhanced by the unmistakable condition of the speaker, who had clearly been indulging freely in commissary whiskey. But the men fully understood that "this thing must not occur again." Poor Jarvis! – commissary whiskey finally proved too much for him and he died a drunkard's death at the Soldier's home at Togus, Maine. The next night we were again alarmed by the cry of fire – it proved that Capt. Shurtleff, a boon companion of the Lt. Col. (both Harvard College men) had been at regimental headquarters, making merry, and on retiring to his own tent had been careless in the use of pitch pine fuel and the consequence was quite a conflagration. Loss – 1 shelter tent, 1 silk sash, 1 briarwood pipe, 1 bottle hair-oil and one tooth brush.

About the middle of February I received an order from division headquarters, detailing me as Judge Advocate of a Court Martial to try cases coming up in the division. Lt. Col. Jarvis was President of the court, which consisted I think of seven officers. Text books were furnished me from division headquarters, so I took up the study of military law and by hard cramming soon fitted myself for my new duties. The first case tried was that of Major Knapp, of the 17th Vt. and grew out of violations of the order forbidding communicating with the enemy on the picket lines. This case was particularly interesting to me, as Major Knapp had relieved me of the charge of the picket lines of the division and I was sure I had turned over the instructions to him – in fact they were in writing, and Gen. Griffin was present when I read them over to him and handed him the paper on which they were written. But the fool went right out on to the lines and exchanged newspapers with the enemy. Gen. Potter, our division commander, was greatly exercised about the matter and had the charges drawn up against the Major in such form that a conviction must be followed by dishonorable discharge from the service. As the poor fellow had just returned from leave of absence and just parted from a fair young bride, I think we were inclined to favor him all we could and the result was a verdict of not guilty on the most serious part of the charges. But more of this case by and by.

About this time we heard of the capture of Charleston, S. C. – brought about by Sherman's movements. Of course the event was celebrated in the usual manner, a salute along the whole length of the lines from shotted guns. The capture of Charleston had a depressing effect on the South Carolina troops in our front and frequent desertions followed. The poor fellows probably thought that if they could get home now they could stay there. The enemy at this time were evidently uneasy, and our commanders were constantly expecting night attacks and our men slept on their arms, ready to fall in behind the works at a moment's notice. In fact, it was the practice, at this time, to have the men turn out for a couple of hours before sunrise.

About the first of March the Lieut. Col. went home on leave and turned the command of the regiment over to me. Of course I moved into his quarters and was much more comfortable. Capt. Adams soon arrived and relieved me of the command, being senior officer – but I still staid at headquarters. Adams was wounded in the "Wilderness" and captured – had been paroled and exchanged, but was still so lame that he could not walk without a cane, and ought not to have come back. I found him a very pleasant companion, well educated and quite cultured, I think a graduate of Harvard College, and formerly assistant surgeon in another regiment. He was now the senior captain in our regiment and I think had been commissioned Major – but could not be mustered as such, our number being reduced below the minimum, so that only two field officers were allowed. We both smoked, played cards and sucked whiskey, so got along very well together.

March 8th arrived my brother Tom and Ned Wadsworth from home, on a visit. They had been to Washington to see the inauguration and after long trying, succeeded in getting passes to the front. They brought many good things from home and were warmly welcomed. They remained about a week and as we had plenty of horses at our disposal, they had a fine time riding about the country and visiting all the

points of interest. I was sorry when the time came for them to leave us. A few extracts from a letter written at this time will give a good idea of camp life.

"Today the Adjutant Genl. put into my hands a case to be tried against a Lieut. of the 179th N. Y., growing out of the soldiers' voting in the field last fall. He is accused of interfering with the freedom of elections and if convicted, will be dishonorably dismissed the service. But I think the case will fail from want of evidence. If he's half as smart as a New York Democrat ought to be, we shall not do much against him."

"At noon I got back to the regiment and was accosted thus by Capt. Adams – 'by George, Hollis, we are ordered out for brigade drill this afternoon, and I want you to go out with me – I'm green as the devil.' I declined the honor on account of Court Martial business – so, after talking over the matter some time and discussing some of the nice points involved in brigade movements, Adams marched off his regiment for the drill ground and I went to working up my cases. Who should surprise me by walking in, but Billy Bond – my old first Lieut. in North Carolina – of Co. B. 45th. He was down here visiting Gen. Macey, formerly Col. of the 20th Mass. I was much pleased to see him and talk over old times. After his visit I went to sleep over my law books and was awakened by the arrival of Capt. Adams, who was delighted with his brigade drill."

"After dress parade we were greatly surprised to find no dinner on the table. I went out to find Tidd, our black cook, but his shanty was empty and no fire on the hearth. I begged some supper from Lt. Emerson, of my company, and had just finished eating, when Tidd arrived, breathing very hard and showing other signs of quick travelling. He had been up to the left to have some pictures taken, had stolen a ride down on the cars, and the train, being an extra, had not stopped at our station, but had carried him almost to City Point."

"This morning, (next day) was warm and beautiful. I went to court and began the trial of Lieut. Lockwood, of the 179th N. Y. We adjourned about noon, and while I was conferring with the Adjt. Genl. a telegram arrived, which was quickly followed by an order from Gen. Potter for his staff to saddle up immediately. I started for the regiment at once – and by the time I reached it orders arrived to have the men under arms at once as an attack was expected – the enemy being massed in our front. So we fell in and waited. In about two hours orders came to break ranks – but to be on the alert, as Johnson's division, in our front, had struck their tents and were prepared to move. Not long after news came from North Carolina to the effect that Bragg had attacked Schofield at Kinston and that prisoners taken stated that they belonged to Johnson's division, from Virginia."

"The rebel pickets came out this afternoon with knapsacks and shelter tents packed – so everything here is excitement, and we are expecting a grand break up at any time – a race, a chase, one big fight and all over!"

About this time we had a photographer in camp, taking pictures and views of things, ostensibly for some illustrated paper. Adams and I entertained him for several days, and one night he went over to fort Davis, the first fort on our right, to make arrangements for his next day's work. He had just returned to our quarters when a corporal and five men came to arrest him for a spy. We vouched for his good character and he was allowed his liberty.

Saint Patrick's day in the morning was a great day with our Irish soldiers and there was great celebrating in some localities. We rode out towards Hatcher's Run to see the races, and rewarded by seeing one Irish colonel and his horse pitched on to their heads, while trying to clear a hurdle. Too much whisky caused the accident. The horse was led away and the Colonel tumbled into an ambulance and the races went on. Our Irish Captain, Jimmy McArdle, "Paddy Mac" I used to call him, came home "tight as a mink" – but knew enough to go quietly to bed.

During all this time my court martial was going on and as I kept command of my company and half the time was in command of the regiment, my time was fully occupied. About the 20th of March I was ordered to try a case in another court, whose Judge Advocate was an important witness. It's sessions were held in the chapel tent, within the enclosure of fort Davis. I had been up to see Gen. Potter, on my way to Court, and was riding along the Jerusalem plank road, towards fort Davis, when I thought I heard a shell burst just in advance of me. The road was filled with wagons loaded with limbs of trees, and there was no commotion among them I concluded I had been mistaken about the shell, so proceeded on to the fort, stopped outside at the guard-house, dismounted, and was just hitching my horse, when a shell came shrieking along within a rod of me and burst in close proximity. I went inside the fort and inquired what was up. It seems our folks were strengthening the abattis in front of the fort, and the johnies thought they would have a little fun with the mules and their drivers – so they were occasionally sending along a shell, thus far without hurting anybody. I thought of the old legal maxim – inter arma leges silent – but we opened the court, though we did not stay long, as the accused officer wanted time to prepare his defence. While I was there three more shells came along and it seemed a curious place to hold court. Later in the day a man was hit. The next day I went to fort Davis again – learned that one of the 39th N. J. was dangerously wounded on the picket line during the night, the 45th Penn. lost two men deserted to the enemy and that twenty rebel deserters came in on our division front. That day an order was promulgated, stopping further granting of furloughs and leaves of absence. This meant business before long.

Early on the morning of March 25th we were startled from our slumbers by a tremendous racket off on our right – artillery, musketry and rebel yells. We turned out and found there was a brisk fight in progress a couple of miles away. Of course we knew it must be an attempt of the enemy to break our lines in that direction. About seven o'clock, a staff officer came along and told us that the johnies had captured fort Steadman (Hell). About half past eight a circular came round, stating that the fort had been recaptured, the rebs. whipped and driven back. It seemed the enemy had completely surprised the forts, gobbled up the garrisons and pushed on nearly up to the railroad, when our reserves took them in hand and checked them. In their retreat the enemy suffered severely and many of them were captured. During the fight large bodies of cavalry and infantry were massed near our division headquarters and the rebel batteries shelled them some – but with no great damage. About noon, cannonading commenced away off on our left, and we could hear the sounds of battle all the afternoon. We heard rumors of successes in that direction and we judged from the noise that Lee's right had been pushed back and the southside R. R. captured. Towards night I rode up to Army headquarters and there saw about 3000 prisoners, part of the day's spoils. Late in the evening we could hear the battle raging on the left and we all felt that the time was near for the last campaign of the Army of the Potomac. It seemed to me that Lee's army must be disheartened and that they could not successfully resist us.

The next morning we were up and in line of battle by 3-30 – but after nearly freezing for a couple of hours and a patriotic speech from Capt. Adams we broke ranks and took to our fires and coffee. During the preceding night there had been a large fire nearly opposite our front, which we concluded was caused by burning the lead works at Taney town. We got reports of great successes the day before on the left, and the following circular came from Corps headquarters.

"Headquarters 9th Army Corps
March 26, 1865
Gen. Orders No. 3
At four A. M. on March 25, the enemy, having massed their divisions in front of fort Steadman, in the lines of the 3rd brigade, first division, of this corps, by a sudden rush broke the picket line, and, after a gallant defence by the garrison of fort Steadman, overpowered it, and gained possession of the fort and a portion of the parapet on either side. He then assaulted ft. Haskell and battery G – but was repulsed with much loss. He attempted to advance towards the railroad, but was speedily checked, and the 1st brigade

3rd division coming up, he was forced back to the fort. From thence he was soon driven by a charge of the 3rd division and the 2d and 3d brigades first division, with the loss of many killed and wounded, 1949 prisoners, including 71 commissioned officers and nine stand of colors, and the entire line seized by him was reoccupied."

March 28th about 11 P. M. came a staff officer, with the information that the enemy were massed in our front, and that deserters stated that an attack was to be made upon us in the morning. He ordered us to double the guards on the camps and breastworks, to be vigilant, and to be under arms by 4 o'clock in the morning. I sat up most of the night, writing up my papers and records and court martial business. The pickets were very quiet and morning came with no enemy. I could not see why we should not attack them, along the whole line – but found out later that Grant's plan was to keep them where they were. He knew that we could break through their lines anywhere – but he wanted them to stay there till Sheridan could work around their right flank – and the plan worked well as the sequel will show. We knew that the bulk of our forces were moving out to the left, and during the day we heard much artillery and musketry firing in that direction. That afternoon, while our pickets were being relieved, the enemy opened with artillery, but without damage. Our side replied with only two guns. Towards night I was summoned to division headquarters and found Gen. Potter very irate because of the action of the court in the case against Major Knapp, of the17th Vt. before mentioned – my first case. He said he drew up the charges himself and meant to have the major convicted and made an example of – that the Court had greatly erred in their action and that he should send the case back to be reviewed and that he should expect a different verdict. I took the scolding meekly and replied but little, though I had my own ideas of the propriety of his course. But more on this later.

That evening was beautiful, and after enjoying it to the full with pipe and dreaming, I was about turning in for a good sound sleep, when suddenly there came that strange, indescribable sound, which no one but a soldier can imagine, but which will arouse a soldier from the soundest sleep. There was confusion, rushing, yelling, bugles, drums, long-roll, assembly, and before anybody knew what was up, our line was formed behind the works. We thought at first our pickets were driven in, but the steady blaze of musketry in the woods showed that they were in the places and wasting ammunition at a great rate. But away off on our right, what a sight! The air was filled with whizzing and bursting shells – the finest pyrotechnic display I ever witnessed – showing us that a terrible artillery duel was going on for miles along the lines. Every gun and mortar, on both sides, must have been in full play, from Fort Hill to the Appomattox. The night being dark, every spark showed distinctly, and the fiery curves of the big mortar shells made a brilliant writing on the clouds. Every discharge of a gun or mortar made its flash visible, lighting up the horizon, every bursting shell showed its various colors, and so they kept it up and so we gazed, spell bound, for nearly two hours. Then, finding the picket line was safe, the men were sent to their quarters. I turned in at midnight and the firing was still going on, though it had begun to rain hard. One of the camp guard told me that everything had been quiet till about ten o'clock, when he saw three rockets, red, white and blue, go up from the enemy's lines, and immediately their guns opened. Of course it was meant for a scare – the hope being to make Grant order back troops from the left. All this day, March 30th, we heard the sounds of battle out where Sheridan was operating, notwithstanding the rain was pouring in torrents. In one minute I counted 19 guns and in another 11.

The next morning we were routed out about 3 o'clock by a staff officer, ordered to fall in quietly, and very quickly we were marching, with some other regiments of our brigade out towards the picket lines. It was dark as pitch and raining fast. On we marched, tumbling over stumps, wading through puddles and swollen water courses, as we all supposed for a charge on the enemy. Arrived at the picket line we halted, listened to the picket firing for about an hour and then marched back to camp. The attack was postponed and the reason I learned during the day. The plan was for part of our brigade to attack in front, while the bulk of the brigade was to march down to the right of Fort Hell and go in there – and the 1st brigade was to support us. But in some way Gen. Parke learned that the enemy were stronger than had been supposed

– so the movement was checked. It rained hard all that forenoon. Sleepy though I was I went to court and tried a case. During the afternoon we listened to the noise, away off on the left, where the fate of Lee's army was being decided. In the evening came an order to be ready to attack at 3 o'clock in the morning, so we turned in to try to get a little sleep. Before the designated hour arrived we were disturbed by the beating of the long roll in the 6th Corps, on our left. Regt. after regt. took up the sound of alarm, and we were all under arms in our respective positions till day-break – when we were dismissed to our quarters. It turned out that the 6th Corps pickets had been driven in – but no attack followed. After breakfast I mounted "Cob" and rode to fort Welch – out beyond the Weldon R. R. to see if I could get any news. The day was fine and I enjoyed the ride – but got no news. So we waited – smoked our pipes – played cribbage – wondered and conjectured – hoping for success and a speedy return home.

About nine o'clock in the evening of April 1st an orderly came with a circular, summoning commanding officers of regiments to brigade headquarters. Capt. Adams started off and I turned in and tried to read myself to sleep with "Vanity Fair", which I was reading for the first time. Before long Adams returned, greatly excited, with the information that we were going to attack the enemy's lines in the morning opposite Fort Hell – that our brigade was to lead the assault – but as one regiment was to be held in reserve, not yet designated, we were in a glorious state of uncertainty. But the officers were told to make all their preparations and we again retired, not to sleep much I fear. I know I was too excited to think of sleeping, so I finished my book by the time the orderly came to order us into position. He also told us that we were to be held in reserve, as we were the garrison of this little fort. The assault was to be made at four o'clock quite a while before sunrise – opposite Fort Hell (Steadman). This fort had been built on plank road running into Petersburg, and was the nearest point to the enemy's lines. Opposite it were Fort Mahone and several contiguous works – in fact, the front line of the enemy, in this vicinity, was a continuous fort, for quite a distance – with plenty of artillery, a ditch in front, and what looked like a very formidable abattis made of logs coupled together with iron links, with sharpened stakes running through them at right angles, so fixed, that the logs always stood on two legs and presented a third to the enemy, however much they might be rolled over. The stakes were of hard wood and so close together that they could not be easily cut off with an axe, and so tall that they could not be scaled. We had looked at them for months and wondered how we were going to get through them. If the fastenings at the ends – the couplings – had been made as stout as they might have been – it would have been a serious job to surmount this difficulty while under the terrible fire which we expected would be poured out from the rebel works. Some two or three hundred yards in rear of this front line was their second line of works, consisting of small forts, into which field batteries could be run, these forts connected by parapets of logs and dirt. Directly in rear of Fort Mahone, on the plank road, which gradually ascended towards Petersburg, was a small fort, mounting two heavy guns, sixty-eight pounders.

Well, we were under arms by two o'clock in the morning, and while the other regiments of the brigade marched to Fort Hell we stood behind the parapets and waited. I think every man felt that this was to be the final blow against Petersburg. In fact, I had for a long time been so confident in my own judgment of the probabilities, that I had made a bet that we would be in Petersburg before the middle of April. At the appointed time the uproar began – and for an hour we stood there listening to the din of musketry, artillery, shot and shell, the cheers of our men and the answering yells of the enemy – knowing from the sound that the assault had been delivered and that our men had reached the rebel works – but not knowing whether they had succeeded in making a lodgment or not. At the end of an hour of anxious listening, a staff officer came galloping up the line, yelling as he came, "double quick your regiment down to Fort Hell and go in!" So off we went at the double quick, along the parapets, Adams in front, mounted, and I in the rear, my duty being to keep up the stragglers and allow no skulking – and I guess I had the hardest part of the job. When we reached the vicinity of Fort Hell we found the battle was raging in earnest and shot and shell were screaming in every direction – all the rebel batteries within reach concentrating their fire on the point of assault. Just as we reached the plank road & turned into it, I noticed quite a commotion in the road and saw approaching us a stretcher, on which was carried a general officer, his

staff surrounding him. The bearers happened to halt and set down their burden and I looked and saw that the wounded man was our division commander, General Potter. He put out his hand to me and smiled, and as I took his hand and expressed my regret at his misfortune, he bade me good bye and remarked that he should never review any more of my court marital cases. I ran off to rejoin my regiment and never saw him again. We passed to the left of Fort Hell, deployed into line of battle, made our first rush to the picket line, where we halted a few minutes for breath, under the protection of the little earthworks which had furnished shelter for the pickets so long. Here we were under the concentrated artillery fire of friends and foes, and it is hard to say which is the most demoralizing. Of course the fire from our own batteries was too high to hit us – but the noise and jar of the guns, and the whizzing and shrieking of the projectiles made it seem confusion – worse confounded. Not a word of command could be heard in the awful din and everything had to be done by signs. We could see that the fighting was still going on for the possession of the enemy's front line and the outside of the forts and earthworks was covered with blue coats, who seemed to be hugging the ground to escape the fire of the enemy. The fact is, it was an unpleasant job – for, though they had got so close to the enemy that they were safe from the artillery fire in the front line, they were still exposed to the infantry fire, and the only entrances to the forts were through embrasures which were completely swept by guns in the second line of works. But the job had to be done, so we made a second rush and did not stop till we were safe in Fort Mahone and the enemy out of it. The ground ascended gradually to the rear of the fort, so that the inside and backside walls were cut square down several feet from the surface, like digging a cellar into the side of hill, the dirt being carried to the front and used for the front wall of the fort – so we, as regarded the present position of the enemy, were in a hole in the ground, so that by squatting down a little, their fire passed over our heads, perfectly harmless to us, but dangerous to reinforcements coming over the ground we had just passed over. What took place on the right and left of us I don't know – I simply know that we got the fort, that the enemy tried to retake it, but were too weak – that we held it all day and the next night. Our position was not at all unpleasant, as we simply had to stay where we were and watch the smoke from the enemy's guns and duck our heads in time to let the shot and shells go over. The lines were too far apart for effective infantry fire, and our only annoyance in that line was from some sharp-shooters, who were concealed by the inequalities of the ground between the lines, rifle pits and zig-zag passages, which had been prepared for this express purpose. They were inclined to practice at any head they saw and made us exercise considerable caution. As we did not know where they were we could not return their fire. Capt. Randall was killed by one of these fellows and Capt. Adams was hit by a glanced ball which struck him in the back with sufficient force to pass through a rubber coat he had on – and I guess it hurt him, for he sang out sharply and seemed terribly demoralized. It happened just as the johnies tried to make a charge and drive us out, and Adams rather lost his head and ordered a retreat. Fortunately I was able to keep the men steady and saved the regiment from what would have been a terrible disgrace. The fact is the ranks of the enemy were drawn out so thin they could not concentrate force enough for a charge. I doubt if they had infantry at all proportioned to their artillery. The two gun battery on the plank road afforded us much amusement during the day. They tried to reach us with all sorts of projectiles – but everything went over our heads. They finally resorted to fuse shells, with reduced charges of powder, rolling the big balls down the road, hoping they would drop in amongst us. This seemed feasible enough, as the rear of the fort was simply a cellar dug below the surface – but the shells would come bounding down the road, much like a rubber foot ball, and some little obstruction would always cause them to bound over us. Of course the artillerists were obliged to expose themselves while loading the guns, and when they showed themselves we would give them a volley which would cause them to drop and then they would jump to their work again while we were reloading. I tried a hand in this fun myself, taking the musket of one of my men and think I fired thirty or forty shots. I wondered greatly why an advance was not ordered, as it was perfectly apparent to me that we could go into Petersburg in spite of them – but I learned later that the plan was simply to hold them where they were and not permit them to send reinforcements to the left where Sheridan was flanking them. Occasionally one of our independent sharp shooters would be seen, skulking along the lines, training his telescopic rifle on some unfortunate johnny. This seemed very much like murder to me – too much business-like coolness and calculation about it.

Perhaps it will be remembered that while I was on duty in the defences of Washington the year before, the only reliable man I had was a Sergt. Hall, who belonged to a New York regiment of red legged zouaves. I met him again this second day of April in Fort Mahone. It was just after the rebel attempt to charge us – when I suppose our friends in the rear thought we might need help. I heard a cheering behind me and looking around saw a lot of fancifully-dressed fellows rushing in through an embrasure. The front man rushed up to me and thrust out his hand, exclaiming "by God, Capt, how are you?" It was Sergt. Hall and I was glad to see him again. These fellows were very very anxious to display their courage and rushed into the only vacant place they could see from which they could open fire. But this was the place exposed to the fire of the rebel sharp-shooters, before mentioned, and the first man who showed his head there retired with a hole through both cheeks. This cooled their ardor somewhat and as there was really no more room than we wanted for ourselves, they soon went back through the embrasure, along the lines further to the left. Through this embrasure, later in the day, came other reinforcements, who furnished us with a good deal of sport. I think they belonged to the 60th Mass. infantry – a hundred days' regiment – who had been serving as Provost Guard at City Point. They had been ordered up during the day, and towards night came across from Fort Hell to help us hold our position against a possible night attack. Of course the johnnies treated them to artillery fire while they were coming across, and it was not strange that they should make precipitately for cover, which was furnished by the ditch in front of the rebel works – said ditch containing considerable water and more yellow mud. There they remained till they had recovered their equanimity, when they began to straggle into the works. Such a sight I never saw before – bright, new uniforms completely plastered with the yellow mud, which literally hung from their legs and in many cases covered them from head to heels. I can't describe the scene, as they came crawling through the embrasure and were immediately welcomed by a volley from the johnnies – which caused them to duck and scramble – while our veterans, from their safe and sheltered places hooted and jeered at them. It was fun for us and as it was their only real experience of war they probably have never regretted it. In fact I think I have since read glorious accounts of the achievements of the 60th on that day. There would be but little satisfaction in being a soldier if you couldn't brag of it afterwards.

Finally darkness came and we settled down to spend the night. Gen. Griffin had sent to know if we wanted any help. Adams replied – "Yes" – but I took the liberty to disagree with him and told the officer we had no room to spare. I had seen enough during the day to know that I was virtually in command of the regiment, and did not hesitate to act independently of my superior officer, who was so lame he couldn't go without a cane and had already been demoralized by a spent ball. I knew I should have the command when the order to advance should be given. Pickets were thrown out after dark and the rest of us lay down to rest – but not to sleep, as we expected to be attacked. The johnies kept up their fire during the evening, especially from their mortar batteries – but towards midnight it was evident that they were leaving both Petersburg and Richmond – as there were large fires burning and several tremendous explosions, all showing that they had given up further defense of the rebel stronghold. I think we all felt that our fighting days were over, as we should be too far in the rear to take part in the final struggle. But we wanted to see Petersburg all the same and were up bright and early, awaiting orders to advance. As we formed line Gen. Griffin rode up and asked me if I was in command of the regiment and on learning that I was, expressed his satisfaction and told me to deploy the regiment as skirmishers and take the advance. This I did quickly and we started for Petersburg – but had not advanced far when I heard the order – "Capt. Hollis, recall your skirmishers and lead the advance." But by the time I could assemble my men into columns the advance had become a race and the 17th Vermont had got ahead of us. I saw the game at once, and running ahead to within hailing distance sang out – "Major Knapp, halt your regiment!" – which he did – and before he saw the joke we had passed by and occupied the road. As I have before said, the ground ascended gradually in approaching the city, until the suburbs were reached, when it pitched sharply down to the river. Arrived on the crest, each regiment was halted until the whole division was massed together – and then – as we gazed upon the object of our ten months' struggle, it seemed as though the men would split their throats with cheering; while the bands played, flags waved,

and all was joy and gladness. Gen. Griffin came to me and said that it had been his intention for me to lead the advance and enter the city first – but that the broken nature of the ground had prevented his getting orders to me promptly enough – and the redlegged regiment, which seemed to be an independent command, had got in ahead of us, and we could see them far in advance, marching in the street. I told the General I guessed it was an empty honor but that I appreciated his good intentions all the same. What a lovely day it was and how jolly we did feel! The most amusing thing I saw was the behavior of the colored people. They were going in for No. 1 with a vengeance – even tearing down fences and outbuildings to get a supply of lumber for themselves. As the street dipped down towards the city, it had been cut through the clay banks, and these banks, along the road, were completely honey-combed with rooms to which the occupants of the houses used to flee whenever our batteries opened upon the city. Some of the houses were pretty well riddled, but there was not nearly so much damage done as one would expect to find after so long a siege. I went into one house for a drink of water and conversed with the women, who were the only occupants. They said they had quite a lot of unexploded shells out in the shed, which had fallen in their small garden. I went to see them and should say there were more than a bushel basket full – and as they were percussion shells and liable to be exploded in handling, I advised them to dig a big hole and bury them at once. The house had been struck several times and they were glad the fighting was over. There were large fires in the streets, where the cotton was burning and some of the principal buildings were in ruins. In marching through the city I saw but two native white men and they looked poor.

There is not much of interest after this. We were in the rear of the whole army, forming the guard of the wagon trains, making short marches and foraging in the country, our only excitement being caused by the occasional cannonading in the distance, where our advance forces were hammering away at Lee's rapidly dwindling and almost starved veterans, the few disordered remnants of the proud army of Virginia. Every day we met hundreds, yes, thousands of the butter-nut colored prisoners, passing to the rear under guard. In due time we arrived at Nottaway Court House, where our regiment was detached and sent out in a southerly direction, to guard a bridge over the little Nottaway river. We remained here two days and had a good time. At the bridge was a grist-mill and about two hundred bushels of white corn. We kept the mill running and it was fun to see the darkies come in from the surrounding country to get their share of the meal. We struck up quite a trade with them, swapping meal for pigs, poultry, eggs, etc. Just across the bridge was the plantation of the widow Toggle, and as I had a picket station out beyond her house, which I was obliged to visit, I took occasion to call on the widow's family and congratulate them on the close of the war. Our men had found great foraging there, the cellars being well supplied with provisions ostensibly for Lee's army. Of course these were confiscated and the sorghum molasses was just what we wanted to go with our white meal griddle cakes. I was invited into the house by the ladies and spent a couple of hours with them very pleasantly. They said our men had behaved like gentlemen, that they expected them to take the supplies as a matter of course; that they had given them all their coffee and hard bread in return. One of my men got up quite a flirtation with the widow's youngest daughter and played duets on the piano with her, to her great delight. Capt. Cartwright and Lt. Emerson accompanied me and we joined the ladies in singing quite a number of songs and pieces of church music. When it was nearly dark I ordered the men back to the regiment and told the women to lock up the house and that they should not be disturbed. They thought I was very kind and wanted my name and address which I gave them. I think Lieut. Emerson kept up a correspondence with them long afterwards. He used to talk of going back after the war, to run the plantation for them. And it would not have been a bad move. It was the only place in the south I ever saw that I would take the gift of to occupy. The country was delightful, game abundant, the mill pond flowed back for miles and was alive with fish and ducks of all sorts. I pitied the poor women though, and before we left I purchased a liberal supply of coffee and sugar of the commissary and sent it to them.

About this time Col. Weld arrived and took command of the regiment – also Lt. Col. Jarvis and Capt. Shurtleff. While we were at this place the following order was promulgated.

"Hancock Station – Va. April 2d, 1865
The General commanding desires to express, so far as he has language to do so, his heartfelt pride and satisfaction at the brave and gallant conduct of the officers and soldiers of his brigade, in carrying the almost impregnable lines of Petersburg. Never was greater valor displayed – never were more heroic deeds performed. The daring deeds of this day need not be recounted here – they will live in history and in the hearts of your country men while time shall last. The second of April will never be forgotten while your country has a name. This glorious achievement is doubtless the death-blow of the rebellion – the finishing of the war. Proudly and joyfully will we return to our homes, to enjoy the blessings of that peace which you, by your perseverance and gallantry have to nobly conquered. By command of Brig. Gen. S. G. Griffin."

Saturday, 8th, the following entry was made in my diary.
"Band up, playing – niggers dancing – packed up and marched off about 3 o'clock and after awhile found the rest of the brigade and halted – mail arrived and – 6000 prisoners marched by – marched to Burkesville by 11 P. M. – a cold night."

"Sunday, 9th – cold but pleasant – up at sunrise – loafed about till noon – relieved the 58th Mass. guarding prisoners – including 24 officers, 1 chaplain – 525 privates – rainy night"

The next day word came down the line that Lee had surrendered! No words of mine can express the sensations of that moment. I myself was simply dumb – but there was noise enough without any help from me. The announcement was followed by an invitation from brigade headquarters to all officers to come up and 'smile'. I did not go but wrote to my little wife instead. One incident I will mention – there was a tall, dark-looking, rebel Colonel, on his parole at brigade headquarters, and he was invited in to celebrate with the rest. As the glasses were raised, all eyes were naturally turned towards the representative of the "fallen cause." He quietly raised his glass and proposed the toast – "Gentlemen, I drink to the American flag." We were guarding many prisoners, and I was quite curious to see what effect the news would have on them. So, as I was officer of the day, I visited the enclosure where they were confined and corroborated the rumor, which they had been inclined to laugh at, by reading them a copy of the official telegram. Many of them swore – some of them cried – and one officer exclaimed - "Well, if Bobby Lee has got enough of it, I've got enough of it." One man swore that Lee ought to be hung for surrendering, apparently having forgotten that he was himself a prisoner; but the others made a rush at him and would have torn him in pieces if the guard had not interfered. After they had quieted down I remarked that we would all go home now and both sides join in celebrating the coming 4th of July. "Yes", replied an Arkansas Captain – "I'm dog-gonned if I don't chuck up fire-balls too."

Nothing remained to be done but to carry out Grant's terms of surrender – parole the poor devils and let them run. After which we turned our faces towards Petersburg and City Point – though we seemed to be in no hurry about getting there, as our regiment did not reach the latter place till the twenty-third. On the 15th we had learned of the death of the President. I will copy from a letter written the next day.

"How the rejoicing at the North will be changed to mourning! Well, his life was worth no more than thousands lost in the great struggle, and if the life of the chief was necessary, to make the sacrifice complete, who shall complain? I think the news makes but little stir in the army. We care very little for what takes place outside our own little world. Our own excitements and trials are so important, while they last, that almost everything else seems tame. Men who are accustomed to see hundreds of their companions shot down in a single battle cannot be expected to be greatly moved by the death of one civilian, at a distance, though he be the President."

The event proved a sad one for the South, as Lincoln was really their best friend – and the struggle which followed the war, over reconstruction, would hardly added to Lincoln's fame, or made his life or death more satisfactory to his friends.

On the 25th of April our regiment went aboard the steamer Montauk – our destination Washington. We got everything aboard before dark, the only accident being caused by the Colonel's mule tumbling overboard. We hauled out into the stream to wait for morning and daylight. The boat could easily accommodate five hundred men, and as we were only about three hundred, we had plenty of room. There were staterooms enough for the officers, and we turned in early, expecting to get a good nights' rest. But he was a thick skinned man who could sleep on board the Montauk. Talk about bed-bugs – they just swarmed. First came the light skirmishes – then the line of battle – closely followed by a grand charge in columns closed in mass! They carried our position and we fled ingloriously – some taking refuge on deck, some cocked up in chairs, while the more vindictive among us rallied and made a counter charge and spent the night in picking them off singly as they ventured out from their strongholds. I think I killed a hundred myself.

The boat was under way the next morning by 4:30 and everybody was on deck to enjoy the trip down the James. We had a beautiful day and pleasant trip – passed Harrison's Landing at sunrise and made Fortress Monroe at 10:15 where we lay to for fifteen minutes while the steward went ashore for supplies and newspapers. We had a fine view of the fleet, comprising every description of vessel from a Yankee monitor to an English blockade-runner. We made Point Lookout at 7 P. M. and at midnight the anchor was dropped. I avoided the bugs that night by sleeping on the cabin floor. The boat started again at sunrise and proceeded on her way up the Potomac. The banks of the river were beautiful and we had a fine view of Mount Vernon. All the people along the river seemed to be engaged in the fishing business – catching Potomac shad, I suppose – at many stations the nets being hauled in by mule power applied to windlasses like an old fashioned cider mill. By 9:30 we were within two miles of Washington, when a tug came alongside with orders for us to land at Alexandria. We marched through the old city with band playing and colors flying, out about three miles, due west, and pitched camp near Fairfax seminary – and just one year had passed since the 9th Corps marched over long bridge and the 56th Mass. Infantry first pitched their tents on the "sacred soil" of old Virginia. Other regiments arrived rapidly and in two days the whole division was encamped in regular order. Our position was a pleasant one, on the road running into the City – the camp facing north with an extensive valley between us and the defences of Washington. The entire army was to encamp about the capitol – preparatory to the grand review and final muster and discharge. The regular routine of camp life was resumed and we were soon at our old work of drills, inspections, parades, reviews, etc. My Court Martial also got into working order again. The men grumbled a good deal and couldn't see the use of constant drilling after the war was over – but their time was not up yet.

May 8th I received a letter from home announcing the birth of little Tommy. He's grown some since – hasn't he? (Footnote: first born son Thomas Hollis, born May 5, 1865)

The first case tried in my court in our new location was that of private Robie of the 11th N. H. whose home was in Chester and in whose fate several of my wife's friends were interested. The charge was desertion and he would have tried before Petersburg – but just as his case was reached he was taken sick and sent to the hospital at City Point. The 11th was encamped near us and I walked down one afternoon to call on Colonel Harriman and to see what he knew about the case – his name being on the list of witnesses furnished me with the papers in the case. The Colonel informed me that Robie was a queer kind of a fellow – that he had run away from the hospital and rejoined his company and was now loafing about the camp and he didn't know what he ought to do with him. I suggested that the regular thing would be to arrest him and turn him over to the Provost Marshal – which was done. The fellow had not deserted to the enemy; but had been picked up by our cavalry patrols, with many others, living in the

woods in rear of the army, subsisting on what they could pick up or steal. Such men never ought to have been enlisted – paupers at home and little better than idiots – entirely unfit for soldiers and simply counting one on a Town's quota. I got him off as easy as I could, getting him a dishonorable discharge from service with loss of all pay and bounty. One of the reasons offered me in mitigation of sentence was that he inherited his vice, his grandfather having been a deserter in the war of 1812.

May 12th not being a very busy day with me I went to division headquarters and got a pass to go over Washington to see the Paymaster and visit my friends. I was cordially received at 137 E. Cap. St. where I spent two nights. (Note – I believe this to be 37 E. Capitol St., the home of Benjamin Brown French, K.S. Loomis) I saw all the relatives including Aunt Maryant's folks and the Russels – beat the Major at cribbage and helped him kill an old Tom-cat. I also called on the Major at his office in the Capitol building and we finished a bottle of fine old brandy I found in a closet there. On getting back to camp I found a letter from home enclosing a lock of hair taken from the head of my boy.

I was summoned before the Colonel and reprimanded for obtaining leave to visit Washington direct from Div. Headquarters – instead of applying through him. He said that if any other officer had done it he should have placed him under arrest. I made what I considered a sufficient apology – denying that I had done anything wrong as I was on detached service under orders from division headquarters, and claiming that what duty I did with the regiment was purely voluntary on my part, while I was engaged in Court Martial matters. The matter was dropped there, so far as I know without leaving any hard feeling.

May 23rd occurred the grand review of the army of the Potomac. The 9th Corps marched across the long bridge the day before and went into bivouac away out on East Capitol St. so as to be ready in season. I took advantage of the occasion to make another call on Major French and family and had a good time. The order for review directed company front of twenty files – which obliged us to form in five companies – and as there were seven captains present, the Colonel gave me my choice to march with the regiment or not. I concluded to go. Adams was acting Major and could ride. I think I have already stated that he had been commissioned Major but could not be mustered, as an order had been issued from the war department, allowing but two field officers to depleted regiments and two officers to a company. As our Colonel and Lt. Colonel were both present the other Captains were a little sore at the idea of Adams playing Major, especially as he was inclined to put on airs, and to horse the rest of us on drills, parades, etc. For this reason, more than anything else, I had not turned out with the regiment lately; but I thought I must take part in the grand review for traditions sake. We had a splendid day for it – but I don't think the rank and file cared much about it. They had us up by four o'clock – we fell in at half past five – stood about till eight – then formed column on East Capitol St. and stood about again till after ten – tedious waiting for us, I tell you, who had fifteen miles marching between us and camp and dinner. Soon after ten we started and struck a tremendous pace which we kept up till near the reviewing stand, when we shortened step a little to make the marching more steady. I carried a bouquet which Mary Ellen had sent me. (Note – Mary Ellen French, wife of B. B. French, K. S. Loomis) Of course the Major had decorated for the occasion – a large gilt eagle was placed over the front door and flags were festooned from it on either side. The Major sat in the library window, opera glass at his eyes, while the ladies covered the front steps. As we got along they recognized me and my company gave them three rousing cheers. That was the only pleasant feature in the review for me. "Tis true, the army was in splendid condition – the clothes were clean and had just been drawn from the quartermaster – guns and brasses shone resplendent – the white gloves doubtless had a good effect – the marching was fine – in fact, it was the Army of the Potomac – splendidly disciplined and on its good behavior. But it was hardly different from a funeral. There was no excitement – no enthusiasm – hardly a cheer – and the men marched and the crowd looked on. One regiment going through Boston would have caused ten times the excitement. It seemed to me that there was no sympathy between the soldiers and the people who crowded the Capitol for this occasion. The people seemed to consider the soldiers as their servants, whom they had hired to do their work – the soldiers looked upon the civilians as of no account, compared with the veterans who had saved

the country, and thought they had done marching enough and only wanted now to go home and have done with it. I suppose I ought to feel differently about this – but I cannot.

After we had passed the reviewing stand, which was filled with big folks, we made the best of time back to camp, as we were hungry – arriving there at four o'clock. A good wash, a glass of ale, some supper and to bed early and all was soon forgotten. I copy now from a letter written home two days later.

"Yesterday was still cooler than Tuesday, and Sherman's army made its first appearance before a Washington audience – and I will lay a wager that they bore off the palm. And why? – simply because they went just as they were – a big mob – ragged, dirty, no uniformity, white and black mixed up together, men, women, and children, monkeys, donkeys, squirrels – a huge caravan – just as different from us as you can imagine, and I'll bet the popular verdict is in their favor. And the two armies represent two principles – one the West Point, regular army principle, the other the rebel plan, that essentials only should be required – fighting and marching everything, appearance nothing. And that is the way it has been all through the war – the Army of the Potomac has given too much attention to clean clothes, bright brasses and polished shoes – too much dress-coat and sash – in fact too much of that nice sense of prosperity which sees a gentleman in a dress-coat but fails to recognize him in shirt sleeves. Though it be hot enough to roast a man's flesh, he must not step outside his quarters without a coat on – because fashionable people, at home, don't go in shirt sleeves. Imagine common men drilled and tortured every day in accordance with such notions and then wonder that it has taken four years to capture Richmond and subdue a nation of free-men!"

"It was a great night in camp, I tell you. Regimental headquarters laid out for a spree and they had it. A big tent was put up, tables and chairs made, viands prepared, glass and crockery hired, a French cook provided, the negroes polished up with white collars and aprons, and the invited guests came – the 'class of '60, of course' – about a dozen of them. The table was laid at 6:30 and the dinner was over at eleven. Headquarters were illuminated, candles being stuck around in every direction, two bands furnished continuous music – it was a grand time, all got gloriously drunk, all made fools of themselves, some of them had to be taken care of for the night – and all this in sight and hearing of the line officers and enlisted men of the regiment – no one from the line invited but Capt. Shurtleff, of course – Adams being acting major, as usual. If any one of his line officers should do half as much he would be placed in arrest and charges preferred. If an enlisted man gets drunk he is tied up by the thumbs – that being Colonel Weld's favorite method of punishment. And there were a dozen enlisted men employed at the feast as waiters, who witnessed the whole thing, listened to the rude jests and songs and saw the officers make fools of themselves. And these are the gentlemen! – the Harvard College men – the class of '60, who can't bear to see a line officer without his coat on – I may not be worthy to associate with such fine people (Capt. Shurtleff says he would not recognize a line officer of his regiment as an acquaintance in civil life) but I don't think my men will ever see me drunk."

Under the date of June 1st I wrote as follows –

"The Judge Advocate of the 1st Brigade told me last night that I should probably be kept employed in Court Martial business after the muster out of the regiments which are going home – that Major Wright, the Adjutant Genl. of the division had told him that I was the best man they had for the position. I'm getting to feel awfully proud."

"I was at division headquarters today and Major Wright offered me one of the staff positions soon to become vacant – either that of Provost Marshall or Inspector General. I told the Major that it was my intention to resign soon unless I could get a leave of absence to go home. He said I could get a good endorsement there if I applied for a leave."

On the night of June 3rd the men got up a little celebration of their own. About eight o'clock, at a given signal, without the least warning to the officers, a candle was lighted on every tent in the brigade. I suppose the occasion was the muster out of the 186th N. Y. who were going home the next day. After enjoying the illumination for awhile, they all formed in procession, each man with a little candle for a torch, and, with our band at their head, marched up to division headquarters, gave three rousing cheers, then to brigade headquarters and cheered, then countermarched to division headquarters – called out Gen. Griffin, who made a short speech, and then to the different camps, the men falling out as they reached their respective camps, exchanging cheers. It was an orderly and well conducted affair – noisy of course and very exciting. It was very fortunate that they could get no liquor.

As I got tired of loafing about camp and had finished up all court martial business I thought I might as well go home to see the folks – so tendered my resignation. It took some time to get it through as there must have been a great rush of business at the war department. I found it much more difficult to get out of service than to get in, notwithstanding the fact that the government was so anxious to cut down expenses that they had issued an order, offering two months extra pay to all officers who should resign by a certain date. In a few days my application was returned with an endorsement that it must be accompanied by a certificate from the Second Auditor's office, showing that I was not indebted to the government. To obtain this certificate I found to be a work requiring time and patience. Of course everything that I had ever receipted for was charged against me at Washington and must be accounted for before I could get a clean bill. This would have been easy enough to do if there had not been such a rush of officers all wanting the attention of the department clerks at the same time. There was a perfect jam all day long and every man must take his turn and could get his papers. Advanced only one point at a time. I thought I knew what red tape was before – but learned my mistake now. Under date of June 9th I wrote –

"At one o'clock I went to the Quarter Master's department and after an hour and a half succeeded in starting my papers and being told to 'call in ten days'. Then I went to the ordnance department where I was detained about half as long and told to 'call tomorrow at twelve'. The force of clerks is not large enough, or they are too lazy, and they are certainly very independent. Having done all I could I went to East Capitol St. of course too late for dinner."

"I suppose Adams was mustered Major yesterday, as we have had the 36th Mass. consolidated with us and Jarvis gave him a certificate that the regiment had 807 men, the number actually needed being 806. I believe the certificate to be false, and could have the muster annulled if I chose. But what's the use? So long as I get out of it I don't care, though I wouldn't remain in the regiment after it if I could possibly help it. If Adams were really my superior officer, I would not object to his being so by rank – but he makes a perfect fool of himself whenever he gets a chance. There are men in the regiment who would be glad to knock him on the head and there is always more or less tendency to mutiny when he gets the command for a few hours. Night before last he 'received the parade' and the men pretended they could not understand his orders, and there were some curious handlings of muskets, accompanied with laughs the whole length of the line. And it is always so – the men hate and despise him. Well, I suppose I should not write anything against my superior officer."

Quite a little row occurred in the 31st Maine about this time. A man disobeyed and order – a serious thing to be sure, but provided for in Army regulations and punishable by Court Martial – but no, court martial was too slow, the officer must act immediately, to show his power and gratify his passion. The man must be tied up by the thumbs – the man objects – the officer seized him and the man resists – other officers come to the rescue – the men crowd around to see the fight and express their sympathy with the culprit – a large guard is ordered out, who surround the fighting parties with fixed bayonets – the fight goes on – the man is overpowered and handcuffed – it tied up – the crowd rushed in through the guard, who refuse to resist them, and cut the man down – officers threaten to shoot the rescuers – stones are thrown – and finally the man is rescued and his hand cuffs broken off – the crowd hoots and groans, and

the officers are worsted – having taken an unlawful position they dared not use their weapons. Then Col. Weld, commanding the brigade, takes up the fight, and orders out the whole brigade – the offender is arrested and tied up – authority is restored and force triumphs over law. For this tying-up, mind you, is illegal. Then the officers of the 31st Maine, ashamed of their own performance and knowing that the affair shows a bad state of things in their regiment, take the ground that the whole trouble was caused by men of the 56th Mass. and come up and enter their complaint. Then Jarvis shows his men that he has as little confidence in them as they have in him. The men are ordered to their quarters, the officers into their company streets and told to wear their pistols and to use them if necessary. Then comes a follish order from brigade headquarters to be read to the men. "Regimental commanders will be held strictly responsible for the orderly conduct of the men of their commands. All the officers of this command are expected to be properly armed, especially of the Day & Guard, who will at all times wear a loaded pistol. In case of any disturbance, if any man refuses to obey the command of any Commissioned Officer, he will be promptly shot down by such officer. Any officer who fails to do this in case of riots or disorderly conduct of the men of this command will be placed in arrest and court martialed. By command of Col S. H. Weld, Jr."

And each officer commanding a company was required to read that order to his company – his head hanging with shame while he did it. I copy the following from my diary.

"June 10th – This morning the 9th N. H. started for home. As they marched by our regiment was paraded and Major Adams proposed three cheers – but they were very feeble and the Major was exceedingly wroth. But its no use – there is an end to good feeling and there will be no more peace and I shall be glad when I am out of it. There will be no trouble so far as my company is concerned and I shall meddle with no other men but my own."

"June 12th – Two of our companies – the provost ones – were sent to Alexandria yesterday, detailed for guard duty. I suspect Jarvis had it done, being afraid of them."

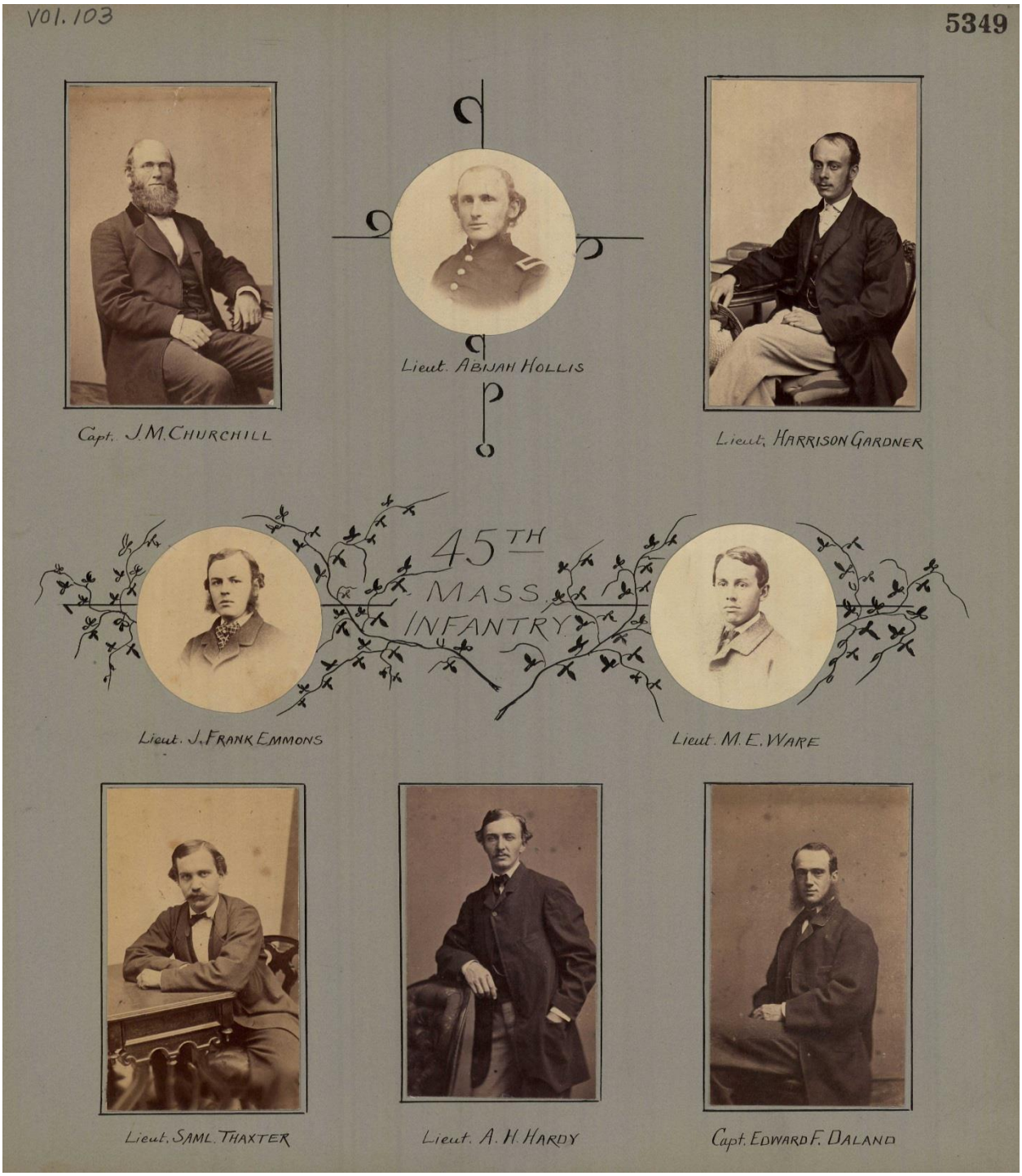
My resignation business did not progress very rapidly and on June 14th I received three communication s from the departments showing the difficulties of my position. One concerned me particularly, stating that I was reported to have had ordnance stores in charge, pertaining to the regiment, Aug. 18, 1864, and requested me to account for the same. That was the day I relieved Capt. Lamb of command of the regiment, about eight o'clock at night, while they were on picket, and if any ordnance stores were turned over to me I never knew it. My affidavit made that all right. The second notified me that H. B. Blair, Corporal of my company, had been paid $72 by the Paymaster. As no such man ever belonged to my company they couldn't get that out of me. The third requested me to forward, to a hospital in Philadelphia, the descriptive list of a man of my company who was mustered out of the service three weeks before in Washington. I sent the descriptive list and they must assume the responsibility of all mistakes.

June 18th I went over to Washington and on making inquiry at the Q. M. department was informed that returns from me were wanting for several months. They had been lost in the mail or mislaid for I had certainly sent them. As I had taken the precaution to bring with me my retained copies, I got some blanks and repaired to Major French's cool office in the Capitol basement to fill them out. Then I went back with them to the department and was told to call again in two days. Instead of going back to camp I accepted the hospitality of 137 East Capitol St. where I was well treated and where I met Frank O. French and his wife – also Major Cilley – an old Exeter school-mate and admirer of my wife. Fanny Gilbert was also there and we had a nice chat. She had taken her position in the treasury department, liked her work and had earned ten dollars.

Early in the evening, someone, Mary Ellen I believe, left the water running into the bathing tub and the result was the much dripping of water in the back part of the house. Mary Ellen pretended to be terribly frightened and said the Major would kill her. But he didn't. I did not get through with the 2d Auditor's office that next day as they wanted an affidavit as to the abandoning of some government property and I had to go back to camp to get a copy of the order for abandoning said property. I copy from a letter written home at this time showing the state of things among us officers.

"I wrote you that there was an examining board appointed, of which Col. Weld was president, to furnish to the War Department a history of each officer in the brigade, for their guidance in case they wanted to retain any volunteer officers in the service. We have accidentally got knowledge of Col. Weld's report – and a falser report you could hardly find. Favoritism rules in the 56th Mass. The class of '60 carries off all the honors. According to the report, Lt. Col. Jarvis is a "brilliant officer, a good disciplinarian and would make a splendid Colonel." Capt. Shurtleff "has the best disciplined company in the regiment and deserves promotion." "Capt. Hollis is a good officer." The other Captains are "indifferent". Several officers are represented as "brave, but lack discipline and efficiency in drill". One Lieutenant "would make a good non-commissioned officer, but is not fit for a commission." What Major Adams' record is, I don't know. You know Col. Weld told me awhile ago that he had recommended me for brevet – a division staff officer has told me that he did not do it, but that Gen. Griffin did. I have also learned that I might have been Major instead of Adams if I had not taken the course I did, last summer, in opposing Jarvis in having outsiders commissioned into the regiment. When they found it out, they made their boasts that I should never receive promotion. If I had known this before I would have joined issue with them and made it warm for Jarvis & Co. – but I have not time to go into it now".

June 24th I was in Washington again and finished my sixteen days' labor of getting a certificate of indebtedness from the 2d Auditor's office. The time till the 27th was occupied in turning over my company and company property – getting a certificate from the Colonel and putting my resignation through in person to the war department. On the 27th I was a free man again, and after bidding good-bye to Washington friends took the first train for home, where I arrived in time to find the folks at the tea table. And thus closes the account of the small part I played in the great work of putting down the rebellion. My commission of Major by brevet was duly issued, with thousands of others, and the only value I attach to it grows out of the fact that is was recommended by my division commander, Gen. Griffin of Keene, N. H.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Capt. J.M. Churchill
Lieut. Abijah Hollis
Lieut. Harrison Gardner
45TH
MASS.
INFANTRY
Lieut. J. Frank Emmons
Lieut. M.E. Ware
Lieut. Saml. Thaxter
Lieut. A.H. Hardy
Capt. Edward F. Daland

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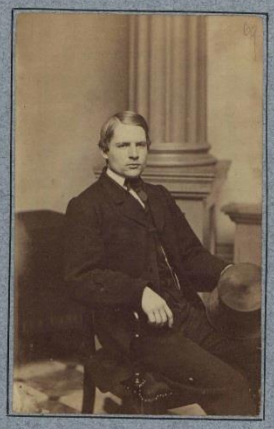
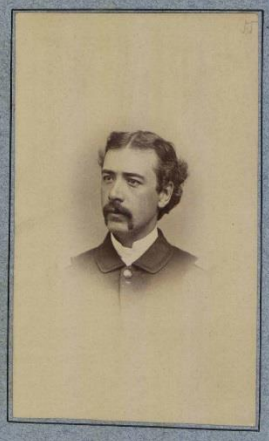
56th MASS. INFANTRY.

Brevet Major ABIJAH HOLLIS

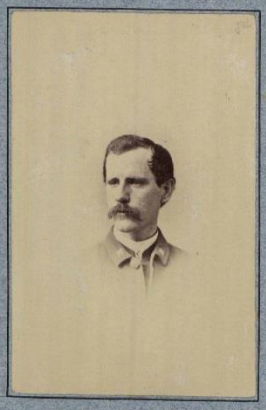


Captain HIRAM S. SHURTLEFF



Captain THOS. R. KEENAN.

1st Lieut. JOHN W. MAYLOAN



Captain ANSEL B. RANDALL

Killed April 2, 1865.

Captain LEODEGAR M. LIPP.

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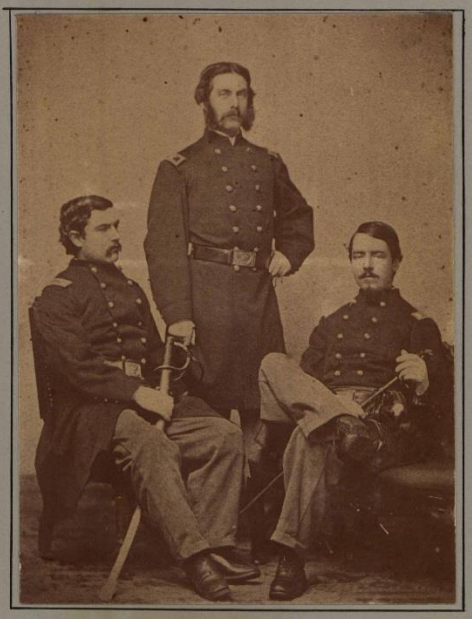
56th Mass. Infantry.

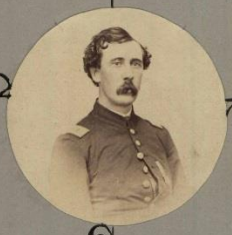
Capt. H. S. Shurtleff



Major Jarves Col. Griswold Lt. Col. Weld

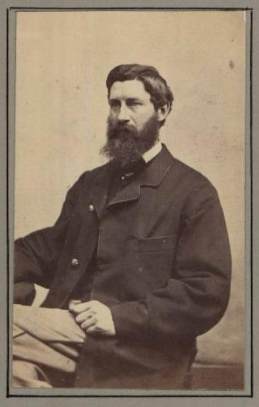
Capt. Wilson W. Fay

Capt. Abijah Hollis



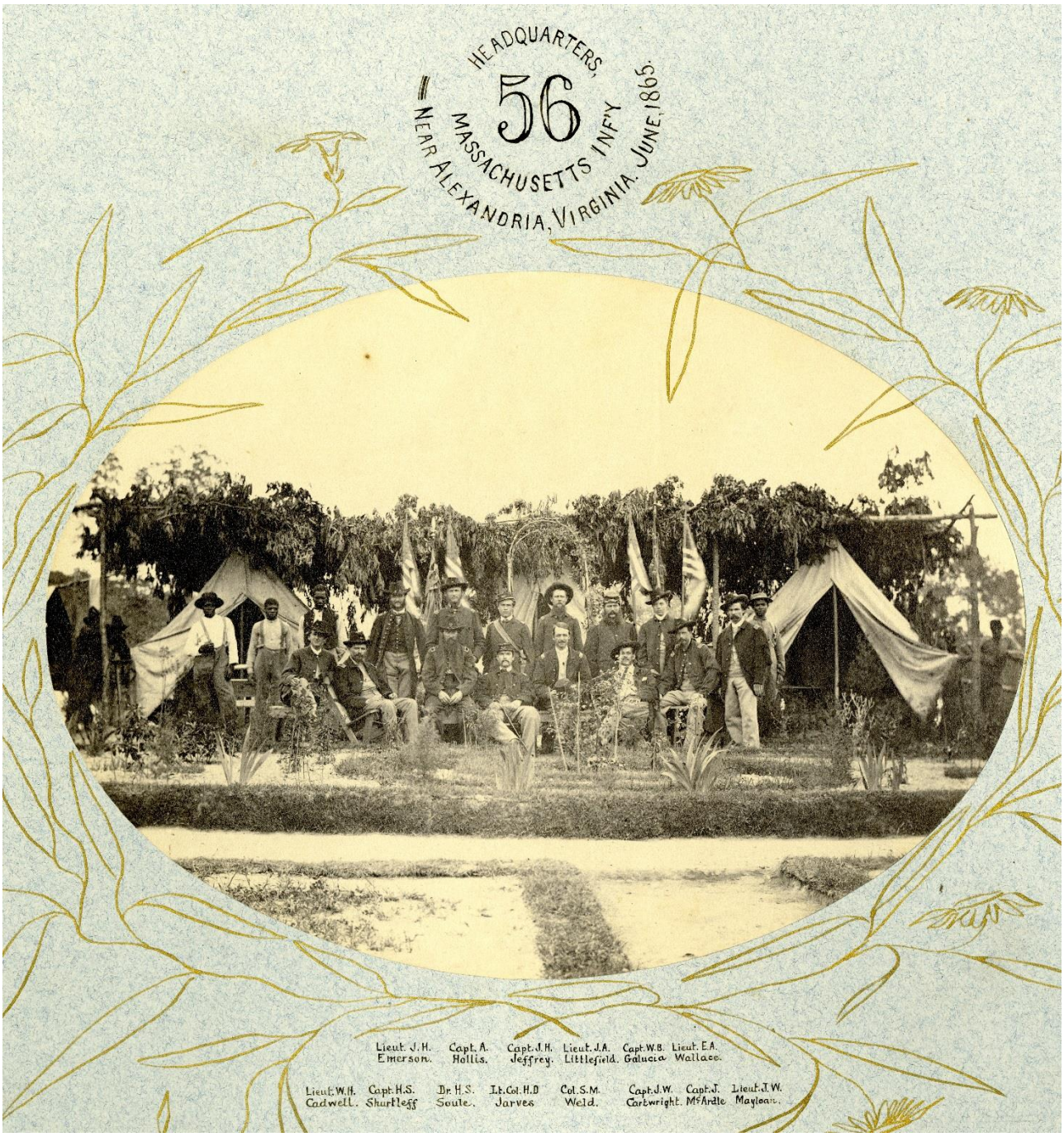
Lieut. R. T. Atkins

Col. Stephen M. Weld
Byt. Brig. Gen.



Capt. G. A. Fletcher Brevet Major Z. B. Adams

Major Wallace A. Putnam


HEADQUARTERS,
56
MASSACHUSETTS INF'Y
NEAR ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. JUNE, 1865.
Lieut. J. H. Emerson.
Capt. A. Hollis.
Capt. J. H. Jeffrey.
Lieut. J. A. Littlefield.
Capt. W. B. Galucia
Lieut. E. A. Wallace.
Lieut. W. H. Cadwell.
Capt. H. S. Shurtleff
Dr. H. S. Soule.
Lt. Col. H. D Jarves
Col. S. M. Weld.
Capt. J. W. Cartwright.
Capt. J. McArdle
Lieut. J. W. Mayloan.

Misc. biographical information

From 1919 NH Notables:
Hollis, Abijah
Granite business; b., Milton, Mass., Nov. 13, 1837; s. Thomas and Deborah Clark (Allen) Hollis; ed. Public schools, Milton, Milton Academy, Chauncy Hall School, Boston, Philips Exeter Academy, 1858, Harvard Law School, L.L. B., 1860; enlisted in the Civil War, Aug. 26, 1862, becoming second lieutenant, 45th Mass. Vols; later captain 56th Mass. Vols. Brevetted major, April 2, 1865; Agnostic; Democrat; moved to West Concord, N. H., Nov. 1, 1865, and engaged in the granite business, retiring in 1895; selectman for several years; representative, N. H. legislature, 1876; member, constitutional convention, 1889, 1902, 1912. Major Hollis is a great lover of nature and the outdoor life, is much interested in forestry and for many years was an enthusiastic fox-hunter. M., July 9, 1864, Harriette Van Mater French, Cambridge, Mass., dau. Judge Henry Flagg French, gr. Dau. Chief Justice William M. Richardson of N. H.; d. May 29, 1911; children, (1) Thomas, b. May 5, 1865, m., 1st Mary Letchworth Coonley of Chicago, 2d, Mary Dwight Brooks, Pearl Creek, N. Y., Children Tomas, John Coonley, Howard Coonley; (2) Anne Richardson, b. July 9, 1867, m. Dr. Arthur Hutchins Cilley of New York City, children Grace (d.), John Kelly; (3) Henry French (see page 81); (4) Allen (see page 49); (5) Harriette Van Mater, b. Sept. 21, 1874, d. April 10, 1877; (6) Mary French, b. April 27, 1880, m. Ralph E. Dakin of Concord, Mass., children, Morrill, Harriette Van Mater, Mary and Hollis. Residence, West Concord, N. H.

From 1932 NH Notables
Hollis, Abijah
Granite business; b. Milton, Mass., Nov. 13 1837; s. Thomas and Deborah Clark (Allen) Hollis; ed. Milton public schools, Milton Academy, Chauncey Hall School, Boston, Phillips Exeter Academy 1858, Harvard Law School, L. L. B., 1860; enlisted in Civil War, 1862, becoming 2nd Lieut., 45th Mass. Vols.; later capt. 56th Mass. Vols.; brevetted major, 1865; moved to West Concord, N. H., Nov. 1, 1865 and engaged in granite business, retiring in 1895; selectman several years; Representative, 1876; member constitutional convention 1889, 1902, 1912; Democrat; Agnostic; m. Harriette Van Mater French, Cambridge, Mass., July 9, 1864, d. May 29, 1911; ch. Thomas, may 5, 1865, Anne Richardson, July 9, 1867, Henry French, Aug. 30, 1869, Allen, Dec. 20, 1871, Harriette Van Mater 1874, d. Apr. 10, 1877, Mary French, Apri. 27, 1880; res. West Concord, N. H.

Letter from Abijah Hollis to Eleanor Slaker June 11, 1929 in reference to her daughter, Nancy Slaker's, wedding to Abijah's grandson, Franklin Hollis (son of Allen Hollis).
My dear Mrs. Slaker
It is time I wrote to acknowledge your kind invitation to your daughter's wedding and to express my regrets that I can't go to your home.
Doubtless some of my people have told you what a smart "Old Gramp" they have. But I can tell a different story. About fifteen years ago I was drawn in a jury and I told Allen he must see the judge and get me exempt – which he did. I asked him what he told the judge and he replied "I told him you were lame and deaf and blind and a dumb old fool anyway."
I am still blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, and my legs are wobbly and I have attacks of Monty's which land me on the floor.
But I don't complain and I suppose that's the reason my family thinks I'm smart. I want to live as long as I can and the way to do that is to be careful what I attempt to do.
I remember old Hamilton Dudley an old drunkard – when I was a boy – who used to walk the sidewalk with a jug of wine in each hand – crying out "never will I die till I draw my last breath and by God – I will!!" That's me!
With kindest regards to yourself and family.
Most respectfully yours, Abijah Hollis