

Lymon Widney Diary 34th Illinois Regiment Mitchell Brigade  
Davis Division September 1862 to October 12, 1862

## Organization of the Union and Confederate Forces

Organization of the Union and Confederate Forces

CHICKAMAUGA AND CHATTANOOGA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK COMMISSION  
BATTLES ABOUT CHATTANOOGA TENN.

November 23-25, 1863

ORCHARD KNOB, LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, MISSIONARY RIDGE

ORGANIZATION of the UNION FORCES

(Commanded by Maj. Gen. U.S. Grant)

and the

CONFEDERATE FORCES

(Commanded by General Braxton Bragg)

Fifteen hundred men of Hazen's brigade of this division manned the boats which floated down to Brown's Ferry, and made the successful landing at that point at 5 a.m. of November 27, which resulted in reopening the Tennessee River. The rest of the brigade, under Lieutenant-Colonel Bassett Langdon, First Ohio, co-operated from the right bank of the river opposite the landing point.

### FOURTEENTH ARMY CORPS

Maj. Gen. John M. Palmer

#### Escort

1st Ohio Cavalry, Company L, Capt. John D. Barker

This corps, after the reorganization which took place in early October, was composed of the divisions of Brig. Gen. R.W. Johnson (First), Brig. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis (Second), and Brig. Gen. Absalom Baird (Third). It occupied the fortifications of Chattanooga from Fort Negley to the Tennessee River below the city, its right being established upon the south points of the spurs extending southerly from Cameron Hill. The First and Third divisions took part in the battle in front of Chattanooga, the Second was sent to prepare for and cover the crossing of General Sherman's army over the Tennessee, opposite the north point of Missionary Ridge. Carlin's Brigade, of Johnson's division, ascended Lookout Mountain, toward evening of the 24th, from the mouth of Chattanooga Creek,

and reenforced the right of General Hooker's line under the palisades, near the Craven House. The First and Second brigades of this division formed the right of the four storming divisions of the Army of the Cumberland against Missionary Ridge. Baird's division supported Sheridan in the movement on the Orchard Knob line of the enemy on the afternoon of November 23, and on the morning of the 25th it was sent to the vicinity of the Tunnel to support General Sherman's attack at that point, but there being no room for it to operate it returned and formed north of Orchard Knob and on the left of General Wood's division of the Fourth Corps, and became the left of the line in the storming of Missionary Ridge. General Baird's instructions to his line before the advance began contemplated an advance to the summit, as did the instructions given in the other division of the Fourteenth Corps (Johnson's), which formed the right of the assaulting line. Both the divisions of this corps carried the rifle-pits at the base of the ridge, and without further orders from the general in command pushed on to the summit.

#### FIRST DIVISION (FOURTEENTH CORPS)

Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson

##### First Brigade

Brig. Gen. William P. Carlin

##### Second Brigade

Col. Marshall F. Moore

Col. William L. Stoughton

#### SECOND DIVISION (FOURTEENTH CORPS)

Brig. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis

##### First Brigade

Brig. Gen. James D. Morgan

10th Illinois, Col. John Tillson

16th Illinois, Lieut. Col. James B. Cahill

60th Illinois, Col. William B. Anderson

21st Kentucky, Col. Samuel W. Price

10th Michigan, Lieut. Col. Christopher J. Dickerson

14th Michigan, [see first footnote below] Col. Henry R. Misner

##### Second Brigade

Brig. Gen. John Beatty

34th Illinois, Lieut. Col. Oscar Van Tassell

78th Illinois, Lieut. Col. Carter Van Vleck

3d Ohio, [see second footnote below] Capt. Leroy S. Bell

98th Ohio, Maj. James M. Shane

108th Ohio, Lieut. Col. Carlo Piepho

113th Ohio, Maj. Lyne S. Sullivant

121st Ohio, Maj. John Yager

[first footnote: Detached at Columbia, Tenn.]

[second footnote: Detached at Kelley's Ferry, Tennessee River]

### Third Brigade

Col. Daniel McCook

85th Illinois, Col. Caleb J. Dilworth

86th Illinois, Lieut. Col. David W. Magee

110th Illinois, Lieut. Col. E. Hibbard Topping

125th Illinois, Col. Oscar F. Harmon

52d Ohio, Maj. James T. Holmes

### Artillery

Capt. William A. Hotchkiss

2d Illinois Light, Battery I, Lieut. Henry B. Plant

Minnesota Light, 2d Battery, Lieut. Richard L. Dawley

Wisconsin Light, 5th Battery, Capt. George [illegible initial] Gardner

This division was charged with the duty of making preparations for the crossing of General Sherman's army over the Tennessee opposite the north point of Missionary Ridge. It was concentrated at Caldwell's Crossing, four miles above Chattanooga. The work of bringing forward and launching the necessary boats was mainly performed by the Third Brigade (D. McCook's). About forty pieces of artillery were assembled to cover the crossing. The division crossed the river in the rear of General Sherman's army before noon of November 24. It remained under General Sherman's orders throughout the battle of the 25th, but, with the exception of one of its batteries (I, Second Illinois), was not put into action. At midnight of that day it crossed the Chickamauga on a pontoon near its mouth and started in pursuit toward Chickamauga Station.

## Diary Entries

### DIARY

Book 1- 34th Illinois Regiment - Mitchell Brigade Davis Division

LYMON WIDNEY - October 6, 1862 - March 30, 1863

The 34th Illinois Regiment, Mitchell's Brigade, Davis' Division, 14th Army Corpse [sic] by Sergeant-Major, Lyman S. Widney.

Thursday, September, 1862

At an early hour I bade good bye to my friends in the hospital at Keokuk, Iowa, and wended my way to the wharf to board the steamer for St. Louis and thence to join my comrades in active service. My outfit provided by the Quartermaster consisted of a new suit of blue, a knapsack containing change of underclothing, a blanket rolled and strapped to the top, haversack, canteen and a "Descriptive Roll" containing a record of my name age, height, color of eyes, hair and complexion, company Regiment and date of last payment. Also an order for transportation and subsistence which authorized me to travel by boat or rail, to eat and lodge at Uncle Sams [sic] Wayside Inns, his Hospitals and convalescent Camps all at his expense. In company with 11 other soldiers bound for their commands I found quarters on the Steamboat Warsaw and at 8:00 A.M. we backed out from the wharf at Keokuk and steamed down the river. The day was beautiful and I fully enjoyed my release from Hospital restrictions. Our boat was busily employed and made many landings usually to take on supplies for the Army such as mules hay corn oats etc. At 10:00 P.M. the fog stopped us for the night.

Friday 26

A gray mist enveloped us this morning until 8 o'clock when a breeze began to ruffle the water and soon caused the fog to roll away in great snowy clouds. The course being sufficiently clear our boat resumed her way. The view of the river was enchanting with its constant scene. The water being at a low stage was clear and sparkling, exposing long lines of white sandy beach sweeping around the bends and encircling numerous islands. Patches of fleecy white clouds of fog drifted helplessly about the sport of every puff of wind seeming both to leave the river's course yet dissolving surely in the sun's rays. We landed at St. Louis at 3 P.M. and our squad proceeded at once to look for quarters where Uncle Sam would foot the bill a task that consumed the afternoon. We were directed from one wrong place to another until at last tired and hungry we were admitted to the "Transportation Office" where after a rigid inspection of our "Descriptive Rolls" to see that we were not deserters, our names were recorded and we were escorted through a side door across a court and securely locked in a "Slave Pen" for such it proved to have been - The blocks where many a slave had stood to be "knocked down" to the highest bidder still ornamented or rather disfigured the court yard. The

rooms assigned to us opened into this court and while they were clean and comfortable we surveyed our surroundings with unconcealed disgust. It seemed that we should have hunted so hard for a place of imprisonment. We expressed our indignation in fitting terms to the clerk in charge who explained that this rule had become necessary for the reason that returning Soldiers applying for transportation to their commands had frequently failed to appear after arrangements for their [sic] conveyance were completed, so the officer in charge decided to lock up all applicants until the Steamboat should be ready to receive them. This explanation was not satisfactory but we had to put up with it consoling ourselves in the expectation of a very brief sojourn. We drew rations, ate supper, unrolled our blankets and laid down to dream of Auctioneers [sic], whips and fetters.

Saturday 27

The prospects of an early release from our obnoxious confinement was disappointing as the morning passed without sign or relief but the afternoon witnessed our departure for the wharf to board the St. War Eagle bound for Helena.

Sunday, Sept. 28

Our boat was not prepared to leave Saturday being busily engaged in completing her cargo. This morning was spent in taking on board two Howitzers, Gen. Curtis' mounted Escort and fourteen Paymasters with several million dollars in greenbacks for the payment of Grants [sic] Army in Mississippi. While the Church bells were ringing for morning service our boat backed out and turned her prow southward. We ran without stopping until 9 P.M. when the low water rendered further progress unsafe. There was no Sunday on Board our boat. The Paymasters and their clerks had entire possession of the cabin and devoted their whole time to gambling. Every table had its group of card players. rattling poker chips, drinking, swearing and smoking. Gen. Curtis' Cavalrymen with their Howitzers and carbines stood guard on the Hurricane roof watching for Guerrillas who might well covet such a valuable prize. Their horses occupied the boiler deck and our little squad found room as best we could on the cabin guards.

Monday 29

Resuming our course at daylight our first stop a short one was made at Cario [sic] about noon, Columbus Ky 20 miles below was our next landing place at 3 P.M. Here I learned that my Regiment was near Louisville [sic] so I left the boat with several comrades whose destination was the same as mine. The steamer continued on her way to Helena. My companions soon afterward were informed that their commands were distributed along the Tennessee River in the State of Mississippi so they boarded a train on the Mobile and Ohio R.R. for Corinth Miss. I was now left alone to find my way to Buels [sic] Army wherever it might be and applied for transportation to Louisville which was promised by the Packet leaving the next day. I found quarters at the Soldiers [sic] Home, so called, a frame building whose only furniture was a floor and a roof. After drawing rations and eating supper, I selected a corner spread my blanket and with knapsack for pillow was soon sleeping so soundly that the arrival of a large number of

new guest did not awaken me until the room was nearly filled and I was completely surrounded with fellow lodgers who came limping or carried on stretchers, to drop or be dropped promiscuously about the floor for a night of rest or suffering. "What is this matter" I asked of my nearest neighbor. "Well we had trouble with old Price down at luka. He wanted to come into town and we got hurt trying to keep him out, but we kept him out, you bet, and we hurt his crowd a good deal worse than he hurt us." My fellow lodgers were the wounded of the Battle of luka who were loaded at once on the cars and shipped to Columbias [sic] to await transportation by Steamer to Northern Hospitals. Their wounds had been dressed and bandaged by the Surgeons but many of the poor fellows were suffering with pain and required all the attention that we, who were able, could give them during the night.

Tuesday 30

My quarters were not so attractive as to induce me to prolong my stay in Columbus so I tried all day to get information as to when a boat should arrive by which I might get transportation to Louisville. Only boats in the service of the Government found any trade below Cario [sic] as the Guerrillas who infested the river banks rendered it unsafe for boats that did not carry an armed guard - The Army distributed at important points as far down as Helena required for food and forage which had to be supplied by boats in the employ of the Government. One of these, returning from Helena, I looked for in vain.

Wednesday October 1, 1862

I was advised this morning to report to Maj. Raymond commanding a detachment of Regulars stationed at Fort Halleck on the highest point of the bluff overlooking the town and river. Scaling the heights, I found the Garrison well protected by heavy fortifications that had been constructed by the Confederates to prevent our gunboats from passing down the Mississippi - The fall of Fort Donelson on the Tennessee and the consequent free progress of our fleet on this river as far as the depth of water would permit its navigation, made the strongholds of Columbus and Island no. 10 untenable and compelled Gen. A.S. Johnstone [sic] to withdraw all his forces to Corinth Miss. The defenses of Fort Halleck were complete. Heavy cannon with muzzles directed toward the river below threatened destruction to hostile river craft. While standing there I saw an illustration of their capacity to command the navigation of the river - Orders were in force that no craft should pass Columbus without landing to report their business and the gunners of Fort Halleck had orders to enforce this regulation. I watched a Steamboat coming down the middle of the river at full speed. Opposite the fort she gave no indication by whistle or by stopping her engines that she intended to land. I saw the gunners prepared to do their duty. A blank cartridge was fired to which the boat paid no attention - Now it looked serious - A solid shot was quickly rammed into the gun and a moment later I could see a cloud of spray where it struck the water just in front of the boat. This admonition was sufficient. If the Falls of Niagara had been 40 feet ahead the pilot could not have "tramped" his wheel to the Larboard with more desperation than he did to turn towards shore. I reported to Major Raymond, the commandant, who treated me very kindly and after enquiring [sic] all about my military experience he sent his

orderly to show me the quarters of the Convalescent Battallion [sic] where I found a number of recruits and returning soldiers like myself awaiting transportation to Buels [sic] Army. They were provided with tents and rations so I joined one of the messes and did my share of the cooking - our tent like the others furnished shelter for six which number also composed our mess.

Thursday 2

The steamer City of Atlon came to the landing this afternoon and our hope of securing passage were realized. Major Raymond came to inform us of the fact and at 3 P.M. our little battalion marched down the steep roadway to the river where we boarded the steamer and at dusk we bade good bye to the frowning bluff of Columbus and proceeded on our way to Cario [sic] where we arrived three hours later and disembarked to wait for the train. The cotton bales on the levee were to be our beds so we sat there until sleep overcame us watching the silvery beams of brilliant moonlight sparkling upon the water which was darkened here and there by the black hulks of a fleet of Gunboats anchored in the stream, grim and silent except when their bells tapped the hours.

Friday 3

Of course we had to rise with the sun to escape the glare of his beams. About the same time a Levee Clerk with traces of a nights [sic] dissipation [sic] and the smell of bad whiskey made his appearance and talked himself into a fury because we had tilted over some of the bales on their side to answer for our beds. Some of our own party wanted to "put a head on him" but we bottled our resentment from fear of Cario [sic] jails, and Officials [sic] renoune [sic] for dirt, depravity and disloyalty.

Friday 3 We remained on the levee waiting for the cars until 10 A.M. when we boarded a train on the Illinois Central enroute to Louisville via Sandoval the river being to [sic] low for steamboats. Reaching Sandoval at 7 P.M. we left the cars and waited for two hours for the train from St. Louis when we proceeded towards Louisville the rain falling heavily. It was cheering to us to notice the interest of the people along our route in our little battalion bound as they knew for the seat of war and play havoc on Northern soil in retaliation [sic] for the ruin inflicted by our Army on Southern Soil. During our trip on the cars when we ran 120 miles from Cario [sic] directly towards my home I was tempted to continue a hundred miles further in the same direction which would have taken me home. Several of our party yielded to the temptation to go home and we missed them when we left Sandoval in a direction away from home and towards the past [sic] of danger.

Saturday 4

Shortly after daylight our train crossed the Wabash river and stopped at Vincennes. The river here divides Illinois from Indiana and Vincennes on the East bank appeared to me the most beautiful town I had ever seen. We stopped two hours then proceeded to Mitchell where we changed cars at noon - then to New Albany where we arrived at 8 P.M. and found quarters for the night by spreading our blankets on the Depot floor.

Sunday 5

We spent the most of the day at the Depot, the stores being closed and business suspended there was little inducement for us to stroll around - An engineer kindly supplied three of us with a basket of provisions. At 2 P.M. crossed the river to Portland where quarters were provided for us in a Convalescent Camp where other soldiers were awaiting transportation to their Regiments.

Monday Oct. 6

At 10 O'clock [sic] this morning all those belonging to Buels [sic] Army were mustered together and started for Louisville under charge of a Sergeant. A march of 3 miles brought us to the Headquarters where our squad was increased in numbers to a Battalion of 120 men and put under charge of two Lieutenants. Rations of fresh beef and bread were issued to us and we marched out on the Bardstown Pike in pursuit of our Army which was also in pursuit of the Confederate Army. When we reached the outskirts of the city we met small squads of paroled confederates [sic] hurrying into town, many of them no doubt anxious to meet friends and relatives. We halted six miles from the city for the night.

Tuesday, October 7

Started again at sunrise and after traveling through the heat and dust until noon when we were brought to a halt by our officer from Bardstown who told us there was no need of our going further as there were no provisions to be had on the way and nothing at Bardstown which was 20 miles distant. Our rations were about exhausted so we held a council to determine whether to proceed. We decided to continue and marched 4 miles to Salt Creek and there encamped. Our march for the day was 18 miles.

Wednesday, October 8

We started early and hurried on towards Bardstown as fast as scant rations and lack of drinking water would permit as the two great armies just ahead of us had drained all the wells. The heat and dust were also oppressive. We reached Bardstown at 4:00 p.m. after an exhausting march of 16 miles and found the town almost deserted as both armies had swept through it within a week. With great difficulty we secured a few crackers but not enough to satisfy our hunger. We passed through and halted at the river. All afternoon as we toiled through heat and dust towards Bardstown we had heard the dull echo of cannons in the distance. As we progressed the reports became more frequent and distinct until at last we imagined we could hear the rattling of musketry. When we reached the river beyond Bardstown at nightfall, the firing ceased but we felt sure that a battle had been fought. We were too tired and hungry to discuss the probable results of the battle after we found a suitable place to encamp on the river bank and soon dropped off to sleep, snugly rolled in our blankets, our last thoughts being the hope and prayer that victory was on our side.

Our conjecture proved true, a battle had been fought. The two armies after manauvering [sic] and marching a thousand miles and threatening each other for three months had at last met in conflict and the result was the battle of Perryville. It was not premediated by



Buel [sic] or Bragg. The latter was trying to get away from Buel [sic] into East Tennessee where the country would afford a better defense and where Buel [sic] would have a long "cracker line," to provide for. But Buel [sic] crowded so close upon Bragg's [sic] heels that the latter deemed it necessary to call upon Buels [sic] advanced troops and check or drive them back. Bragg accordingly massed a heavy force in front of McCooks [sic] Corps to which my regiment belonged. My regiment, however, was absent from the Corps together with our whole Division.

General Sills which had been detached at Louisville to intercept the Confederate General Kirby Smith's [sic] march upon Cincinnati - our division had been ordered to rejoin its Corps when Kirby Smith had retired, and was now near at hand. Buel [sic] was waiting for our division in order to make a general attack upon Bragg who appeared to be waiting the attack. Bragg did not know that he was hemmed in so closely by Buels [sic] main army or he would not have risked an engagement. Buel [sic] did not think that Bragg would have the temerity to attack and, in fact, neither Commander ordered an attack. It was brought about uninvitingly by General McCook our Corps Commander who finding one of his Brigades suffering for water ordered an advance to a small stream only a short distance in front of his line. This movement brought the brigade on contact with a strong force of Confederate and presently both sides became furiously engaged. Bragg hurried reinforcements to his front thinking that he could overpower what he believed to be only one of Buels [sic] advance Divisions - McCooks [sic] two Divisions were soon drawn into the fight and next Phil Sheridan's [sic] Division of Gilberts [sic] Corps which joined McCooks [sic] right. These three Divisions fought desperately all afternoon while five other Divisions of our army stood idly in line almost within gun shot listening [sic] to the roar of artillery and the cracking of musketry waiting for orders that never came to help their comrades in distress. Gilberts [sic] Corps of three divisions except Sheridan in the center and Crittenden's [sic] Corps of three divisions on the right took no part in the battle which was fought by McCook and Sheridan with three Divisions whose loss amounted to 1000 killed and 3000 wounded.

It is almost incredible yet nevertheless true that Buel [sic] did not know that a battle was in progress on the left of his line until late in the evening, although his Headquarters were only 3 ½ miles in rear of Gilberts [sic] Corps in the center. Our little Detachment, a days [sic] march distant from the scene, had a clearer appreciation of this fact than Buel [sic] who insisted that the firing only proceeded from a skirmish and therefore allowed McCook and Sheridan to struggle unsupported through one of the great battles of the war. When Buel [sic] at last came to know the true state of affairs, he aroused [sic] himself with his old time energy and ordered an immediate and general advance of his whole line, but nightfall ended the contest before his movement could produce any results. The Confederates were glad to withdraw under the friendly shades of darkness for their loss was very heavy and Bragg did not dare to risk another engagement.

Buel [sic] did not lose the battle; he held the field and the enemy's dead at its close, but he lost, in addition to 4,000 of his bravest men - the confidence of his army. He was

justly held responsible by his soldiers for the failure to support the fragment of his army that did all the fighting. Nothing weakens the soldier in battle more than the suspicion that his commander is neglecting him. The feeling of distrust resulting from Buels [sic] neglect in the case was not confined to the men who fought to hold their line all through this bloody afternoon nor to those who suffered from mortal or painful wounds but it was shared equally by the rank and file of the five divisions who stood obediently in line anxious and able to decide the day but waiting for the orders that came only when the shades of night had stopped the carnage.

Buel [sic] at last aroused to action spent the night in preparations for a combined attack on the morrow, but while he was there preparing to fight, Bragg with his exhausted army was preparing to fly.

Thursday, October 9

The morning light disclosed the confederate [sic] columns marching rapidly away from the scene leaving their dead unburied on the field and their wounded crowding the houses of Perryville. Nothing decisive resulted from their mutual slaughter of thousands of brave men and both claimed the victory. Buel [sic] because he held the field, and Bragg because he checked his pursuers who greatly outnumbered him and thereby gained time for a safe retreat.

Our little detachment, encamped as we were for the night near Bardstown 30 miles from the battlefield, knew nothing of the details of the battle when we awoke this morning with a long march before us and nothing in sight for breakfast. We sent two men back to Bardstown for supplies and they returned with a few crackers in time for dinner. We let breakfast go by default. We resumed our march at noon and presently met two country wagons going to mill, "Prairie Schooners" we called them, each drawn by four mules in charge of a white man and a negro. We pressed them into our service without much persuasion, loaded the wagon with knapsacks and those of our comrades least able to walk, and bade the drivers turn the mules towards Perryville. We now moved along at a cheerful rate. Our white teamsters appeared to enjoy the trip and laughed to think how his folks at home would be surprised to learn that he had started to mill and had gone traveling with the army. The negro was in a jolly humor. This was a picnic. In all his life as a slave nothing so exciting had ever happened. No one had even presumed to give him any orders contrary to those of his master. Here he was with a lot of strange new masters from a far county who could order his old master around.

We made good time with our teams and stopped for the night near the little village of Fredericktown where a small stream supplied us with water which was about all we had, as rations were exhausted. We managed however, to get enough from the citizens to keep from starving. While encamped around our brightly burning fires we were told by some Union people that their secession neighbors were talking about a party of Guerrillas [sic] who had arranged to pounce upon our camp after we had gone to sleep. As our detachment had only six guns, we felt rather helpless so we held a council of war and decided to ambush those who would ambush us. Accordingly, we left our fires

burning and concealed ourselves in the bushes near by, hoping that our enemies if they came might stumble unexpectedly upon us in the darkness and be put to flight. We kept our six guns on picket duty all night but we were not disturbed.

Friday, October 10

We started at sunrise with our team, anxious to get under the protecting wing of the main army as we did not know what moment we might encounter Guerillas [sic] or the enemy's cavalry. Five miles from camp we were overtaken by the owner of the negro, accompanied by the sheriff, to make legal demand for possession of his property which included the negro as well as the team. We did not at first comply for although he had the sheriff on his side we had six guns on our side and besides we felt entirely irresponsible for we knew that our detachment would lose its organization as soon as we should be overtaken [sic] by the Army, and each individual would seek his own company and Regiment.

We did not stop to argue with the master and Sheriff but continued on our way while the two rode their horses close after the coveted wagon, and begged more earnestly as we progressed. At last we yielded to persuasion as the owner claimed to be a good union man, and after taking out our baggage, we bade the negro turn his team towards home, which in fact he was glad to do as our talk of Guerrillas had thoroughly demoralized him and then his master, he had told us, always treated him well. Our white driver continued on with his team the balance of the day but he grew very tired of his job when rain began to fall at noon and continued all afternoon. We extended our march until dark in order to reach the little village of Pottsville for shelter. We there dismissed our teamster with his team and heard no more about him. We quartered ourselves in vacant buildings wherever we found them. Several of us found refuge in a kitchen where we disputed possessions in the darkness with a stove and other kitchen furniture. I found room under the table to roll myself in my blanket and only remained awake long enough to thank Heaven for the dry floor and a tight roof that protected me from rain and mud outside.

Saturday, October 11

Was awakened this morning by the rattling of the kitchen stove as the colored servant began to prepare breakfast for her master's family. The presence of uninvited lodgers and the possibility of uninvited guests for breakfast did not seem to concern her as she stepped over the prostrate forms that blocked her way at every turn. We did not stay for breakfast well knowing that the scant supplies left for families by the two armies ahead of us would not permit of hospitality. We also learned that our army was only eight miles distant and fearing it might move on and give us another long chase, we hurried off without ceremony. We did not even give our host a vote of thanks for our lodging. We made quick time to Perryville and reported to Gen. Buel [sic] whom we saw pacing back and forth [sic] before his headquarters [sic] tent. Our detachment halted at a respectful distance while the Lieutenant, who was supposed to command us, rode up to the General and saluted. Buel [sic] continued his walk and the Lieutenant addressed

him, but still without eliciting any sign of recognition. After several futile attempts to attract the notice of his supervisor, our Lieutenant appeared to resign himself to the embarrassment [sic] of the situation and sat on his horse speechless watching the General passing and re-passing directly in front of him, apparently oblivious to his presence. The Lieutenant turned his face towards us with a mute appeal for help or suggestion neither of which we could furnish as we were equally mystified. At last General Buel [sic] stopped abruptly. "Young man" said he, you might as well learn military etiquette now as later. Get down from your horse, sir, when you address a superior officer." A quiet "snicker" ran through our ranks when we saw our Lieutenant fairly tumble from his horse in his haste to get down to his proper footing. Upon reviewing our report, Gen. Buel [sic] directed us to join our several commands which we proceeded to do without further ceremony, each one in search of his own regiment. My course bid me over the battlefield of Wednesday where broken fences, trampled fields, shattered trees, and the unburied Confederates dead portrayed the bloody horrors of war. A stone fence marked the locality of the hardest struggle. It was defended by our troops and repeatedly charged by the Confederates who left the field strewn with their dead.

As I walked among the bodies I could see just how they met their death - some with faces set toward the deadly stone fences as they advanced, others with back to the foe as they retreated from the unsuccessful charge. Many a brave fellow had rushed close enough to the fence to look into the muzzle of the guns leveled on its top and there left his body as the silent witness of his gallantry. What poor reward for heroism. Abandoned by comrades, neglected by foes, their bodies exposed for days to pitiless rains, at last to be dragged like carcasses [sic] of beasts into long trenches that would be mockery to call graves; there to smoulder [sic] into dust unrecognized and unknown. Sick at heart, with such scenes, I continued the search for my regiment through the camps where Buel's [sic] army was bivouaced [sic] and preparing for march. The organization of Brigades and Division had been changed during my absence so that my inquiries were restricted to the whereabouts of my particular Regiment. I did not know that it had been assigned to Gen. Sills [sic] Division and dispatched from Louisville to Frankfort to interrupt Kirby Smith's advance towards Cincinnati, and that the Division had not yet rejoined the main army but was within a few hours march and Buel [sic] only awaited its arrival to continue the pursuit of Bragg. When the troops began to move, I stationed myself on the Danville Pike three miles from Perryville and watched the steady stream of Regiment Brigade and Division marching by until night hid them from my view, but still I could hear the trampling of feet and the jingling of coffee pots, tin cups and skillets carried by the soldiers.

Sunday, October 12

Worn out with fruitless watching and inquiry for my regiment, I was glad to find a straw shed a short distance from the pike where I could roll myself in my blanket for "forty winks of sleep" without danger of being trampled on by the passing troops.

At the break of day I was up and continued my inquiry. Regiment after regiment passed but not one that I was familiar with. At last I recognized one familiar face that of General Phil Sheridan, riding with his staff at the head of the Division. I knew that he could tell me where to find my regiment so I saluted and said, "General, can you tell me where to find the 34th Illinois?" "Yes, my boy, he replied, stay where you are. Your Regiment will pass in a little while." I did not wait long until the 34th came in sight when I placed myself under its protecting wings with all the eagerness of a helpless chicken that has long been separated from its mother hen. Three weeks of precarious subsistence made the ranks of the Regiment appear to me a veritable home. True, my comrades did not have a roof or a bed to offer me, but they gave me a part of the road to walk in, a place at the campfire, my share of rations, the privilege of cooking, and a spot of ground to sleep on. As I marched in the ranks with a light step, and a light havesack [sic], clothing [sic] with my old mess mates, who has interesting experiences to relate, I had to laugh at their ridiculous appearance [end of entry]