

Unsigned Diary of 72nd Indiana

Partial Entry

[missing text] along it was out of the question. It was a dangerous feat for a man to venture upon his feet or he would find himself going to the farthest corner of the car in a hurry and maybe making an unpleasant impression on the floor with his nose only to be laughed at by the rest. The night was very cold indeed. I am now 188 miles from home, closer perhaps that [sic] I will be soon again, if ever, so I believe I can say "God's will be done".

Tuesday, January 6, 1863

After a sleepless night we arrived at Nashville this morning at 7 A.M. From what I have seen of the city I do not like it as well as Louisville. It has too aristocratic a look to suit me. Like most of the southern towns I have seen here it bears the ruthless hand of war. It extends up and down the Cumberland for a considerable distance. There are some very imposing structures to be seen; the state house is a fine building, though now used as a hospital, no fence around it and the cattle and hogs close around the door at all times. I visited a couple of our hospitals this evening and saw near 1,500 wounded from Rosecrans [sic] recent battle. They all seem in good spirits. I had quite a long take [sic] with one fellow from near Harrisburg, Pa., who had just lost an arm by amputation, and who had a minnie [sic] ball yet in his left side and it was the opinion of the surgeon that to remove it would kill him. He was 16 years of age and I surprised to find, a christian [sic]. He said that his relations were all opposed to his going into the army and would not consent. So he started, as they thought, to his uncle's, but in reality to Philadelphia where he enlisted, and had now been in the army 16 months and had never written a line or heard a word from home, and now says, "I will never write for I won't let them think I shall be a burden to them, or hear them say 'there, I knew he would come to some bad end, and now when he wants us to help him he can write' ". "No said he, while the tears chased each other down his cheeks, "I will suffer and die alone for it would kill my poor old mother to know what a situation I am in".

Wednesday, January 7, 1863

We started for Murfreesboro at 7 A.M. as guard for some 120 government wagons loaded with supplies for Rosecrans [sic] army. Morgan is said to be between here and Murfreesboro. 10 A.M. - We are now 8 miles from town near the Insane Asylum where the skirmishing first began between our army and the Rebels. Dead horses, burnt wagons, graves etc. are plenty along the road. 4 P.M. - We are now in camp four miles from Murfreesboro upon the left of the pike. We have passed over a portion of the

recent battleground this afternoon. Dead horses, mules, broken wagons, artillery, camp equipages etc. etc. strew the ground in every direction. At Lavergne the destruction is complete, as but one house is left standing. This is said to be the place where Gen. R. E. McCook was taken out of an ambulance (being sick) and cruelly murdered in cold blood by the Guerillas. - Hence the destruction as the perpetrators were supposed to have lived here.

Thursday, January 8, 1863

We resumed our march this morning at 7 A.M. and soon came to the main battle-field, the greatest of the war thus far in point of numbers and final results. 8:30 P.M. - We have just passed a squad of some 200 Rebel prisoners on their way to Nashville under guard. 9 P.M. - I have just crossed over the river on a 12 inch sill lying on top of benches, which is all that remains of the bridge, the Rebels having burnt it. It is now being rebuilt as fast as possible, a force of near 200 being engaged upon it. 1 P.M. - We have just returned to camp 1/4 of a mile east of town in a woods pasture. It is said the smallpox is raging in town to a frightful extent among the sick and wounded Rebel prisoners, of which the town is full. 6 P.M. - It is now hailing considerably and is quite cold.

Friday, January 9, 1863

We have remained quiet in camp today. Four companies of our regiment have gone on picket this morning. We have received no mail as yet. The number of our Division and Brigade has been changed, we are now in the 5th Division and the 1st Brigade, and our position is in the center of the entire army. I have been looking over the battlefield this morning. There are many bodies yet unburied. I took a pocket Diary out of one poor fellow's breast pocket, (who had received his mortal wound in the left breast and the book was wet with his blood) which was lying in a pool beneath him. He belonged to the 21st Ind., Company G.

Saturday, January 10, 1863

A detail of some forty men were sent out after forage this morning. We went near six miles to the plantation of a tory, (as I call those who call themselves Union and yet favor the Rebels) where we filled 61 wagons with grain and returned to camp in the evening. I was agreeably surprised to get four letters, three from Indiana and one from my Friend Geo. H. telling of the death of the boy with whom I talked in Nashville. He died before his friends came to see him (George says he wrote for them the evening I left) poor fellow. I believe he is with his God and is past all sin and suffering in this world. Bro. W

speaks of sending a box to me, of associations and in hourly danger as it were. May I continue worthy of such love, is my heartfelt prayer.

Sunday, January 11, 1863

All has been quiet in camp today. We had inspection of arms and accoutrements at 9 A.M. Other than this, we had no duty to perform. It is quite cold consequently we had no preaching. I have spent the afternoon in writing and reading in the New Testament and I trust it has done me good. Three men died in the 75th Ind. today, one in Company G of our regiment. Poor fellows, disease strikes down more than the missiles of the enemy.

Monday, January 12, 1863

We have had quite a nice day today. Had a long battalion drill today (Major Carr superintending). I wrote a letter home this evening. I have just returned from town, where I went to ascertain something in regard to my box, but could hear nothing of it. The town is improving rapidly, buildings are going up on all sides. The Rebel wounded and sick are being sent to Nashville as fast as they are able to travel.

Tuesday, January 13, 1863

Another beautiful day. I have been washing my clothes and making a pot of lye hominy this afternoon and my fingers feel like they were raw. 8 P.M. - We had a long battalion drill this afternoon. It has been warm and pleasant all day. I received another letter from home this evening, all were well.

Wednesday, January 14, 1863

Another month has rolled around since I entered the United States service, and I can truly say, that I do not regret it. Were I now at home and my Country calling for my aid as she is I would leave all home ties and consecrate my poor life upon her altar. How humiliating it seems when we remember how many young and able bodied men there are at home now, when our Country so loudly calls for aid, yet they sit with folded hands and apparently unconcerned as to what becomes of our glorious institutions. Would that I could inspire all with the feelings I possess upon this subject. We received orders this morning to go to the river and work upon a fort now in course of construction to guard the two bridges. It is nearly square in form, covering an area of near one acre of ground. It is situated upon a high Bluff overlooking Stone [sic] River. The enemy seems to have retired to near Wartrace and Shelbyville but their scouts and ours are continually skirmishing, with no important results however. [end of diary]

