



CIVIL WAR REPORTS



VOL. 1 NO. 6

JANUARY-DECEMBER 1862

Camp near Waynesville, Mo.

January the 21st, 1862
Dear Companion,

I will again improve (word obscured by crease in paper) this morning by writing you a few lines. I received a letter from you on Friday last which stated that you were all in good health and all doing as well as could be expected. I am very glad to know that you are well and I hope that you may continue to enjoy good health the greatest of earthly blessings. My health at the present time is very poor and has been for several days through. I'm still able to be around. I have a very large cold and it has run into something like the Guanderes. I hope however that it will not be very serious and I think that I will be well in a few days.



J.M. Kirkpatrick is well at this time with the exception of a bad cold and the boys all have that. Thomas Sackey is still at Rolla where we left him at last accounts he was getting better. The health of our company at the present time is very bad so bad that I do not think we have over 40 men fit for duty at the present time.

The fact is if we are kept out here scouting and moving every week the balance of the winter like we have been for the last three weeks Price will have an easy job in the spring to whip us or take us all prisoners.

The weather has been soft wet and muddy with few exceptions ever since we left Rolla and we have been moving and scouting all the time. Often making our beds on the ground without even a tent over us and the ground wet and cold under us living on hard bread and bacon, often

travelling half the night and then hunting up feed for our horses and in all this time we have never yet had the pleasure of meeting secessionists enough to make a decent fight. It is enough to make the devil, sick but such is the fate of the soldier.

Our battalion of four companies under Major McConnel went out on a scout on last Sunday morning and returned last night. We found no enemy to fight, but we found plenty of mud. It was the worst riding that I have seen since we have been out on this campaign and our horses are very bad today, but I expect they will look worse before the first of May. It is my opinion we will go to Springfield before we return to Rolla. We have been reinforced by three regiments of infantry and 12 pieces of artillery which makes our force about 4000 men here at his camp.

Price is understood to have from the best information we can get about 10,000 men at Springfield which will give him 2½ (two and one half) men to our one, but I do not expect we will ever get a fight on any better terms with Price and we had better fight him even at these odds than to have to watch him always.

While I am writing the first Missouri regiment are breaking up their camp and moving on west and I have no doubt but what we shall get orders to move on tomorrow. Whether we go on to Springfield or merely move on to another camp. I cannot say, but I will write to you in my next if anything of importance transpires. There is one thing certain we are eating up every thing in this part of Missouri and I do not see what the people will live on here another season. It is a pity for the women and children, but as far as the men are concerned it is not much difference for they are no account nohow. I

suppose you have not sold the pork yet and the price of pork is no better yet. This is bad and I fear the pork will not bring you much money, but you will have to do the best you can under the circumstances. Probably you will.

S.L. Marrett

(The soldier who wrote this letter was with the Third Illinois Cavalry Regiment, which moved to Rolla Nov. 13-19, 1861. The regiment remained in that area through January 1862. The original letter is housed in the Manuscript Department, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University. Some light punctuation has been added for easier reading. Otherwise, the contents of the letter remain the same as the original with no attempt at grammatical correction).



Letter from the 30th Regiment
Lebanon, Laclede Co., Mo.
Jan. 26, 1862

Dear Beacon:

Surmising that you have advices from our many friends in the 86th up to the time of our arrival at Waynesville, I will endeavor to give you an idea of the progress of events since that time.

Waynesville is the county seat of Pulaski County; contains a brick courthouse, and perhaps a score of painted houses, including one or two merchantile establishments where the "country folks" of this rough region repair once or twice a year, to lay in supplies of the well-known staples, tar, salt, and whiskey. The luxuries they produce at



home, or find them at the "mill," where all the men folks in these parts seem to have gone, according to the tell of the women and children. Some of us are so uncharitable however, as to conjecture that they are at Springfield preparing for the "mill" we hope to treat them to before they return home.

The post at Waynesville and troops in that vicinity, were under command of Col. Carr, of the 3rd Illinois Cavalry.

We struck tents at (print hard to read) o'clock on Wednesday morning the 22nd. We marched ten miles, within four miles of the crossing of the Gasconade River, nearly parallel to which river we had been marching since the first day's travel. The 3rd cavalry marched with us. Capt. Jenks being temporarily attached to that regiment, has been with the expedition since that time. We camped on high ground, near water, and were up and away at six o'clock.

We reached the Gasconade in an hour and a half, and halted a couple of hours for the completion of a foot-bridge, when we crossed over dry shod, and were again on the way. During the forenoon the marching was fine, but

before we came into camp we had to plod through two miles of about as stiff, persistent, ankle-deep mud as could be manufactured by the tramp of four or five thousand men and horses. We pitched tents at 12M., within eight miles of Lebanon, at which place we arrived about 1 p.m. the next day, (Friday, the 24th).



The country from Waynesville to this point is a repetition of that from Rolla to Waynesville, — scrub oaks, up hill, limestone rocks; scrub oaks, down hill, creeks, deserted cabins, continually repeated, would give a very fair idea of what might be casually observed on the route.

In some places, however, the scenery is fine, but

seldom interspersed with the beauty given to it by the enterprise of a thriving community of men. We are now, however, comparatively "out of the wilderness." — Being camped on the edge of a prairie, which extends away to the north and west, into the most fertile part of Missouri. That portion is quite well cultivated. While that part of the country south, of the Missouri river, east of the Gasconade, and north of Ironton and Cape Girardeau starves out and banishes the agricultural adventurer, there are but very few tracks of equal extent producing in so various and rich profusion the useful metals. With the rough, ragged, repulsive hills are stored inexhaustible supplies of iron and lead and numerous deposits of copper, nickel and cobalt.

(The preceeding account, printed in an Aurora, Ill., newspaper on Thursday, Feb. 6, 1862, was made available by John F. Bradbury, Jr., Manuscript Specialist, and the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Rolla).



CIVIL WAR REPORTS



VOL. 1 NO. 6

JANUARY-DECEMBER 1862

Article in the
"Iowa City
Republican"

Nov. 19, 1862

Camp near Rolla, Mo.

Nov. 12, 1862

Editors: Republican:

Another week has gone, and I take my pen in hand to chronicle a few items and facts occurring in the camp of the 22nd Regiment, the paternity of which is claimed by "old Johnson." A week of sorrow and joy to many, a week of weal and woe to our country, and a week of monotony to the 22nd. This regiment is enduring a chrysalis state, one of masterly inactivity, from which it is hoped it will emerge into a state of activity and usefulness. Two months have elapsed since entering the U.S. service, and the regiment has learned but the daily routine of camp life. This state of affairs is not in accordance with the feelings or wishes of the men composing the command, who are eagerly clamorous for the field, to meet the secesh in his lair, and aid effectually in crushing this rebellion. Let their present work be preserved for the "Grey Beards" and Home Guards.

There being but a small cavalry force stationed here, companies are occasionally detached from the 22nd, for the purpose of escorting trains to the Southwest. On last Monday week, Co. A was assigned to that duty, and being a little anxious to see the old route once more, I accompanied them. The previous was spent in cooking rations and making other preparations for the journey. The "regulars" were up bright and early, and eager for the trip, some, indeed, having been up all night, for fear they would lose the opportunity. A few convalescents were taken along to improve their condition. Early in the morning found us wending our way to camp Sigel, a few miles from town, where we were to meet the train. It was composed of sixty wagons loaded with commissary stores for the "army of the Frontier."

Each wagon was drawn by six mules, and each load 4,000 pounds. An advance of 10 men, and a rear guard of 20 men were formed, the balance of the company being scattered along the line. Noon found us en route for Waynesville. The roads were dusty and the weather warm. The road runs for several miles on the track



of the railroad, which is nearly graded to Lebanon, and its complete construction is worthy the attention of the government. 5 o'clock found the train at the "Little Piney," where we encamped for the night. The teams were cared, and the guards posted for the night, and tents erected for protection from the cold. The "Piney" is a small stream which empties into the Gasconade a short distance from here. At this point the retreating army of Gen. Sigel, in August, 1861, struck the main road on their retreat to Rolla. The country in the vicinity is wild and rugged and scarcely inhabited.

Morning found the train in commotion preparatory to leaving. Around our camp fires, might be seen the remains of a few young porkers, who had come to an untimely end, and feathers lay around loose, a few turkey heads having dropped near the fire also, while there owners were asleep. No one could account for their presence. Mysterious, very! A march of eight miles brought us to the "Big Piney," a fine stream of clear water, also a branch of the Gasconade. Here is a ferry for footmen, and a good fort. The hills adjacent are steep and rocky. Across the "Piney" the road takes up a high bluff, and enters a dense forest, and the route is on

an elevated ridge for the whole remaining distance.

At 4 p.m., on Tuesday we reached Waynesville, and pitched our tents for the night. We were here relieved by a cavalry escort. The town is situated in a deep mountain gorge, with high rocky bluffs on either side.

It has been taken possession of by the army. I wandered through the town, and could find no private residence. The former inhabitants were secesh, and have skedaddled. The houses were occupied by the quartermaster, sutler, hospital, and commissary store rooms. The place is defended by eight companies of the 13th Mo. cavalry under Col. Sigel. They have a small fort or bastion erected here on a high hill overlooking the town. There is no cannon mounted, it is used for infantry protection, and was built by the labor of Secesh prisoners, a few of whom were still at work under guard in digging a trench outside the fort. They were a hard looking crowd—a man would feel for his money at the first sight of them.

Col. Sigel, commandant of the post, is a tall athletic man, dark complexioned, stern in manner through very agreeable and accommodating in his intercourse with the men. He makes a fine appearance, and he is said to be a good officer. In personal appearance he differs widely from his brother, the gallant General.

Northwest of town there is a high bluff, 800 feet high, of solid rock, nearly perpendicular. In company with Lieut. Hughes, Corporal Trimble and private H.D. Carson. I went to visit curiosities in that vicinity. After arriving at the foot of the bluff, after crossing the Rudubee (SIC), a small stream flowing near the base, we scrambled with difficulty about half distance to the top, and here the solid rock commenced. By the rough unhewn steps we ascended still higher, and found ourselves at the entrance of several spacious caves.

These were entered, and we saw the wonderful exhibitions of nature therein. One we followed some distance into the rock, and the aperture grew smaller and smaller, and then we went on our hands and knees, and finally crawled about 60 yards into the dark enclosure, guided by the light of a lantern, and here we entered a fine grotto, about the size of a small tent. It was the terminus of the cave, and here the sight was magnificent. The light reflected back, and gave to view the stalactites, crystals and geological curiosities that laid abundantly around. The surface was encircled with a cornice resembling icicles from a dwelling. The dazzling light gave a peculiar lustre to their

ashy appearance. With the aid of a few stones, we secured many rich specimens, which I hope will someday find their way on to the shelves of the Iowa State Historical Society. This scene amply repaid us for all our toil and labor. After engraving our names on the solid rock, we left the haunts never tread by human foot before, impressed with the idea that the country had some redeeming feature about it, the sublime in nature.

We remained two days waiting for a return train, and on Friday we struck our tents and made our way for Rolla, where we arrived on Saturday noon, without anything unusual occurring, except those mysterious appearances each morning. Perfectly unaccountable. We were

six days on the trip, and arrived home in good spirits, with none on the sick list. The scenes and incidents of our journey are familiar to all the companies, especially those morning apparitions. Co. I is now absent performing said duty.

(The Iowa 22nd Infantry moved to Rolla Sept. 22-23, 1862, where it had garrison duty until Jan. 27, 1863. The transcript appears here courtesy of John F. Bradbury, Jr., Manuscript Specialist, and the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Rolla).



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