



Waynesville Civil War Diaries

by John F. Bradbury, Jr.

Introduction

The diary of Sergeant Benjamin F. McIntyre of the 19th Iowa Infantry is one of the best accounts by a Union soldier of the Civil War in the Ozarks. McIntyre served with the 19th Iowa Infantry, which was part of the Army of the Frontier from September 1862 to June 1863. The period included the battle of Prairie Grove, near Fayetteville, Arkansas, in which McIntyre and the 19th Iowa came under enemy fire for the first time. The regiment ultimately made a circuit to the northern Ozarks. Stops on the itinerary included Rolla, Waynesville, Lebanon, Springfield, Cassville, Forsyth and Salem, Missouri, and Fayetteville, Huntsville, and Van Buren, Arkansas. McIntyre's articulate and detailed daily observations of the campaign were published by the University of Texas Press under the title *Federals On the Frontier*, edited by Nannie M. Tilley (Austin: 1963). The work is quite entertaining and useful and is often quoted by scholars and local historians.

Less well known, however,

are two other diaries by different soldiers in the same regiment which are remarkably similar to that of Sergeant McIntyre. They are the journal of Corporal Timothy Phillips, and another by an unidentified soldier. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin holds a copy of the Phillips diary, which has never been published. The unidentified diary has been published as "The Diary of An Unknown Soldier," edited by Elsa Vaughn, *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* (Spring 1959). Its author has never been identified but may have been Corporal Charles H. Judd. The diary itself was picked up on the Prairie Grove battlefield shortly after the battle.

The three different diaries are very similar in content and language. The diaries of Sergeant McIntyre and Corporal Phillips bear the most striking verbatim duplications, but the unidentified diary also features many similarities. The following excerpts from the three diaries include spelling and punctuation styles as in the originals:

DIARY OF BENJAMIN MCINTYRE

September 17, 1862 Camp on the Little Piney.

Left camp on the Little Piney at 12 a.m. today arriving here about dark — Our camp tonight is one on which Gen. Sigel camped with his command when on his famous retreat from Wilson creek to Rolla and many of the people in the neighborhood still have reasons for remembering him for the amount of property he destroyed along the road. The 20th Iowa came up with us today and our force presents a formidable appearance.

Distance came today 9 miles.

September 18, 1862—Camp near Waynesville, Mo.

Waynesville is one of those necessary little towns which are needed in certain counties as a place for horse racing, quarrels & fights and where bad whiskey and poor tobacco is offered for sale at reasonable prices for approved credit or country produce...I shall leave

this camp on Rubidu Creek with pleasure, for through the town and a mile and a half around it sees selected as a vast cemetery for Uncle Sam's dead horses and mules for they are spread broadcast over considerable extent of country and through the town. The air is foul with the stench arising from them and you can imagine that your very vitals are contaminated with the decay of animal matter.

September 19, 1862, Camp on the Gasconade River.

We are all tired tonight, it has been a hot dusty day and many a blistered foot is aching. And the river bank is lined with soldiers who are laving in the cool water their heated lacerated limbs.

It is a beautiful country in this vicinity, the soil rich and fertile.

We crossed the Gasconade by means of a rope ferry. It is low at present but at certain times of the year must be a large stream.

Our tramp today amounted to just 15 miles.

September 24, 1862—Camp near Springfield, Mo.

Springfield was before the rebellion a town of perhaps 2000 inhabitants and contains several fine buildings and many beautiful residences. Yet like all other towns of interior Missouri their glory had departed and is shorn of their beauty to a great extent and everything going on seems carried on by the government. Large trains are arriving and departing daily with government stores and provisions. The place seems to have been deserted by its inhabitants and Storehouses and dwellings are closed or opened by U S Employees for the transaction of their business. The sentinel marches his lonely rounds and guards every avenue leading to the place—You scarce meet an individual but the blazing capitals U S stare out in bold relief and every sign denotes a place of business of the U S—and every horse and mule and wagon bears the common brand of U S. There are 19000 troops in and about Springfield at present. There are various forts and fortifications in and

near the place.

November 5, 1862—Camp near Cassville, Mo.

Left Pea Ridge at 8 o'clock—at 9 am again passed the state line and was in Missouri again. As I have before written concerning this route when I passed over some weeks ago it is at present unnecessary to add but little more than I have already written. The little town of Keitsville has been nearly destroyed—it has been for some time a rendezvous ro hiding place for small gangs of guerrilla or bushwhackers who have repeatedly fired upon our mail carriers and dispatch bearers and others passing unattended by a guard. Our men had borne these outrages until forebearance could no longer be indulged and our soldiers burned nearly the entire place. Not only had Keitsville suffered but along the entire distance we have come today nearly every dwelling has been destroyed. The inmates had claimed strong proclivities for the Union yet had harbored rebels who practiced their murderous warfare.

More Civil War Accounts!

by Gary Knehans

There are still two other existing civil war diary accounts pertaining to troop movement through Waynesville on September 18th, 1862. One of them, written by Edward G. Miller, just mentioned that the 20th Wisconsin army unit moved through Waynesville. However, another diary, written by Captain Chester Barney, Company E, 20th Wisconsin Infantry, presents new information not mentioned in the similar McIntyre, Phillips, and unknown soldier's diaries. Captain Barney's Waynesville entry follows:

Our march on the 18th brought us to Waynesville, a small village containing four-

teen houses...This town was remarkable for having in it a 'school house,' the only institution of the kind we had yet met with in the State. The enterprising projector of such a novel scheme in that region of the country must have found it rather an unprofitable investment, for from its appearance it was then mortgaged to a flock of sheep, which had evidently occupied it unmolested for a long time. There was a post office too, in that flourishing place, or rather had been, but as mails were like 'angels visits,' the enterprising postmaster had now converted it into a whisky shop and tavern, and was doing a thriving business.



DIARY OF TIMOTHY PHILLIPS

September 17, 1862 Camp on the Little Piney.

Left camp on Little Piney at 12 o'clock to day arrived here about dark. Our camp to night is one on which Gen. Sigel camped on his famous retreat from Springfield. The 20th Iowa has joined us and we know present quite a formidable army.

Gen. Herron is our commander.

Distance to day 9 miles.

September 18, 1862—Camp near Waynesville, Mo.

Waynesville seems to be one of those places needed in certain portions of the country to be a place for fights horse racing and where bad whiskey and poor tobacco is kept for sale...I will leave this camp on Rubidu

Creek with pleasure for the whole country for miles around seems to have been used for a cemetery for deceased Government horses and mules. They seem spread broadcast over the entire country and the air is foul with the stench arising from them.

September 19, 1862 Camp on the Gasconade River.

The boys are tired to night. It has been a hot dusty day and many a blistered foot is aching. It is a beautiful country in this vicinity and the soil is rich and fertile. We crossed a stream by means of a rope ferry. It must be a large stream in certain times in the year.

Distance to day 15 miles.

September 24, 1862—Camp near Springfield, Mo.

There are several fine build-

ings and some nice residences in Springfield yet like all other interior towns in this state Nothing is doing except by the government is goods and provisions Large trains are arriving and departing daily The place seems deserted of its inhabitants Store houses or in fact all places of business seems closed or in Gov't use of occupied by a sutler. The sentinel marches his lonely rounds through the streets of a once beautiful little city You can scarce meet an individual but the blazing capitals U.S. stare out in bold relief Scarce a building but the sign denotes business by the U.S. and every horse mule & cart bear the common brand of U.S. There are 19000 soldiers in and around Springfield at present There are various fortifications in and around the place one of

which contain 126 rebel soldiers.

November 5, 1862—Camp near Cassville, Mo.

We left Pea Ridge at 8 o'clock this morning At 9 we again passed the state line into Missouri. As I have written all that is necessary concerning this route as we have passed over it once before I have little more to add except that the little town of Keitsville has been burned as it has been used as a rendezvous for guerrillas for some time Nearly all the houses which were along this road have been burned The road to day has been very dusty and this march has been most disagreeable To night a sheep strayed into our mess and in some poor fellows loss we can rejoice