

Civil War Diary of William C. Benson

Camp Knox, January 1, 1864.

WM. C. BENSON

Friday, January 1, 1864. W. C. Benson enlisted in the 120th regt. Ind. Vols. November 24th, 1863. Enrolled by Capt. A. Knowles. Come into camp [Knox, Vincennes] Dec. 8th, 1863, of which an account has been taken this first day of Jan., 1864¹

Saturday, 2. New Year's day was exceedingly cold, with considerable snow which still continues.

Sunday, 3. Nothing of unfrequent occurrence has taken place today; more than the weather still ceases to moderate.

Monday, January 4, 1864. March to the battle field. The foe is now before us. Each heart is freedom's shield and freedom's flag is o'er us.

Wednesday, 6. A furlough of 5 days was granted to me the 2nd inst. to go home. I returned to camp today.

Thursday, 7. On the night of Jan. 7th, 1864, B. F. Johnson [Poseyville] and myself were detailed to act as nurse at the hospital. There being two of our Comp. to care for.

Friday, 8. Today Capt. [Albert] Knowle's Comp. [D] was sworn in to the service of the U. S. Also mustered into the service of the U. S.

Sunday, 10. The weather has continued to be very cold since Jan. 1st, until today, when it is moderating with an unusual degree.

¹ The following is from *Terrell's Reports*.

The One-hundred-Twentieth was organized along with five other regiments to form the first brigade, first division of the Twenty-Third army corps under Gen. John M. Schofield. General Sherman sent Gen. Alvin P. Hovey from Chattanooga to organize it, bring it to the front and get it ready for the Atlanta Campaign.

The following entry applies to the author of the diary:

"Benson, Wm. C., Owensville, Mus. Jan. 8, 1864, Died of wounds rec'd at Kingston, N. C. Mar. 11, 1865."

Monday, 11. Today I was detailed to act as nurse at the hospital. Camp Knox, Ind.

Tuesday, 12. Great anxiety prevails throughout the Camp. for the appearance of the paymaster.

Wednesday, 13.

The stars of morn on our banner borne,
With the iris of heaven are blended,
The hand of our sires first mingled those fires,
And by us they shall be defended.

Friday, 15. No room for any more sick in the hospital. Health of the soldiers in Camp Knox very bad.

Saturday, 16. A pass granted to W. C. Benson and Thomas M. Crow [Dongola] to go into Vincennes to take quite a no. of letters to the P. O.

Sunday, 17. We are warned of the arrival of the paymaster without fail on the following Monday. Great appearance of another snow.

Monday, 18. No paymaster arrived today. The depth of the snow this evening is estimated at twelve inches. Today the weather has been to unfavorable to drill.

Tuesday, 19. The weather moderates slowly. The paymaster arrives but promises no money to the camps mustered into the service; the former mustering officer not having signed the pay roll.

Wednesday, 20. We were paid off today (\$60 only) by taking another oath of allegiance.

Thursday, 21. Today I was detailed as a supernumera guard. The most of Knowle's camp have leave of absence to go home until Feb. 2nd, 1864.

Friday, 22. Harrison Marcus [Poseyville] taken to the hospital, he being very sick with the measles. Two of Knowle's Camp are now in hospital including Lieut. [John] Stephenson [Folsomville].

Saturday, 23. Received a letter from home. Which brought the news that all was well also a letter from Santford Howe of the 24th Ind. [Co. K] which is at Ibera, Louisiana.

Sunday, 24. A pass was granted us today to go to church in Vincennes.

Monday, 25. Today I am detailed as a patrol guard to stand at the Junction.

Tuesday, 26. The news comes that the 24th Ind. will be at the Junction at train time, of which is false.

Wednesday, 27. Two soldiers of Capt. [Henry] Gillam's Company [G] died this morning at the hospital. Camp Knox.

Thursday, 28. The 24th Ind. regt. [Hovey's] arrives at Princeton. [On veteran furlough.] The wildest enthusiasm exists among the citizens. The veterans in fine spirits.

Friday, 29. Rumors are afloat that the rebels are fighting among themselves.

Saturday, 30. The 42nd Ind. arrives at the junction. [Vincennes.]

Sunday, 31. Rumors of the Smallpox in Vincennes.

Monday, February 1. Cases of Small Pox confirmed. Great exertions are being made to prevent it getting into camp Knox.

Tuesday, 2. A great many furloughed soldiers return to Camp.

Wednesday, 3. To day I am granted a furlough to go home on recruiting service until the 15th inst.

Thursday, 4. A grand supper prepared in Owensville at the Odd Fellows hall for Veteran Soldiers who have returned home.

Friday, 5. Public speaking appointed at Owensville by Col. Coons and Major Brown. But they failed to comply with the appointment.

Saturday, 6. Funeral of P. Williams of the 42nd regt. Ind. Vols. took place at Owensville.

Sunday, 7. Went to Antioch to church. Santford Howe of the 24th regt. Ind. Vols. returns to Montgomery Township Gibson County Ind.

Monday, 8. Great weather for making maple sugar.

Saturday, 13. Thompsons Gambrel shot by a soldier of the 24th Ind., at Princeton, Ind.

Sunday, 14. Gambrel reported killed. But is only wounded.

Monday, 15. I return to camp Knox, Indiana, and find all the soldiers in fine spirits.

Tuesday, 16. Capt. Knowles returns to Camp Knox.

Wednesday, 17. Capt. Williamson's camp of cavalry Camp Knox Ind.

Monday, 22. Two men of Alexandre's Comp, and one of Capt. Fisher's comp shot by accident—cavalry.

Tuesday, 23. Union convention at Indianapolis continues from the 22nd.

Wednesday, 24. A Soldier belonging to camp Knox severely beaten by a butternut in Vincennes.

Tuesday, March 1. *Vincennes Sun* office torn up by the 24th Ind. Vols. They receive three cheers from the boys in Camp Knox.

Wednesday, 2. Was on patrol guard in the City and met several interesting Ladies which were true blue union.

Thursday, 3. The Sun is shining clear and bright this morning and all nature seems to rejoice in the prospect of nice weather.

Friday, 4. How changeable the weather is. Today the wind is blowing cold and bleak as December.

Saturday, 5. The wind continues to blow as cold as ever and the snow is falling quite rapidly.

Sunday, 6. Several of our boys went to Church in the City today.

Thursday, 10. Cavalry under marching orders.

Friday, 11. Camp Knox. Three Comps. of Cavalry leave for Columbus, Ind.

Saturday, 12. Comp D under marching orders. Also three other companies which was organized at Camp Knox, Ind.

Sunday, 13. Comp D. ordered to Indianapolis tomorrow.

Monday, 14. We leave Camp Knox for Camp Carrington, Ind. [Indianapolis].

Tuesday, 15. The 31st Ind. leave Camp Carrington for Dixie. [Louisville.]

Wednesday, 16. The 120th draw their nap sacks and other articles necessary for a soldier.

Thursday, 17. The weather very cold.

Friday, 18. The 120th receive marching orders.

Saturday, 19. The 120th Ind. paid one month's wages and are to leave to morrow at 7 oclock for dixie.

Sunday, 20. The 120th leaves Camp Carrington for Louisville, Ky. Arrives at 11 oclock A. M. and is quartered at the General Barracks.

Monday, 21. The 47th Ohio arrives at Louisville on their way home. They, having reenlisted.

Tuesday, 22. We leave the General Barracks and go Southward one mile and a half to Camp Parke.

Wednesday, 23. Company D draw their tents. Expectations of a movement southward.

Thursday, 24. General [Alvin P.] Hovey makes his appearance on the drill ground, while the troops are drilling.

Friday, 25. The weather rainy and cold.

Saturday, 26. The 33rd leave Camp Anderson for their respective homes on 30 days furlough.

Sunday, 27. The 120th Ind. leaves Louisville Ky for Nashville Tenn. at about 6 oclock P. M.

Monday, 28. After traveling without intermission we arrive at Nashville Tenn at 4 oclock P. M. We pitch our tents near forte Neigly. [Negley.] Having no tent sticks we experience an unhappy night.

Tuesday, 29. Made a visit to Fort Neigly today, which was quite interesting haveing thoroughly inspected the plan of the Fort which is built in the form of a Star.

Wednesday, 30. While the men were all busy arrangeing their tents this morning Gen. Hovey made his appearance in Camp, which put a stop to the work for a while.

Thursday, 31. A Man shot by a picket garde. The weather clear and pleasant.

Friday, April 1. As this is considered all fools day the boys are having a great deal of sport.

Saturday, 2. We receive orders to be in readiness to march against 9 oclock tomorrow.

Sunday, 3. We are to leave tomorrow instead of today. Probably our whole division. [First of 23rd Corps.]

Monday, 4. The march still delaied on account of the

weather. A great many soldiers are passing to & from the direction of Chatanooga.

Tuesday, 5. We leave Nashville for Murfreesborough, and march 10 miles in that direction when we pitch our tents in an open field and prepare for a good night's sleep.

Wednesday, 6. We resume our journey and march within 12 miles of Murfreesborough, pitch our tents and go on battalion drill in the evening.

Thursday, 7. Our division commanded by Col. [Richard F.] Barter [Mt. Vernon] arrives at Murfreesborough and at night camp on the Stone river battleground.

Friday, 8. Our division leaves Murfreesborough with five days rations in havre sacks, at night pitch tents after a march of 10 miles.

Saturday, 9. We march within 3 miles of Shelbyville the place so much noted for its patriotic people.

Sunday, 10. We proceed to march and rest two hours in Shelbyville. In passing through the 120th gives three loud cheers for the place after our days march we find ourselves within 8½ miles of Tullyhoma.

Monday, 11. At twelve o'clock arrived at Tullyhoma. A dismal looking place it is, the greatest object being the old fortification showing the intentions of a little at some past time.

Tuesday, 12. The division, Hovey's, leaves Tullyhoma and march to Decker Station, distant fourteen miles and a very rough road.

Wednesday, 13. The division leaves Decker station and march to the foot of the Cumberland Md. there draw four days rations.

Thursday, 14. We cross the Mts. and camp in the plains.

Friday, 15. We proceed to march. At night camp in Ala, 4 miles from Stephenson. At this camp a soldier in comp E 120th Ind. was accidentally shot. [John St. Clair, Folsomville.]

Saturday, 16. Today we march through Stephenson, and beyond the place 4 miles, our direction now being towards Chatanooga.

Sunday, 17. Our march is continued to Bridgeport where we draw four day's rations to last till we get to Chatanooga. We camp on an Island in the Tennessee river.

Monday, 18. We march within 14 miles of Chatanooga Camp at the summit of very high Mts. of the Cumberland range.

Tuesday, 19. We take up our line of March and at night find ourselves encamped at the foot of Lookout Mountain Tenn. We have now been marching fifteen days.

Wednesday, 20. The Division goes to Chatanooga. During our short stay at this place we are visited by many friends in the 42nd Ind.

Thursday, 21. The Division leaves Chatanooga for Cleveland Tenn. Cross Missionary ridge which though rugged is interesting as it is where so complete a union victory was won.

Friday, 22. We are yet on our march to Cleveland. Roads are good. Weather clear and pleasant.

Saturday, 23. We go to Cleveland, halting only long enough to draw two day's rations.

Sunday, 24. Arrive at Charleston Tenn at 10 o'clock A. M. Pitch tents on a Mt. near Hiwasee.

Monday, 25. All quiet in camp. Soldiers resting at ease, after 20 day's march. General Hovey gives great praise for our good conduct during the march.

Tuesday, 26. Ordered to move tents a short distance further up the Mt.

Wednesday, 27. Soldiers busily engaged in arranging their tents so as to be more comfortable than usual. Also setting out cedar bushes before their tents so as to add new beauty to the camping grounds.

Thursday, 28. A rebel Lieut. gives himself up to the union authorities comes into Charleston Tenn. and takes the oath of allegiance to the federal Government.

Friday, 29. I help to unload three car loads of cartridges in the morning, for which reason I am excused from battalion drill in the evening.

W. C. B.

Saturday, 30. 120th Ind. mustered for pay. Great numbers of cavalry are passing through Charleston in the direction of Georgia.

Sunday, May 1. The 80th, 63rd, and 65th Ind. regiments arrive at Charleston Tenn. The greater portion of the 23rd army corps are now concentrated at Charleston Tenn. John M. Schoffieds corps.

Monday, 2. The 23rd army corps receive marching orders at 5 oclock tomorrow. 120th Ind. visited by many friends in the 80th Ind. regt.

Tuesday, 3. General J. Schoffield's Corps leaves Charleston Tenn and go to Cleveland, distance 12 miles.

Wednesday, 4. The corps leaves Cleveland at an early hour this morn and march a short distance in the direction of Dalton Georgia where the rebels are said to be stationed.

Thursday, 5. At noon we receive marching orders. Hovey's division go to sand Hill Geo.

Friday, 6. All day, we remain in readiness to march but receive no such orders. Ordered to be in readiness to march at day light the following morning.

Saturday, 7. Hovey's division leave sand hill; at night camp on the ground held by the rebels in the morning. Late in the evening the union cavalry routes a small body of rebels near our camp.

Sunday, 8. We moove a short distance towards Dalton Geo, and hear some fighting going on.

Monday, 9. Ordered to move on the enemy. 2nd Brigade capturing a rebel batery. Heavy firing is heard all day in the direction of Dalton. A general engagement soon expected.

Tuesday, 10. Rebels attempt to shell our division but meet with little success. (Glorious news from Gen. Grant's army in Virginia) Hooker's Corps which is in rear of Dalton meets with heavy loss.

Wednesday, 11. Rebels fire on our pickets. We are formed in line of battle, but meet with no attack from the enemy.

Thursday, 12. The 23rd Corps is ordered to the rear of Dalton to keep in possession the railroad leading to Atlanta Geo by which means the rebels might escape.

Friday, 13. The 23rd corps is in rear of Dalton according to the request of our Commander in chief. Considerable cannonading still going on near the enemy's works.

Saturday, 14. Hard fighting all day. Hovey's division not engaged but is held in readiness. The rebels are driven back.

Sunday, 15. Hard fighting still going on. The enemy are repulsed with considerable loss on both sides. Hovey's division engaged.

Monday, 16. Union men burying their dead. Dead rebels still remain on the field. Our forces pursue the fleeing enemy.

Tuesday, 17. Our forces still advancing southward. Rations are scarce and details are made to forage for the subsistence of the army.

Wednesday, 18. Still we march towards Atlanta. Weather warm with some rain.

Thursday, 19. Same old command; forward, March! yet we know not where we are going.

Friday, 20. March through Kingston, Ga., a beautiful place a few days ago, but is now a lonesome spot such is the fruits of rebellion against a good Government.

Saturday, 21. 23rd corps remain at rest for the first time since leaving Charleston Tenn. Now about 4 miles North of Altoona Ga where the rebs are said to be making a stand.

Sunday, 22. Army still remains silent. Boys busily engaged in writing home to their friends and relatives. 58th Ind at Cassville Ga.

Monday, 23. The army makes another moove toward the rebel nest. Roads are exceedingly dusty which renders it very disagreeable marching.

Tuesday, 24. We cross High Tower river on the pontoon bridge constructed by the 58th Ind. V. V. regt. At dark we have to counter-march while a thunderstorm is raging with great fury.

Wednesday, 25. At 10 oclock we proceed to march. The object, as I suppose is to surround the enemy. Heavy cannonading is heard late in the evening, in the direction of the rebels.

Thursday, 26. All day we remain at rest waiting for orders to march. Rebels are constantly giving themselves up to the Union army.

Friday, 27. Heavy cannonading kept up all day. Last night comps. A, F & D of the 120th are detached to guard the train, also to assist in getting the wagons over the rough roads.

Saturday, 28. Countermarch to where we were three days ago. The sick are sent to the rear. Yesterday evening the rebels shelled us out of our camp.

Sunday, 29. Hovey's division is moved forward near the enemy. Skirmishing all night. At times heavy firing 120th takes its position behind breast works.

Monday, 30. The 120th Ind. strengthen their breast works. Fighting all day.

Tuesday, 31. Heavy skirmishing all day cannonading at intervals. Balls flying thick and fast over our breast works.

Wednesday, June 1. The 120th again strengthen their works. At night are ordered north of the enemy's fortifications.

Thursday, 2. 120th skirmish with the enemy. Heavy thunder storm as well as thundering from the cannon is in progress. Rations scarce.

Friday, 3. The 120th Ind changes its position and build a new line of breast works. The sharp shooters do great execution.

Saturday, 4. Again the 120th moved and they build another line of works. Co A skirmish with the rebels.

Sunday, 5. 120th rest behind their breast works during the day. Rebels said to be leaving their fortifications and going towards Atlanta. Richmond reported taken.

Monday, 6. Still we rest. No expectations of a fight north of the Chattahoochee river. Rations very scarce.

Tuesday, 7. We move about 3 miles from our works and construct a new line. Co D is placed on picket with loaded guns but empty stomachs. Richmond said to be besieged by Grant.

Wednesday, 8. Co D ordered from picket. 120th draw $\frac{1}{4}$ rations after doing without two days. Informed that the supply train will be here to-morrow. Hopes of better times.

Thursday, 9. Informed that Gen. Hovey has resigned. He receives great praise from regimental and comp officers

for the manner in which he has conducted himself while in command.

Friday, 10. Again we move from our present position, distant about 4 miles. Take a new stand at the summit of a very high hill opposite the enemy, who make a few attempts to shell us out. Skirmishing still prevails.

Saturday, 11. On this hill we still remain with a few works, (thrown up hastily) in front of us. Heavy cannonading at times. It is yet raining which has hardly ceased during the present month.

Sunday, 12. Cos. A F D and C support the skirmish line. Rain still falling. Soldiers wet and hungry, for rations are as scarce as the weather is foul.

Monday, 13. Co K put on picket while the other cos. are moved about 1 mile nearer the enemy and again fortify. Still raining. Five of co D are sent to hospital there now being 30 fit for duty out of 92.

Tuesday, 14. Co D placed on picket. The rebel picket and that of the federals talk to each other. Heavy cannonading on our left. Rebels fortify all night.

Wednesday, 15. Schofield's corps engaged with the rebels west of their fortification. The fight so far has been successful to the federals. The 120th have now been without rations for three days.

Thursday, 16. We draw rations at twelve o'clock which strengthens us considerably. Armies still fighting. 120th move on the enemy at night and are considerably exposed to their shells. Rebels fall back before day light.

Friday, 17. Armies still fighting. One of our best Gunners killed of the 23rd corps. Heavy firing on our left.

Saturday, 18. Co D again placed on picket in mud and rain. Rebels fall back again in the night.

Sunday, 19. Still raining. Federals still pursue the fleeing enemy. Schofield takes his position on the right of the rebels.

Monday, 20. Heavy firing towards the Chatahoochee river. Received a letter from the 24th Ind. V. V. regiment. Rebs supposed to be crossing the Chatahoochee river.

Tuesday, 21. Rumored that the 23rd corps have orders to

go back to Knoxville Tenn. Still raining. A great many soldiers sick.

Wednesday, 22. 23rd corps move up. Rebels attempt to cut their way through Hookers. We are sent double quick to support him. Work all night fortifying.

Thursday, 23. We strengthen our works as the rebels are thought to be massing their forces to cut their way out at this point. (west.)

Friday, 24. 120th lay behind their first line of breast works. Capt. Knowles sent out on the skirmish line as picket Officer. Expectations of an attack on our left.

Saturday, 25. Rebel skirmishers driven in expectations of an attack from the rebs. We strengthen our works.

Sunday, 26. Co D again placed on picket. I am taken sick and sent from the skirmish line back to the regt.

Monday, 27. Sent to the field hospital.

Tuesday, 28. The sick in the field hospital are sent to Alatoona.

Wednesday, 29. Arrive at Alatoona. I am assigned to Ward B. five of Co D are here in hospital.

Thursday, 30. Hospital is situated in a beautiful place. But they being tents and a part of the soldiers having to lay on the ground a great many are dying.

Friday, July 1. The chief diseases which prevail in this hospital are Diarrhea and Typhoid fever.

Monday, 18. The hospital at Alatoona ordered to be moved to Marietta ga at which place we arrive at 9 o'clock in the night.

Tuesday, 19. Doctors, Ward masters, nurses, and fatigue men busily engaged in making the hospital as comfortable as possible.

Wednesday, 20. Some appearance of rain the dampness of the weather causing the sick to not feel so well as usual.

Thursday, 21. 3 years since the first battle of Bull run. A great many soldiers sent from hospital to convalescent camp.

Friday, 22. Gen. Mcpherson's body said to be lying in Marietta he having been killed near Atlanta Ga.

Saturday, 23. 250 sick and wounded sent from the front to the hospital at Marrietta.

Sunday, 24. Soldiers who have served their time out are returning to their homes. A great many sick and wounded here are dying.

Monday, 25. But little cannonading heard in front. 1100 rebel prisoners in Marrietta will be sent north tomorrow.

Tuesday, 26. Trains loaded with prisoners start northward. Heavy cannonading in front.

Wednesday, 27. To day there seems to be but little fighting in front. A very heavy rain falls.

Thursday, 28. Gov. Morton said to be in Marietta, and will visit us tomorrow.

Friday, 29. Gen. Hooker leaves Marietta either for home or to take a command at or near Richmond Va. 100 sick from the 2nd Division 23rd corps are brought to the hospital.

Saturday, 30. New tables constructed to eat from. A much better arrangement for Convalescents than heretofore.

Sunday, 31. Raining all day. Day of rest, but an uncommon thing in the army. Wagon train from Ky going front.

Monday, August 1. More sick brought to the corps Hospital from the front.

Tuesday, 2. Sick brought in to hospital in large numbers. Three from company D 120th Ind arrive.

Wednesday, 3. Nurses busy dressing wounds of men brought in yesterday.

Thursday, 4. A great deal of chat prevails thruout the hospital concerning the fall elections. Soldiers taunted by cop heads in the north Stoneman said to be captured.

Friday, 5. Gen Grant said to be playing smash at Richmond.

Saturday, 6. 300 sent from the hospital at Marietta Ga to Knoxville Ten.

Sunday, 7. A great many soldiers going to the front. Sick and wounded going to the rear.

Monday, 8. Wards first and 2nd draw clothing. The evening is very rainy.

Tuesday, 9. Heavy cannonading still going on in front.

Wednesday, 10. More sick and wounded are sent to Knoxville Tenn.

Thursday, 11. 500 sick and wounded are brought to the hospital at Marietta.

Friday, 12. Ordered to Knoxville Tenn on the day following.

Saturday, 13. Start for Knoxville at dark. Rebs tare up the track between Bigshanty and Alatoona. We are detained the remainder of the night.

Sunday, 14. The train, after running back to big Shanty till all could be regulated starts about 4 oclock for Knoxville.

Monday, 15. This morning we eat the best breakfast we have had since we have been in Ga at Dalton. Arrive at Chatanooga Tenn.

Tuesday, 16. Arrive at Knoxville about 2 oclock A M. Taken to the Asylum hospital.

Wednesday, 17. Considerable talk about Morgan and Wheeler making a raid into Knoxville.

Sunday, 21. These comps from different regts in 23rd corps are organized for the defense of Knoxville.

Monday, 22. We throw up breast works fearing an attack from Morgan and Wheeler the former said to be near Londen.

Tuesday, 23. We are called up at 3 oclock A. M. in order to be ready for an attack should any be made.

Wednesday, 24. We are still held in readiness for the Guerily Band but they are not yet in view.

Thursday, 25. But little news stiring the rebels having torn up the track near London.

Friday, 26. Details are made to work on fortifications for the defense of Knoxville. Brownlow gets a despatch from Richmond. Cheering news.

Saturday, 27. Fifteen rebels taken by our scouts and brought to Knoxville.

Sunday, 28. Inspection day. A great deal of style put on for the satisfaction of citizen Drs.

Monday, 29. A large detail made to work on breast works as usual. Wheeler reported cut to pieces by the union forces.

Tuesday, 30. Reported that Grant has taken 10,000 prisoners recently.

Wednesday, 31. Muster for pay at the Asylum hospital (Knoxville).

Thursday, September 1. A despatch received at Knoxville that Mclelan is the nominee of the Democratic party.

Friday, 2. The mail comes through from Chatanooga to Knoxville partly by water.

Saturday, 3. Atlanta said to be taken with 15,000 prisoners.

Sunday, 4. News confirmed that Atlanta is taken.

Monday, 5. A brisk fight takes place in E. T. with John Morgan. Morgan said to be killed.

Tuesday, 6. News still favorable to the union cause.

Wednesday, 7. Furloughs, descriptive rolls, paymaster, & peace are the subjects of discussion among the soldiers at the present time.

Thursday, 8. Furloughs are granted to the sickest men in the Asylums hospital for 30 days.

Friday, 9. Sherman said to have fallen back on Atlanta but is not generally believed.

Saturday, 10. Work half the day on breast works. A 24 hrs. pass promised us.

Sunday, 11. Get a 12 hrs. pass and visit the holston hospital. Also pass the pickets and get some splendid apples.

Monday, 12. Another fatiege squad raised. The present one relieved for three days.

Tuesday, 13. Nights cool and days warm.

Wednesday, 14. Hospital supplied with more bed clothing.

Thursday, 15. Wheeler comitting depredations in East Tennessee. Convalescents ordered to be in readiness should an attack be made on Knoxville.

Friday, 16. Negro troops sent after Wheeler.

Saturday, 17. Soldiers in the Asylum Hospital sign the pay roll.

Sunday, 18. Soldiers eager for the appearance of the Pay Master. Grand inspection day.

Monday, 19. An examination in the Asylum Hospital for the front.

Tuesday, 20. A great many soldiers start home on furlough. The day clear and pleasant.

Wednesday, 21. Receive 4 letters from home which have been _____ .

Thursday, 22. Sheridan said to have gained a complete victory over the rebs in Virginia.

Friday, 23. Weather rainy and windy. I go to Knoxville on a pass of 12 hrs.

Saturday, 24. Paymaster expected soon. Great joy over Sheridan's victory in Va.

Sunday, 25. Another grand inspection day. Ward 4 of the Asylum Hospital takes the premium the 2nd time. Also ward 4 of the Holston Hospital.

Monday, 26. Rumored that Ind soldiers will be aloud to start home in a few days to vote at the coming elections.

Tuesday, 27. Confirmed that Ind soldiers will start on the day following to their respective homes.

Thursday, November 10. Start for Knoxville Ten get to Louisville Ky two oclock next morning when we go to foundry hospital and remain there till day light on the 11th.

Friday, 11. Leave Louisville Ky at 11 oclock A. M. arrived at Nashville Tenn. at 2 oclock next morning.

Saturday, 12. Leave Nashville at 3 oclock P. M. after runing all night are detained at shell mound from some cause or other.

Sunday, 13. Arrived at Chattanooga Tenn at 3 oclock P. M. stay at soldiers home during the night.

Monday, 14. Leave Chattanooga Tenn for Knoxville Tenn at 7:30 A. M. Arrive at Knoxville at 7 P. M.

Tuesday, 15. Aply for a discharge from the hospital to go to my regt. but is not granted me.

Wednesday, 16. Aply for our commutation money but cant get it for three days. Rations rather short.

Thursday, 17. Two train loads of soldiers come up to Knoxville from Chattanooga on their way to strawberry plains.

Friday, 18. Warm and rainy Companys organized from different Regt for the defence of Knoxville.

Saturday, 19. Boys who are well anxious to go to their Regts. but cannot get permission for a few days to come.

Sunday, 20. Weather still rainy and chilly another inspection day but the inspecting officers have not appeared.

Monday, 21. Turning very cold and disagreeable. East Tenn rather deceiving to most northern boys.

Tuesday, 22. Day cold and cloudy poor chance for fire boys trembling cold.

Wednesday, 23. Clear and moderating to some extent a few in hospital receive their commutation money.

Thursday, 24. Weather clear and tolerably pleasant 60 of us go to hospital to remove tents.

Friday, 25. Discharged from Asylum Hospital. Receive \$11 commutation money.

Saturday, 26. Leave Knoxville Tenn for Chatanooga. Arrive 7 o'clock P. M. stay at this place during the night.

Sunday, 27. Leave Chatanooga Tenn at three o'clock P. M. Arrive at Nashville at day light the 28th.

Monday, 28. Leave Nashville for Columbus Tenn where 120th Ind are said to be stationed. Get to my Regt. at dark.

Tuesday, 29. 120th ordered to march at 4 o'clock. To guard the train to Spring Hill. Brisk fighting at Spring Hill.

Wednesday, 30. Thomas' Army falls back to Franklin 120th guards the train to Franklin. Hard fighting at Franklin.

Thursday, Dec. 1. [Gen. Geo. H.] Thomas falls back to Nashville Tenn. 3rd brigade 3rd divisions camped near ft. Negle. [Negley.]

Friday, 2. Thomas army awaiting the approach of Hood. Federals throw up a few breast works.

Saturday, 3. Cloudy and disagreeable. The enemy said to have their lines extended from a point on the Cumberland above. Nashville to a point below.

Sunday, 4. Third division still resting near fort Negley skirmishing still prevails.

Monday, 5. Ordered to get ready to move. Orders countermanded.

Tuesday, 6. Again ordered to move and again countermanded.

Thursday, 8. Weather cold and the ground is covered with sleet which renders it very disagreeable.

Friday, 9. Wood is very scarce and the boys are shivering around a small fire.

Saturday, 10. I have to go on picket at 4 o'clock P. M. the picket lines are more comfortable than the camp as there are more wood.

Sunday, 11. Clear and very cold Sunday, but I did not know it till late when some one mentioned it.

Monday, 12. Cold as I ever saw it in Ind. Sleet still on the ground The sunny south cant wear the name at present.

Tuesday, 13. Weather moderating to some extent we make preparations to move but not orders to move.

Wednesday, 14. Warm and muddy no indication of a move to day. frequent skirmishing with the Johnnies.

Thursday, 15. Five of Comp D on picket at 4 o'clock P. M. 1½ S. E. of fort Negley. Hard fighting all day.

Friday, 16. Relieved from picket at 4 P. M. 3rd division having moved in vain we try to find our commands. Rebs left give way stubbornly.

Saturday, 17. We find our division with little difficulty this morning. The Rebs fell back last night. Marched very hard during the Afternoon towards Franklin.

Sunday, 18. Go to Franklin and camp on the battle ground.

Monday, 19. At an early hour start for Spring Hill. Details made to bury our dead over again at Franklin.

Tuesday, 20. We remain at Spring Hill. Weather very cold.

Wednesday, 21. Still remain at rest expecting to move every hour.

Thursday, 22. Still we rest at Spring Hill. Quite unwell. Cold and blustry.

Friday, 23. Ordered to Columbia. I get transportation in an ambulance.

Saturday, 24. We remain in Camp at Columbia north of Duck River.

Sunday, 25. A dry Christmas we rest but soldiers no more interested than common.

Monday, 26. Ordered to move only cross the river and go 1½ miles South of the town.

Tuesday, 27. Third division rest all day neare Pulaska Pike.

Wednesday, 28. We go into winter Quarters, or have such orders. Weather turning cold.

Thursday, 29. Still cold and Snowy. Strict orders against foraging.

Friday, 30. Very cold not much to do but cook and eat.

Saturday, 31. Last day in the year some of the boys try to forage a turkey for New Year but don't succeed.

Sunday, January 1, 1865. A dry new year. Joseph Fisher [Fort Branch], Henry Hamilton [Francisco], Wm. Alen [Washington], John Garrison [Folsomville] and myself are placed on picket 1½ miles north of Columbia.

Monday, 2. Relieved from picket just at sun down. Sec and third divisions leave Columbia, taking the Mt. Pleasant Pike.

Tuesday, 3. First Division leave Columbia at early morn and march as far as Mt. Pleasant via Mt. Pleasant Pike.

Wednesday, 4. 120th detached to guard the wagon train. Very rough marching the country being a very wilderness part.

Thursday, 5. March through Laurel Hill which is situated next to nowhere.

Friday, 6. 120th rest about 5 miles from Laurel Hill. The division pass during the day. Snow in the evening. 1st Lieut. Simmerman of comp D arrives.

Saturday, 7. Start for Waynesboro and arrive at about 3 o'clock. The ground being frozen caused the days march to be very hard on us.

Sunday, 8. Remain at Waynesboro during the day. Sec. Div. leave for Clifton Tenn 120th still guard the train.

Monday, 9. First Div leave Waynesboro for Clifton. Arrive about 4 o'clock Go on picket. It rains during the night.

Tuesday, 10. First Div remain in camp. Relieved from picket at dark. Sec div leave their present camp and go down to the landing.

Wednesday, 11. Clear and pleasant. Ordered to be ready for inspection this forenoon.

Thursday, 12. We have grand inspection. Picket duty very heavy on us.

Friday, 13. Mail goes out for the first time since leaving Columbia Tenn.

Saturday, 14. On picket 1½ miles from camp.

Sunday, 15. Relieved from picket 23rd Corps ordered to Louisville Ky.

Monday, 16. All quiet in camp. Heavy mail comes to 120th.

Tuesday, 17. First division moove down to the landing on the Tenn river.

Wednesday, 18. 1st Div leave at dark on board the steam boat Caroline.

Thursday, 19. Arrive at Paduka Ky. Draw rations, and leave the place at sunset.

Friday, 20. Arrive at Evansville Ind. 10 of comp D are permitted to leave the boat for a short time, to go to the commissary dept and get an order for 4 bailes of hay, which we roll aboard the boat and tarry no longer.

Saturday, 21. More travelling. Only arrive at Leavenworth Ind.

Sunday, 22. Boat prevented from running by the fog. Arrive at Louisville, Ky. but tarry not.

Monday, 23. Pass Madison Ind. A great deal of ice floating in the river.

Tuesday, 24. Get to Cincinnati Ohio at early morn. Remain but a short time, till aboard of the cars and on our way to Columbus Ohio. Where we arrive in the night.

Wednesday, 25. Leave Columbus for Belair Ohio.

Thursday, 26. Arrive at Belair, cross the river, draw rations and are soon aboard of the cars on the Baltimore and Ohio R. R. One of Comp D comes near freezing to death.

Friday, 27. Still traveling, the railroad is very rough. The weather is very cold, which render it very disagreeable on us.

Saturday, 28. Arrive at Washington D. C. about 10 o'clock P. M. We go in barracks A Supper of light bread meat and hot coffee is given us.

Sunday, 29. Move 4 miles from town to camp Stoneman draw rations and Wedge tents and seem to fix up to live in quietude awhile.

Monday, 30. Clear and pleasant. Nothing to do but reflect on the past and think of what we have heard of our present camp in former times, when he were enjoying the pleasures of a quiet home.

Tuesday, 31. Appearance of snow. All quiet in camp. Nothing strange occurring.

February, Wednesday, 1. 120 band reported at Washington.

Thursday, 2. 120th sign the payroll some prospect of getting a few green backs.

Friday, 3. Capt. Knowles returns to his command at Washington D. C.

Saturday, 4. Clear and pleasant. Boys resting quietly in camp.

Sunday, 5. Windy and disagreeable. Wood scarce as hen teeth.

Monday, 6. Still windy and cold tents can scarcely stand with the aid of 4 or 5 of us to resist the wind.

Tuesday, 7. Cold with considerable snow. Wind having a sweep of 8 miles is almost irresistible.

Wednesday, 8. 120th paid off. A great many are swindled out of their amount due from some cause or other.

Thursday, 9. Boys being paid are having a jolly time. Eating luxuries which we have not had for a long time notwithstanding we have recently passed through the garden of America.

Friday, 10. Several of Comp D go to town and visit the white house, where we see a great many curiosities, enough to excite the minds, and cause us to reflect on past history. (I express 100 dols. home).

Saturday, 11. No news of importance more than rumors of peace which soldiers do not consider important, as they can place no confidence such. Grant & Sherman being the only peace commissioners in which the armies have confidence.

Sunday, 12. Very cold. But wood a little more plenty if such terms are allowable as (more plenty)

Monday, 13. Passes still granted to the boys to go to the city, which they make good use of, as general thing. Yet there are some exceptions, and once in awhile a great deal of noise is made in camp occasioned by the use of intoxicating liquors.

Tuesday, 14. Valentine day when the young folks at home are in their finest glee and merriment. But doubtless more than a few boys in the army are like myself forgot it till the day was past and gone.

Wednesday, 15. Rainy and cold. One year since I returned to camp Knox my last furlough from that place being expired. One year ago the day was pleasant. Quit different to day.

Thursday, 16. Ground covered with ice which renders it very difficult getting about. 120th draw sanitary articles from the commission 1st Division under marching orders.

Friday, 17. Inspection of arms for the first time since leaving Clifton Te.

Saturday, 18. Camp full of rumors concerning peace, the capture of Charleston and the evacuation of Willmington, none of which are known to be true or even likely to be reliable.

Sunday, 19. 120th receive but little mail which has been the condition since our arrival at camp Stoneman. Supposed the 1st Div will leave camp Stoneman the day following.

Monday, 20. Leave Camp Stoneman near Washington D. C. and go to Alexandre Va. distant 6 miles. We are quartered at the Soldiers rest, and well provided for.

Tuesday, 21. Leave the Soldiers rest at Alexandria and go on board the Steamer New York. But remain at the Landing during the night.

Wednesday, 22. Embark at 3 o'clock P. M. having to wait for the tide to rise in order to get the ship from the landing. Go to the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay and ancor for the night.

Thursday, 23. At early morn proceed on our journey. Said to be going to Fort Fisher.

Friday, 24. Still traveling towards the scene of action. We are followed most of the day by a rebel iron clad but the New York being too swift for them they give up the chase.

Saturday, 25. Anchored within 20 miles of Wilmington. Wilmington said to be taken on the 22 inst.

Sunday, 26. Receive orders to Moorhead city N. C. to which point we set sail. Sea very rough.

Monday, 27. Arrive at Moorhead City N. C. At this place remain but a short time till aboard the cars, and bound for Newbern where we arrive at 11 o'clock P. M.

Tuesday, 28. Move near 2½ miles from Newbern and go in regular camp.

Wednesday, March 1. Cloudy and raining to some extent. Mustered for pay. We have general inspection.

Thursday, 2. Cloudy and cool. A few of the capt order Comp drill. Rumored that we are to remain here for some time and do post duty, though not generally believed.

Friday, 3. Leave Newbern N. C. for parts not generally known by the private soldier. Though it is a march of about 10 miles through mud and rain along the r. r. line.

Saturday, 4. Our march is continuing about 12 miles further through country almost impassible. First Div are now about 12 miles from Kingston where the Johns are said to be fortified.

Sunday, 5. Remain in camp. 120 receive a large mail. Inspection of arms and accouterments by the Lieut. Col. One of comp. D put on double duty for not putting his gun in better order.

Monday, 6. Div drill before and after noon. Weather clear and pleasant.

Tuesday, 7. Move at 7 o'clock A. M. to the advance Camp in hearing of the cannon near Kingston. Rebs report to be leaving Kingston.

Wednesday, 8. Received orders and moved to the front and built breastworks. Corporal C. W. Bryant of Co. D was wounded. I will have to quit writing and try and get some sleep.

Thursday, 9. Have been working on our works all day.

What is that! The Rebs are charging our works. I will get my gun and help to drive them back.

Friday, 10. Was mortally wounded and taken back to field Hospital.

Saturday, 11. Suffered a hundred deaths on account of his wound but endured all like a Soldier who was not afraid to die for his country. died at 3 o'clock P. M. and was buried at 6 P. M.

J. R. Thomas, Lieut.
Co. E 120th Ind.

The following letters show home conditions.

SARAH ROBINSON TO LOUISA ROBINSON.

September 14, 1856.

Gibson Cy.

Dear son I write by Roberts request as he wanted to go to meeting to day to let you know he got home safe he got here friday night about 10 oclock and found us well he is much pleased with Illinois and I hope he will try to go there Earl has Bought Brack Clarks land he gave him fifteen hundred Dollars I have Nothing to write worth your attention they are all well at Mr. Bensons I staid there last Saturday night and Sarah staid with me Sunday night there is a great deal of sickness here at this time Mr. Roseberry Died yesterday two weeks ago to day his Daughter Mrs. Noles was Buried and Mrs. Redmun Aunt ann is very low with the flux But is thought to be mending since Compeld to Call in Doctor Cook. I will Conclude after telling you there is people enough fixing to start to Illinois in a few days to fill up a large part of the state I think the most of the Gibson people will soon be there if the fever keeps up another year I want to see you all more than I can express this looks like a solitary place ever since you left tell Sylvester and Martha I want to see them more than any one els. Nothing more But will remain your affectionate

Mother till Death

SARAH ROBINSON
R. L. ROBINSON

FROM WM. & MARGARET BENSON TO JAMES & LOUISA ROBINSON.

Gibson County State of Indiana May 20th 1857

Affectionate Children we again write to you we are all in common health for which we have abundant reason to be thankful to an all wise providence hoping this letter may find you in the same situation your connexion on both sides are well as far as we know. We have had a

cold backward spring some frost this morning the farmers mostly finished planting corn wheat crops looks very well far better than we expected in the winter the spring appears one month later than usual we received your letter dated I think in February we answered your letter we understand that Louisa is afflicted with a soar Mouth we send below a receipt which if applied is said never to fail performing a cure, take black oak bark the inside bark boil it to a quart of strong ooze Take this willow commonly called water willow such as growes along black River take the root burn it to a coal then pulverize it as much as two heaping table spoonfuls put a lump of allum in about the size of the red part of a hens Egg mix it all together then wash your mouth often if bad wash by night as well as day Swallow a little of the medicine ocasionally continue to use it some time after you think your mouth is well—Mr. Powel of Owensvill gave your Mother Directions how to Make this Medicine She made for Lydia Massy Doctor Cooks Wife & others has never failed to cure.

N. B. you must use oil pills or something to keep the bowels regular I want you to write let us know how you are as soon as you receive this letter be sure and use Black oak bark no other species oak will do you can find the willow I suppose along some of the Creeks if the willow is not to be found in your County we will send it to you.

So I will Conclude by subscribing our names

To JAMES & LOUISA ROBINSON

WILLIAM & MARGARET BENSON

W. C. BENSON to SYLVESTER ROBINSON

Camp Knox Ind.

March 11th 1864

Well Sylvester I concluded that I would write you another letter, though it is with little hope of ever receiving an answer for I have never received an answer to a letter from Ills yet. I wrote a letter to Sarah about two month ago and have never got an answer. I have also written 2 or three to you without any respond. We are still in old Camp Knox. Four Infantry Comps are organized here. The balance of the regt is at Indianapolis where I expect we will go next week when the regt will be organized and sent to the field. The company I belong has been more than full, several have been transfered to another company. I received a letter from home yesterday stating that all was well. Santford has been at home. I was also at home part of the time he was. He looks very natural only a great deal larger. The 24th met to reorganize the other day and came into Vincennes and tore up the *Vincennes Sun* press (a copperhead paper) then went to Evansvill to complete their organization. I have not heard from them since I don't know whether they are gone to dixie or not. The 58th has also reenlisted they passed down the other day on their way home on 30 days furlough. They passed the camp at half speed but not so fast but what I knew Henry Burke, who was standing between the cars. I

had forgot about their coming or I would have went to the junction and seen them. Some of the boys were up there and said some of the 58th boys were enquiring about me. But they knew not who made the inquiry. Trains loaded with Soldiers are passing every day and in every direction.

Our Company officers Commissioned are as follows:

Capt: ALBERT KNOWLES

1st Lieut: JOHN STEPHENSON

2nd " JAMES HART

I do not know who will be our regimental officers I expect to know in about a week No more at present but write soon

W. C. BENSON

To

SYLVESTER ROBINSON

This letter (as I forgot to tell you) leaves me in very good health and I hope will find the whole family enjoying the same. W. C. BENSON

March 22nd 1864

Friend Sylvester.

Although I have nothing of importance to communicate at present, yet I will make the attempt to answer your much intereting letter which I received a few days since. We are all enjoying a reasonable portion of health, except Sarah who has the dyspepsa. Today is very warm and pleasan, but a little indication of rain. During the past week I have been building fense & hauling old rails for stove-wood. Well Sylvester, perhaps you would be pleased to know what we talk about in Indiana. The general discussion of the day is, the draft, the Southern rebels, and the northern butternuts or copperheads. I do not know whether I need give an explanation of this last mentioned name or not for I expect the name is as common in Illinois as any where else. But what we call butternuts are men in the north who are doing all they can against the Administration. The are men who forget that Jeff Davis is a traitor, but are always denounceing Lincoln & Gov. Morton as abolition trators. I need not go on to describe this party any further for the only difference between this party and southern rebels is, that the one possesses one more characteristic than the other. The butternuts are cowards and those in the south are not.

WM. & PEGGY BENSON to JAMES and LOUISA ROBINSON

February 16th 1865

AFFECTIONATE CHILDREN your letter has come to hand dated Jan. 31st we are glad to hear you are all well (sorry to hear of James Mavils misfortune getting his house burnt) we Received a letter from Columbus dated Jan. 31st 1865 he is at or near the City of Washington D. C. he left Clifton Tenn on the night of the 18th instant and arrived at Washington on the night of the 29th being Eleven days & nights on those rout he states they have relieved 22d army corps who has been

stationed there for two years he thinks it probable they may stay here for some time the 22d corp was sent front the weather was cold (as much they could do to keep from freezing had several chills on the boat & cars but was all right now he says are encamped two miles from the white house in plain view) I think it is likely they will stay there for sometime they have been going for the most of the time for almost a year and need rest. Manoch Smith has purchased Green Bosboroughs plantation for the sum of 7000. two hundred dollars (sold his Spoor farm to David Eppeson for \$60 pr acre) Allen Wilson has got up and about the rest of the connection are all well as far as we know the health of the people is generly good James Spear was buried yesterday the last one of old Jacobs Children which makes eight that has died of consumption Dr Neilys wife died of Dropsy since you was here old James Malone is dead James Daugherty & Elijah Lucas has volunteered and gone to war this county makes up her compliment without drafting Posey & Vandaburg will draft

Property of every description is high pork sold at \$12½ 13½ & 14 a hundred I sold mine at Harmony for 13½ for one thousand & fourteen dollars corn is worth one dollar & ten cents a bushel in Evensville wheat \$1.80 & 85 hands to work on the farm is asking thirty dollars a month I expect they will get it. I forgot to name old aunt Nancy Montgomery she is dead Luck Douglass was killed in the battle before Nashville was brought home buried in the Spilman grave yard These few lines leaves us all well

We Remain your affectionate

Father & Mother WM & PEGGY BENSON

To JAMES and LOUISA ROBBINSON

N.B. answer soon

WM. C. BENSON to BROTHER & SISTER

Alexandre Va

February 21st, 1865

Dear BROTHER & SISTER:

I will now occupy a few moments writing you a short letter relative to my health and whereabouts. As to my health I can say it is very good, and has been since our arrival at Washington. We left Camp Stoneman near Washington D. C. yesterday morning and came here distant 6 miles from the camp While at Camp Stoneman I answered Martha & Sylvester's letters which I received at Clifton Tenn the day before we left there. I am looking every day for another letter from Martha & Sil Louisa you requested me to send my photograph to you a long time ago which I had not a chance to do till recently. I will now send you one taken in Washington City the 16th inst I had a dozen taken and was going to send one to each of the family. But nobody ever writes to me only Sylvester (Benson). Lemyra writes once

about every 3 months. I wrote mother a letter this morning and sent her my photograph. And at the same time give the balance of the children goss (except Sylvester) for not writing and give them to understand if they got my photograph they would have to scratch for it, and scratch something in the shape of a letter at that. We are looking every minute to fall aboard of a ship to go some where unknown to us exactly some think we will land at fort Fisher and take it by land to wherever we are going. To days papers confirm Columbia S. C. taken and also states that the rebs are evacuating Wilmington Alexandra is a beautiful town situated about 10 miles below Washington on the Potomac river. As we entered the town I was scarcely thinking where I was nor caring but little till the drums & fifes struck up (Elsworths body lies mouldering in the tomb.) This aroused my feelings for a while and caused me to think and reflect on history recently passed by. I remembered what a stir it caused in the north when Elsworth was killed at this place I believe Elsworth was a succor. Tell Lum & Woodfin I am all right And tell Martha & Syl to write often. I'll be sure to answer their letters. Write yourselves as often as convenient.

Yours & Co.

W. C. BENSON
Co D 120 Regt
Ind. Vol. Inft.

SARAH BENSON to JAMES & LOUISA ROBINSON

March the 26th 1865

Dear Sister and Brother it has become my painful duty to write you a few lines. That Haveing received news by last thursdays Mail that Brother Columbus was killed in the late Battle of Kingston. N. Carolina he was not killed instantly. but was mortaly wounded in the Second days fight we hear that he lived two days after being wounded we cannot know whether he had any thing to say befor he died or not. Our Poor Brother lies now beneath the sod of North Carolina not far from the Atlantic Ocean. Brother Sylvester has just come and brought a letter from Dr. Marshal Neely. Stating that Columbus was shot in the bowels also stating that he died the next day after being wounded. He was wounded in the 2nd days. (battle) Dr. Neely stated that a friend of Brothers took care of him untill he died and took possession of his body he is buried near the hospital where he died his grave is marked and may be found at any time. Sylvester says he going to have him brought home. I sometimes feel reconciled that he is gone as I think he is resting from all the toils and troubles of this most awful war. he sleeps in death and will hear of wars no more. he is now numbered with the Heroic dead, haveing fought for Liberty, and union we are Cheered at the thought of his dying in a good cause.

We received a letter from him dated march the 2nd written just 6 days before he received that fatal wound. I will now bring my letter

to a close hoping you will excuse me for not writing a more lengthy letter as you know I do not feel like writing at this time we are all well but greatly troubled no more from your Sister.

SARAH BENSON.

MYRA to LOUISA ROBINSON

Thursday April the 21st 65

DEAR SISTER

I will drop you these few lines, as you requested us to write soon. Mother & Father are verry poorly. Mother was taken two weeks ago last monday and has not been able to sit up an hour at a time since. Although she is now mending and I think she will get up again if she does not take a back set she was taken with a severe cough and fever. trouble is the greatest cause of her sickness. Father is verry poorly although he is able to be up. He seems to take this trouble as hard as Mother But he was stouter and abler to bear it. he looks worse than I ever saw him. You requested us to write to you whether Brother had any thing to say before he died or not. George Williams of the same company wrote back that Columbus said to tell Mother that he died like a man and a soldier fighting for his country and was standing at his post, he said to tell her that he thought of her every day. The Boys said when they were carrying him off the battle ground, that he talked of home and Mother they did not write whether he was willing to die or not But Louisa we know Lum was a good boy and a thoughtful one and hope that he is now at rest.

Mr. Pritchett of Owensville started after him two weeks ago last Friday it will be three week tomorrow. when he started he supposed it would take him 4 weeks he is going to telegraph to princeton when he gets to Indianapolis. and then there will be a runner sent down to let us know when he will be here. We would like for you to be here if was so you could The last account we had of Prichett he was at Washington City and had his papers arranged so that he could go on Father has rented his place out he had hired a hand to work on the farm but he has concluded not to raise a crop. there was a man here this morning to rent the field that he was going to hire he sent him to Sylvester and told him to tell Syl to rent him the ground for what he thought it was worth. he said he did not feel like attending to any business himself He talks sometimes of moving to Owensville. He says he knowes he never will see any more satisfaction here for he can go no where about the place but what he sees something that reminds him of Columbus. But I think he will get out of the notion of mooving after awhile.

Well as my paper is about spent I will have to quit. I will write to you a gain when they bring brother home you must excuse bad writing for I have written it on my lap.

MYRA

SARAH BENSON to her SISTER

April the 27th 1865

DEAR SISTER,

I will write again in order to inform you that Mothers health is improveing some as she is able to sit up some and walk about the room a little. Father I think is some better although he has been very poorly. This will inform you that Mr. Pritchett returned with the remains of Brother Columbus Monday the 24 of the present month and buried at our old family grave yard the 25th. Mr. Pritchett was gone just three weeks and three days makeing a very quick trip, after haveing traveled about three thousand miles in order to get him, he said he did not have any trouble in finding him, as he fell in company with the Doctor that attended on Columbus after being wounded, he had Columbus name written in one of his Books Company regiment

The Doctor took his Book and went with Mr. Pritchett and pointed out where he lay his head board being marked with his name. Company regiment D Mr. Prichett said the Doctor told him that he Columbus seemed to suffer a great deal for awhile until he gave him medicine which seemed to relieve his sufferings he was by mistake taken to the wrong Hospital and was attended on by a Doctor from Massetustts he brought his head board home with him he had him put in a very nice Metalic coffin costing \$60 there was a great many people at his burying Mr. Walker made a short discours over his Death, and Concluded by the rev Mr. Hudson. I will now bring my letter to a close as I have given you all the information I can, no more from your sister.

SARAH BENSON.

SYLVESTER BENSON to JAMES & LOUISA ROBINSON

Gibson Co. Ind May 7th 1865

DEAR, SISTER & BROTHER and FAMILY

I embrace this opportunity of writing you a few lines, in answer to a short letter I received from you a few days ago. You wish to know the particulars concerning Brother Columbus death. From the Best information we can get he was mortally wounded on the 10th of March in the Battle of Kinston N. C. at or near the close of a 2½ days fight, and died the next day at 3 o'clock in the evening, he was shot in the left side near the groin, the Ball remaining in his body. (This is Prickett statement) He was carried to a field Hospital, but from some mistake was not taken to the hospital of his own regiment, as surgeon Neely of the 120th wrote to me, he was buried near the Hospital where he died, by the side of a Lieutenant that died from wounds at almost the same moment that he died.

The soldiers used a couple of cracker Boxes one at his head, the other at his feet, for a coffin his grave was fenced. His head Bord was marked, with his name, Regt. Co. the day he was wounded, an the

day he died. A. Pritchett Brought the head board with his body. Pritchett was gone 3 wks and 4 ds. arrived at fathers on 24th of April. Columbus was buried on the 25th by the side of Grand Mother Leach, there was a great many people at his Burial. All of our family was there but you and Mother. He was conscious, he told some of the soldiers to tell his Mother that he died a true soldier. Surgeon J. M. Neely wrote to me that he was a brave soldier. Lt. [John M.] Simmerman [Evansville] that comd the company in the Battle, wrote to Father that he was a brave and good soldier, and beloved by all that knew him, I do not know who of his acquaintance was with him when he died his comrades have sent Back some of his personal affects, such as his Diary, inkstand pen, Necktye, Leather gloves, 2 Pocket Books and I believe six of his own Photographs. His diary was written By himself up to the 9th of March, he says of the 9th we are at work on the fortifications, But winds up by saying "the rebels are charging our works. I will take my gun and help drive them back," these I expect were the last words he ever wrote (his 2 Lt. [John R.] Thomas wrote what hapened the 10th, 11th) He was buried in a Metalic case, the expense of Bringing his remains home was \$267.45 ct much less than I expected. Pritchett is possessed of both energy and honor, and should be respected by all of us while we live, I (or we) gave him \$125. for his trouble, he came home By way of New York, Cleaveland Toledo &c. there being an order against disinterments Mother has been sick for a month or more she was considerably better on last sunday she has a bad cough, and some fever at times But is anxious to get well, she mends very slow, there is no doubt but trouble was the principal cause of her sickness, She appears in better spirits, than she was the first week or two after she heard of Columbus Death, She was on last sunday able to be up an hour or two at a time. Father appears to be worse grived if possible, than Mother, I never saw him look so emaciated unless prostrated by sickness, he sometimes eats nothing for two or three days at a time. He wants to sell his property (personal) and move to Owensville he has but little to say, he says he cannot think of any thing but Columbus, you request me to go and see them often, I have went to see them often, but have not seen nor heard from them for a week, but their hired hand would let me know if they were worse, I will go and see them again in a day or two. Sarah is not very well, I believe the rest of our connection are well.

James Rossborough Died a few days ago on the old Ricey Waters Place of Diphtheria the complaint is dangerous and is said to be contagious, Ridenour was with him and report says he has taken it to day. I am in hopes it is untrue. You must excuse me for my bad writing and blunders. I am writing by a very dim light. I calculate to go to Princeton tomorrow, and will mail this letter their we have had a very wet spring Farmers are behind time with their corn crops. Any information you request if you will write to me I will answer you to the best of my knowledge, I have not been with Absalom Pritchett very

much since his return, and generally there was a good many others present when I was in his company, as he went out to Kinston on board of a vessel the force pump bursted and the vessel came near sinking he said he would have given all he was worth at any time during 8 hours to have been on dry land. Columbus Body he says was much decayed, he could not recognize it, But he saw the surgeon and hospital steward that attended on him, the surgeon told him he suffered a good deal the first evening but the day he died he was comparatively easy, so no more.

But remain your Brother,

SYLVESTER BENSON

To J & LOUISA ROBINSON