

Alexander Sterrett Paxton Diaries: Volume Four

November 22, 1861-February 9th, 1862

Transcribed Summer 2012

* Volume 4 is a medium sized homemade unbound book with rounded corners

Cover Reads:

Commences Nov 22nd 1861

“I feel like one who treads alone,

Some banquet hall deserted,

Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead, &c [etc.]”

Written on entering Bath, the Co [County] Seat of Morgan, but a few hours before full of Yankees, who left supper in some of their houses partly gotten &c. Alex S. Paxton

*Image drawn in pencil of a map with markers identified as “South Branch of Potomac”, “Yankee camps”, “Cumberland Road”, “Indian Mound Cemetery”, and “Romney”

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Nov 22nd, 1861

To day we moved our camp from the grounds above Winchester to a place 4 ½ miles below the town. Tho' [although], didn't improve in situation much, at least for, our Reg't [Regiment]; yet got a situation nearer water. As we marched thru Winchester, the Reg't [Regiment] was halted near the Taylor Hotel & was treated by the citizens to a bountiful supply of tobacco. Many thanks to the citizens for their liberality & kindness. But some of our boys thoughtfully remarked that it was the desire to get their rooms rid of the useless & unprofitable weed on hands more than their love for the wants of the soldiers that prompted the gift. Gen [General] Jackson has his Head Quarters in the town where he is busily engaged in discharging the duties which devolve upon him as commander of the Valley district. He does not make much show or parade about his Quarters. Likes to go about without a long train of attendants &c. He sent our Capt [Captain]

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word that he would probably take our company soon from the Reg't [Regiment], for a guard around Head Quarters. He was led to say this I guess, by the letter written to him by Gens [Generals] Johnston and Smith, requesting him so to do. Well we got to our camp grounds about the middle of the day. Ours was the last Reg't [Regiment] that moved & the result was that we got the worst place of the whole crowd. The 4th Reg't [Regiment] is certainly made up of good material, "good pluck", but 'tis surely the worst provided Reg't [Regiment] in the brigade here in the way of wagons &c. We pitched our tents in a clover field. Had 9 in our tent, thick as bees in a hive. Our drummer got his old drum broken over at Manassas, & so we haven't had any night or morning roll calls, for some time. The soldiers don't care how long the drum stays broken either. For 'tis not so pleasant to roll out cold nights & mornings to answer to one's name. But soon as 'tis over just roll back & cover up in bed again.

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Nov. 29th 1861

Camp Stevenson

My brother Mack & myself went to town to day. Walked there, tho' [although] the roads were in no nice fix, muddy &c. Had our likenesses taken in one case, but did not succeed in blowing up the machine. Saw more pretty girls, than saw over at Manassas the whole time during 3 months. The female schools in Winchester seem to be in a flourishing condition. In such a condition let them be. For the education of the boys (I mean larger ones) is material affected in the South now by the calls of patriotism & the horrors of war.

Then it will be left to women, to instill into the minds of the young the seeds of early instruction. Having spent most of the day in running about the town get necessary articles &c, we left in the evening about 4 o'clock. Obtained the pleasure of riding most of the way back in a gentleman's carriage. Got to our camp a little after dark, pretty tired. Hence, soon retired to our hard beds & soon were wrapped in deep slumber.

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Dec 2nd 1861

Camp Stevenson

'Tis a pretty looking day out doors, yet the wind blows cold & chilly from the tops of the Alleghenies. The summits of these surrounding mountains have now been two or three times white with snow, & when we shudder in the chilly breezes blowing hence, we think the camp cry ought to be "Oh to winter Quarters". These torn and tattered tents are not the most comfortable residences in the world especially in windy, & stormy weather 'Tis said our Reg't [Regiment] is going to quarter in Winchester this winter. But guess Gen [General] Jackson will take his men to better quarters in his own fit time. They are expecting a battle over at Centerville soon, so they are not in quarters there. After a battle is fought & won, then doubtless the whole army in this part of the Valley can go into Quarters &c. Nearly every tent in the Reg't [Regiment] has got a flue, fireplace &c. in it by which we manage to keep pretty warm.

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Some of our Company are near their home now, living as they do close around here. One day last week a carriage full of nice pretty ladies (relations of these boys) came & spent the day in the quarters of our company. They sang songs, played on the guitar for us & seemed to amuse themselves wonderfully. They were taken into the tent of their brothers & cousins. Another young chap who lived in the same tent, being alas sent where the ladies came, returned in a short time, & not knowing of the fair inhabitants in his abode, he made a dart in the door of the tent, when the bevy of girls broke upon his astonished gaze. At first the fellow jumped back in speechless amazement, & stood looking at them 'till one of the boys introduced him. Said, he thought he had strayed into a private parlor in Richmond or some other burg.

Well as to how we are satisfied over here in the Valley there are two view of the question-

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-regarding the duty we have to perform & the hardships we have to endure, our Company had rather be back at Head Quarters at Centreville. But when we look at the beauties of this country compared with the one left, then I prefer the Valley. I love this part of the country because 'tis part of that same good old Valley of VA [Virginia] in which I was born & brought up. The beautiful Mts [Mountains] that rise south of us here are part of that same range that coats their long shadows near the home of my childhood. And when I look around me here & see this fine country. I can't help thinking of the lines of the Past; that here are:

"Fatling herds & fruitful fields,
All joys that peace & plenty yield,

Earth's sweetest flowers here shed perfume
And here earth's fairest maidens bloom—”

However taking all things into consideration, believe I'm very well satisfied with our change. Can get articles necessary for wearing and war in Winchester, which could not be obtained over at Manassas— That is a strong consideration on the subject too.

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Dec 10th, 1861

Camp Stevenson

Today we had a grand review of our brigade, by our new brigadier Gen [General] Garnett. He seemed much pleased with the movements &c. of the troops whom he is destined to lead to battle against the enemies of his country. Gen [General] Garnett is a native of VA [Virginia], & has been on duty on Craney Island. Is quite young in his appearance, & more dashing in his movements—personal &c. than Gen [General] Jackson. He established some new regulations—i.e. guard mounting at 8 ½ A.M. Reveille at 6 A.M. Tattoo 8 P.M. Battalion drill 9 A. M. Company drill 2 P.M. Guard mounting here-to-fore was at 4 ½ P.M. All seemed well pleased with the regulation. Last night 5 companies of the 5th Reg't [Regiment] went off in the cars towards Harper's Ferry. One day last week, a few companies of 27th Reg't [Regiment] & 4 pieces of the Rockbridge Artillery left in the same direction. Don't as yet know of their destination or departure.

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Dec 16th, 1861

Camp near Martinsburg

We arose this morning at 3 o'clock, breakfasted, struck tents at four 4, & by 6 the brigade was in motion. When dawn first ringed the eastern sky with its ruddy streaks it found us on the road toward Martinsburg. We had been expecting a move for some time, & today we realized our expectation. So after treading again one of our old beats, after a march of 15 miles, we find ourselves encamped here two miles from the town of M— [Martinsburg]. Have brought all our equipment along & have pitched all the tents; as these nights are rather chilly, reposing only under the broad canopy of the sky. The troops stand the marches far better now than when beneath the rays of a July Sun, they last trod this road. Met many wagons on our way engaged in removing the track, ma—

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—chinery &c., of the Balt & Ohio R-R [Railroad] to Strasburg. 'Tis much more fatiguing to march in the Reg't [Regiment] then otherwise. And by the time we were nearing this place, you could see many wishful glances cast toward the major, to see if he was not soon going to halt. Could hear the long drawn sigh & deep murmurings about sore feet &c. But when the word "halt" rung along the lines, as the sun was fast sinking beneath the western _____, then the countenance of many a toil-worn soldier brightens up, & he revels in the hopes a good supper & an undisturbed night's repose. Alas! For those whose sad lot 'tis to go on guard after a long day's march. As to the object of this move I know not & cannot say. Tho' [Although there] are many conjectures, time will solve the mystery. I think something of importance is on hand, as Gen [General] Jackson came down this evening with his staff.

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Dec 17th 1861

Arose bright and early this morning. Started at about 9 ½ & filed thro' [through] the streets of Martinsburg. Then we got some hard old looks from the good old Union loving people. Left our tents at the camp of the previous night. Found out that we were going down to tear down Dam no. 5, on the Chesapeake & Ohio canal. This is one of the carriers of supplies especially coal to the old Federal Capital. So destroying this Dam, thus breaking up the canal—as it does—for 15 miles, will be of disastrous result to the Lincoln den this winter. We got to Harrisville about sunset, where had a skirmish with the advanced guard of Patterson's Army on last July (2nd). Lost the road and went about 3 miles out of the way quite gratifying to the fatigued soldiers. At length we hear the dam roaring & know we are near our journey's end. Took all the Reg'ts [Regiments] except the 2nd—wh [which] was sent on picket—into a piece-

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-of woods near the river, to spend the night. Also sent the workmen down to the Dam i.e. the Hibernians-Irish from 27th. Now the work to do is to tear down some cribs filled with stone near this bank, for the dam washed away at this side once &

the beach was filled up with these pens. The work men erected a kind of a breastwork on the farthest end of the crib-work, behind which they could work.

Dec 18th 1861

Slept on the ground last night & had a cold rest of it too. The enemy didn't find out that our men were on the dam till about 3 in the morning. Then they commenced firing upon us every chance. They drew the water out of the canal on the other side of the stream & stationing themselves therein fired at our men whenever they exposed themselves. We had our sharp shooters stationed on our side in a stone mill & along the top of the cliff

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So the sharp crack of the rifles woke up the echoes of the morning. They marched us all out in a field about a mile from the river where we were ordered to cook two days rations. In the evening we went over near the dam to relieve the 2nd on picket. We were placed under the bow of the hill, & the Yankee balls were whizzing over our heads continually.

Dec 19th 1861

'Twas cool & clear this morning & as usual the rifles sounded up & down the river. The prying Yankees found out our position about daylight, & when everything was still they sent a shell howling over our heads. And then the way the boys got up as amusing in the extreme. Every fellow jumped up at once & there was a pulling on boots & a packing up of blankets in "hot haste" But after changing our position behind a cliff of high rocks we only laughed at the murderous shells as they howled over our heads seeming to say "Where are you?" "Where are you?"

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We were relieved by the 5th soon afterwards & came to our old cooking place in the field. Many of the troops who had improved guns stole out of the lines, & went over to the riverbank to get a shot at the Yankees who were standing on picket on an opposite hill. Nothing is so exciting as to get a shot at a Yankee. Now strange that the better & kinder feelings of our natures should be thus changed! Sometimes I almost feel like asking "why is all this?" But then the truth flashes upon me in all its dread reality. That we are engaged in a war with a mad & fanatical people who

would fain subdue our fair land, desolate our fertile fields desecrate our altars, pollute our firesides & subject our fair daughters to ignominy & shame! As our fathers fought the first war of the independence of the North & S—[South] so now we are fighting the battles of the independence of the Glorious South!

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Dec 20th 1861

Last night moved back in the woods nearer the river to sleep—but soon this morning came to this old place. Yankees have 3 Reg'ts [Regiments] & 3 pieces of artillery on their side. They act right bravely, as are mostly from Indiana. Our sharp shooters are posted on the cliff & in a mill near the dam to annoy the enemy as much as possible & also to protect our workmen on the dam. They are getting along very well. Could not work on it last night as the Yankees set the Mill on fire about dusk & the working party could not be relieved on account of the bright light. Before the Rockbridge rifles left the mill the enemy shot a ball thro' [through] both walls. They well knew the mill would soon be in flames & they must escape. But in order to do this, they wd [would] expose themselves to the withering fire of the enemy across the river. Out they go, one at a time, up the steep hill. A hundred guns fired at them, but strange to say they all escaped except one poor fellow who was

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shot dead half way up the hill. 'Twas Parks from Lexington: another name to be inscribed on the Rockbridge Monument. Gen [General] Jackson took 12 boats with the expedition. This made the Yankees believe we were going to cross the river. However, this evening the Gen [General] used them in a strategic way. The Yankees were playing on the dam with their artillery & we wanted to finish it that night so off the boats were packed up the river to a little place called Georgetown. The enemy seeing this dispatched their guns off up there. So we got all things arranged for the completion of the job.

Dec 22nd 1861

Camp Stevenson

Well 'tis Sunday evening & we are once more back on our old camp after the "dam expedition", as one of our boys called it. Finished the dam on the night of the 20th & left soon in the morning of 21st. Got to our tents above Martinsburg about 2 in

evening & starting soon this morning made a forward march as the day was cold, & got to this old camp about 2 P.M. Had good weather i.e., calm but cold at the

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dam. Fortunate too for 'tis now sleeting in a hurry. Had a right hard time of it down there. The next packet [packet boat] that comes will doubtless wash the whole concern away. Hope 'twill soon rain. The prospect for a Merry Christmas is quite dull indeed & we will doubtless spend a far different one from the own last spent at our old homes.

Dec 23rd 1861

The ground is covered with sleet this morning & slippery enough too. Pitched our tents in same old place, but during our absence some mischievous boys knocked the tops off our chimneys. And you may be sure some of the boys blessed them. 'Twas about 9 A.M. & the boys were knocking around camp as usual. A voice was heard exclaiming "good news for Co I." That news was that- -our company was ordered to report to Gen [General] Jackson's Head Qr's [Quarters] in Winchester for guard duty. That was good news! For us. For we expected now to realize the long dream of being-

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-stationed at the Gen.'s H-Qr's [General's Head Quarter's] in town & getting out of the old Reg't [Regiment] So we soon packed up & were in route for H-Qr's [Head Quarter's]. The H-Qr's [Head Quarter's] were in the suburbs in eastern part of town. Had to pitch our tents in a lot near, for was no house for us near enough H-Qr's., for us. Besides unless had a good comfortable and large house well supplied with fireplaces, I'd prefer the tents with chimneys.

The wind was blowing so hard that could scarcely pitch our tents. And when night came the wind blew so strong that it laid some of our tents flat & the others torn & tattered threatened to come down every minute. Many of us boys went over town to sleep. 19 staid [sic] at a hotel & slept in a bed the first time for 6 months. Was so newfangled that couldn't sleep for some time. Next morning, found our camp all "laid low in the dust", cups, plates &c. scattered all over the lot. And 'twas cold for the world too. The wind kept sweeping in fitful blasts from the cold & bleak summits of the Alleghany.

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Dec 25th, 1861

Head Quarters
Winchester Virginia

Well today was Christmas & how changed it seemed from the good old Christmas days of home. We spent the first part of the day in camp, and on the streets spirits up exited &c. Our duty here is quite easy, only two posts during the day & one at night, that being in the passage. Besides have nice times, as have no roll-calls &c., can go down town & visit the ladies as often as choose. 'Tis even better than at the H-Qr's [Head Quarters] of the old hero of Manassas, at Centreville. At night went to a concert given by the Sunday School at the Methodist S---Church. 'Tis the finest & largest one in town. 'Twas crowded with soldiers & the scene was enlivened by some of the beauty of Winchester. Had splendid music. 'Twas first time had been in a church for 6 months. The exercises all passed off very well indeed.

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Dec 31st 1861

Head Qr's [Quarters] Winchester

Well this is the last day of this memorable year. A yr. [year] of change & decay. A yr. [year] in which the tear of sorrow has dimmed the eye of many, & the smile of joy illuminated the countenance of others. It has been a year in which _____ political changes that will doubtless shake this globe from centre to circumference. Our Old Republic is divided, & we are no longer a United People.

The broad savannas & palmetto groves of the sunny South are no longer joined in political compact to the granite hills and bleak mountains of the fanatical North! We claim for ourselves a rank among the great nations of the world. And with the strong arm of our young men to fight our battles & with the God of battles for our-

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trust, we hope to secure & maintain that independence.

Well our boys have been enjoying themselves as well as could be expected. I've been visiting the ladies & making some very pleasant acquaintances. 'Tis rumored that the whole army have orders to march tomorrow. By the way the trees have reinforced strongly by 3 brigades from the army of the Western part of VA [Virginia], Gen [General] Loring is here & he commanded a division in the N— West. Have some four or five of our boys clerking at H-Qr's [Head Quarters] & two detailed daily for clerks. The others of the Rg't seem to envy our Company our situation & call us the "Pet Lambs", Don't care what call us so far can get a good comfortable situation. Charles James Faulkner who was exchanged from Yankee Prison for Col Ely is one of Gen [General] Jackson's volunteer aids. Four of the Gen [General]'s aids are alumni of W— [Washington] College. So the Gen [General] likes the College boys.

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Jan 1st 1862

Encampment on bank of "Hog Creek"

We got orders by daylight this morning to pack up, strike tents & be ready to move by 12 A.M. And to march not with the Reg't [Regiment] but as a Company & with the Gen'[General]'s wagons. We immediately conjectured a march against Romney, as there the Yankees were wintering. Also we felt sorry to leave Winchester so soon, just as we're beginning to make some lady acquaintances & really enjoy ourselves &c. However go we must & by two P.M. we started & after a march of nine miles, we halted & kindled our bivouac fires here on the banks of this, so called "hog creek" The troops are all ahead of us except a brigade of militia whose campfires we can see behind us. The Gen [General] has his tent pitched & is going to roost here with us. We'll take care of him.

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Jan 2nd 1862

Bivouac on the road-side

Started by daylight this morning & the day has been cold. Our company wagon owing to its heavy load didn't start with the Gen's [General's]. After going about a mile we fell in with the trains of wagons belonging to Gen [General] Loring's division & had to march behind them all day. 'Twas very boring as they moved slowly. Our Company wagon got in the train about 1 ½ miles behind us, so we despaired of seeing it soon. About 12 A.M. we passes the Romney road & took the

road leading thro' [through] Morgan Co [County], on towards Bath the County Seat of Morgan. So suspect the Gen. [General] was going down to tear down some of the bridges on the Balt & Ohio R-R [Railroad]. The day was miserably cold. Some of the Tenn. troops marching first in front of us stopped every now & then & kindled fires, must to the trouble of the citizens too; for-

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-they most invariably set the woods on fire. The whole line of march could be marked out from a distance by the smoke of the fires. Only marched about 9 miles & night cold & dark & found us in the midst of a long train of wagons in a long hollow. The road was bad & most of them stalled every now & then. The- Gen's wagon couldn't get up to him, nor could we get our wagon either. Here was a mess. Had nothing to eat since morning & no prospect soon. Kindled fires by the road side not sparing the rails at all & determined to make the best of the matter. Knew we were in for a winter campaign. The wind swept down the hollow in fitful blasts, the glowing of the fires, the shouting of the troops, & halloing of the drivers, made it a scene not often witnessed in civil life.

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Jan 3rd 1862

Encampment on Sleepy Creek

Last night about 10 o'clock our Company commissary (Raymond, a very worthy & energetic young man from Mass. [Massachusetts]) and some other detailed to stay with the wagon came up to the company & brought us something to eat, tho' [although] not enough by far to satiate our ravenous appetites [sic]. The wagon in front of us moved up about 1 o'clock, a distance of about 300 yds. & there some of them stuck fast 'till morning. Had the Yankees come on us & whipped us there, they'd gotten our blankest wagons &c. surely. We then built up large fires, laid rails around them, & then hard as 'twas we snatched a few hours sleep, without blankets & some of us without overcoats too, for they were in the wagon a mile behind. The night was bitter cold & one side would freeze whilst the other would thaw.

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Arose from our hard bed about daylight & with nothing to eat started on. Met several Reg'ts coming back to their wagons after something to eat . Our brigade

was in front, & we got up with it about sunrise. But by the way the sun did not honor us with his rays this morning. The Gen gave our Capt' [Captain] orders for us to join our Reg't [Regiment] this morning & let the wagons follow on after. So into the Reg't [Regiment] our Com- went, & started on the march about 9 o'clock. Were on the Martinsburg & Bath turnpike & 'twas a much better road than that of the previous day. To day came about 12 miles. Are getting near Bath now, where 'tis said are some 3,000 Yankees. We had a bright prospect before us. Hungry & cold, for blankets & provisions away behind in the wagon. About dark it began to snow. Had a miserable time of it crossing a creek 3 or 4 times on rails. I tell you the troops blessed the Gen

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for starting out on this expedition thus in the dead of Winter in a manner that wouldn't have been pleasant for him to have heard. Halted at length near the creek & kindled fires. Those who had tents, pitched them, but our company unfortunately had ours with the old wagon. Did the best we could. Got a piece of bread about the size of a man's hand & it only sharpened our appetites. Capt' [Captain] Gardner of the Pulaski Guards gave us a long fly to a tent, & this some of the boys hoisted & piled under with their feet towards the fire. Many of us went off & attempted to sleep in a barn, but 'twas so cold, we nearly froze. So we came back to the camp before daylight & the wagon was still in the rear. Thought we had as well laugh as cry under the circumstances of this pitiable case. Snowed and rained most all night.

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Jan 4th 1862

Bath

All started off on the march by daylight this morning. Only 12 of our Co— [Company] were present. The Capt. [Captain] gave the others permission to go back to the wagon, get something to eat. Their overcoats &c. Those of us who were present had pretty keen appetites, as had not eaten a good meal for two days. I fet [sic] very badly in the morning & had gone back but for the small size of our cot & soon after starting, it commenced snowing, blowing right in our faces. I tell you we suffered very much indeed. Gen. [General] Jackson & staff soon passed us, they all had a badge on, i.e. a strip of white cloth tied around the right arm. We then guessed, they expected a fight, Loring's advanced guard had a skirmish with the enemy yesterday evening & took 8 prisoners. We expected they had a strong

force there. Soon we halted & loaded. Then came the deep booming of cannons & we knew there was-

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-some work to do. Bath is situated in a kind of a hollow. With two roads leading from it to the Potomac, 6 miles distant. One across a small mountain N. W— [North West] of the town & other along the foot of said Mt [Mountain]. Gen. [General] Jackson found out there was only about 1,500 of the enemy there & so wished to surround the place & capture the larks. Our brigade was to enter by the main road, Loring's division were to come up on the S [South] & East sides of the place, & A brigade of the militia were sent forward to cut off the road over the Mt. [Mountain] The cannons still continue to fire, they are two pieces of the enemy stationed on the Mt. [Mountain] & commanding the main road. Our guns don't fire & don't wish them to know our force. So we have 30 pieces of artillery including two 24-pounders. So our brigade nears the place, the progress is slow, seeing to the flank movements &c.

We hear the volleys of musketry & think the work begun & feel sure of bagging the Yankees. But our-

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-plan was destined to fail. The enemy seeing they were out-numbered & likely to be surrounded, attempted to retreat by the road to the river along the foot of the Mt. [Mountain] There they turned and started over the Mt.—[Mountain]. There on or near the summit they met the brigade of militia sent thither to cut them off a very easy matter too. About 20 of the Yankees fired into them & shame to tell the cowardly "dogs" * ran. Their Col. [Colonel] ran over some of his men, so scared was he. Thus the way of retreat was offered. Just then a general advance was made on the town & the Yankees seeing themselves so closely pressed, hundreds of them took to the Mt. [Mountain] & like foxes ran over, each man for himself. Thus owing to the cowardice of the militia the whole crowd got away. Loring's division crossed the Mt. [Mountain] after the flying dogs & our brigade was quartered in the town. Here are the Berkly [Berkeley] Springs & the extensive buildings can accommodate a great many. Gen. [General] Jackson had our Co—[Company] ordered to leave the Reg't & quarter in this house, our belonging to the

* written over "dogs" is scrawled "Malish" slang for militia

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springs & very comfortable too. Are plenty of beds and mattresses in it, a kitchen to cook in &c.

We captured some Yankees here asleep & two sick ones. Also some commissary stores quite desirable about this time. A Yankee company occupied the house in which we are now quartered. In their flight they left many little things behind. So much for the taking of Bath, a kind of a failure in its own way.

We got their two pieces of cannon & 15 prisoners, nearly all of whom were from Illinois. Also took up some 10 of the Union men who were found at suspicious places & under suspicious circumstances too. They were the meanest kind of looking men & ought to be hung too every one of them. Well 'tis most bad time & must finish my chapter. Some of our boys we left on the way sick & are afraid some more of us will be sick ere long too. Left our tents by the way side too.

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Jan 5th 1862

Bath

As usual were aroused from our comfortable couches this morning about daylight & told to march back to the wagons and get breakfast. The Reg't's wagons were only about ½ mile back but ours was four only. 'Twas bitter cold ad as we walked briskly back the moisture of our breath froze on our whiskers & we, i.e. some of us, looked like Dunkards or old [Druids?]. Found & recognized our old wagon at last & cooked & eat one more hearty meal. Came back to Bath, thus making 8 miles at least of the breakfast trip. Found that the brigade had left & our Co— [Company] had been ordered by the Gen [General] to stay there, take charge of the prisoners & guard the public stores &c. To This we made no objections whatever. So the Co— [Company] marched to the Court House, Took the prisoners & posted our sentinels at the required places.

The house in which we staid last night was the summer residence of David Strother, alias Porte Crayon,

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whose father-in-law Mr. Randolph is the proprietor of the Berkly Springs. Porte Crayon, shame to say is now in Gen [General] Bank's staff. Mr. Randolph is a

strong Southern Man, or is at least while the southern troops are here. Crayon's house has some nice furniture in it. Is in it a laboratory containing some nice specimens; also his painting room full of hundreds of paintings, some of which were beautiful. I didn't know before he was such a good painter. Also there was his library, tho' [although] it had been picked over, & were now no select works in it. Shame to say, that this man so gifted is a traitor to his old mother state. I saw his wife & little boy. She came & got the most valuable of the things from his cabinet & picture room. The others were confiscated. I could not carry off any of the pictures as were too large, but I got a book out of the library ("Eulogies Pronounced on Death of Henry Clay") & some shells &c. from the cabinet. The country in Morgan & uper [sic] Frederick is very rough &

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uneven, by no means striking in its features at all—his poor & looks as 'twere not worth fighting for. Yet this is a very pretty little village & the things are very finely fixed up indeed. Now the water is very warm & steam constantly rises off it. Many of our boys went in & took a bathe, but the coming out part was the worst. Every Summer a great many visitors frequent the springs. Mr. Randolph gave them their meals. Quite a treat too.

Jan 6th 1862

Bath. In Court House.

Had a good rest in this house last night, as kept it warm all the night & I only pity the troops down on the river. They have torn town two rail road bridges & also torn up much of the track. Also captured large army supplies, such as overcoats, leather &c. 'Tis reported they are

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going to shell (i.e. burn) Hancock over in MD [Maryland]. The prisoners seem to be well contented, as our company treats them well & don't taunt them. To do so is cowardly. Always treat an enemy kindly, when he is in your power. Said if they were free they would fight again. Are a great many Union men in B—[Bath]. In fact most of Morgan County were so inclined. Have heard a good deal of firing down on the river today. The weather still continues cold.

Jan 7th 1862

Encampment at Cross Roads

Got orders soon this morning to pack up & be ready to march in the rear of the brigade with the prisoners. Started our wagons on soon, so as to give it a fair start. The Gen. [General] had accomplished his purpose & was ready to retire. 'Twas about sunset when the brigade passed thro' & we left the beautiful little village of B—[Bath]. Marched to this place—15 miles—by 12 & halted. 'Twas amusing to see

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Yankees as well as our boys fall down, coming along. The road was quite slippery, in some places icy. Built large fires & placed a guard over the prisoners. Then went to bed. Mac & myself built a large fire, raked the snow away & getting some boards, near at hand, made a good bed. With our feet toward the fire we slept soundly until 8 in the morning.

Jan 10th 1862

Head Qtr's [Quarters]
Cross Roads

On the evening of the 8th we were relieved of the prisoner by a Co [Company] of militia. The Yankee boys didn't like it much, going into the hands of the militia besides me treated them kindly. Had guards from our Co—[Company] posted around HQ [Head Quarters], & the rest of us came to the barn to sleep, where we are now. It has moderated considerably & 'tis quite comfortable sleeping in the hay compared with the quarters of the other troops

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The number of the sick is enormous & 'tis increasing too. The old Gen [General] is sick also. I can't imagine what he is waiting here for. Unless he is planning a Romney expedition & is waiting for the roads to improve.

About $\frac{1}{3}$ of our company is sick,

Such expeditions as these cost more than they gain. 'tis killing both our man & beast. But soldiers are no better than brutes.

Some of the troops changed their camping grounds this morning & that looks like staying here sometime.

We don't eat but one good meal a day now & that about 10 in morning.

We can't stay here very long as 'tis too hard to get provisions here over the bad roads. The army will follow the Gen. [General] in the Spring & Summer cheerfully but there is cause for murmur thus in the dead of Winter, the ground white with snow & ice on the ponds on our way, could many _____ on the ice.

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Jan 13th 1862

Encampment at Bloomery Gap

Had orders to march by daylight this morning. Were many conjectures as to the direction &c. The cry of all is "back to W—[Winchester & in to winter quarters]". Started by daylight & took the Bloomery road. Got here about 2 o'clock & are going to stay here right in the ruts to night. 'Tis colder here than at W—[Winchester]'s & looks as tho' twould snow for a little. We are now on the road to Springfield whither 'tis said we are going to tear up some more R-[Rail] Road. This is a right good road. The Yankees have all left Romney. Heard we were coming on there & had a stampede leaving the place. Left 460 tents, great many army stores &c, also left the morning reports of the entire command, which was something over 5,000. 'Tis quite cold this evening.

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Jan 14th 1862

Four miles from Romney

Sure enough our expectations of snow last night were realized. Soon this morning our Capt [Captain] got orders to take ours & the wagons of the Gen [General]'s & try & go to Romney that night So away we went. Our wagon was in the midst of a train, but the Gen[General]'s were ahead of all. Soon came to Cacapon river, about the size of the North running by Lex—[Lexington]. Had to wait a short time for a bridge to be completed. About half a mile further came to the North, quite a respectable stream. Was no bridge & only a small boat. Many of the guard with the wagons, for they were ahead of the brigade, crossed on the wagons & horses. One of our boys (Jones) got over safe & sound but volunteered to bring back the boat for the Capt [Captain]. He was a dry-land frog, hence knew nothing about water. He first run the boat up & then down the river

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then across in a zigzag maneuver, until he ran into a team of mules crossing & came near being upset. Finally got to the bank & said 'twas his first & last trip in a boat. So thought we. But to crown all, Maj. [Major] Paxton pressed the boat for the bridge builders & Jones had to wait ever so long before going over. Some of us went up the river about 1 ½ miles & crossed in a boat & then striking across the county, fell into the road. Came to within four miles of W—[Winchester] & our company staid [sic] in two deserted houses near the road. The scenes that met our gaze in the evening shocked us. For the cruel Yankees have burnt all the homes on the road from R—[Romney] to W—[Winchester] for a distance of 8 miles from R—[Romney]. Frenchtown a little village a few weeks ago all flourishing & full of life is now in ashes by the torch of the miserable Yankee. To many of those they set fire, whilst the inmates were yet in them, they escaping-

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-only with their lives. They shot one poor old man down in his door & burned his house over his head. These & such other deeds they did, all of which are sufficient to make humanity cry out "for shame"! 'Tis enough to make every man in the South rush into the ranks of war from hoary age to blooming youth, & drive back the cruel invader. This is naught but extermination. They can't subdue us, they know it & in revenge the spirit of the nether world bids them thus set the torch to our homes, desolate our firesides, & tear our fair women & helpless children out to breast the mid-winters storm. The charred walls & lonely chimneys that now meet the eye on that desolated road will stand as sullen monuments to tell the people of the South the true character of their foe & to tell the world the cruelty of the Northern fanatics.

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Jan 15th 1862

Romney

Our whole company took breakfast this morning at a house near where we staid [sic] all night, & finally got into R—[Romney] about 12 AM. 'Twas raining this morning too. Were quartered in a good & comfortable house the opposite side of the street from Head Quarters. Have a good Kitchen to cook in & c. Am glad we have gotten here at last. For have been talking about coming here to run the Yankees away for 6 months. Rest didn't have the pleasure of fighting "The Gents."

About two weeks ago, they heard that Jackson was about to surround them & they made a perfect stampede from the place. They left a great many army stores behind, many tents, & even the morning reports of the command showing a force of 5,326. They were fortified here & had they made a bold stand, many a one of our brave troops had fallen ere-

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-the Confederate flag had floated as it now does over this mountain girdled town. They were living highly here, having plundered the country for miles around. And then when our army comes to give them battle, behold, like cowardly dogs on a sheep-killing expedition they all ran. Did the world ever see such cowardice & cruelty combined –No, No!

Jan 18th 1862

Romney

Well we are getting along finely here, plenty to eat & good quarters. Some of our boys are boarding out, & living well. This is a small place & was no doubt a beautiful one before the Yankees polluted it with their vile presence. They have disfigured it awfully & by burning up all the fences, cutting down shade trees, tearing down houses &c. Drove many of the “secesh” citizens away & occupied their

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homes. Hence many of them came back with us. The town is surrounded with Mts. [Mountains] & the South branch of the Potomac runs half a mile North of the place. The main body of the army came up Yesterday. Most of the troops are quartered in houses. The people in this part of the country welcome us heartily as coming to deliver them from the merciless invader. Many of the citizens had a great many goods stored away in their houses, these we searched & got back all the Yankee property. Now Gen [General] Jackson has cleared the Yankees out of this part of Va. For are now from H— Ferry away up the Potomac above this point . Some of our company are coming in from W—. Would like to gather all here. One of our boys (H. White) got a furlough at Cross Roads.

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Jan 20th 1862

Romney

'Tis raining hard this morning & has been raining for several days past. The river & mountain streams near here are all swollen & rush madly along their rocky channels. We got under soon this morning to cook two days rations & be ready to march in two hours, but guess that owing to the inclemency of the weather, the Gen. [General] will hold on a moment or until it quits raining at least. 'Tis thought he is going down to nab some Yankees cut off by the high water is also going to the R—[Rail] Road to pay it a few compliments. Yesterday was Sunday & went to church in the afternoon. Heard a chaplain in the 1st Tenn Reg't [Regiment] preach from same text heard him preach in W— [Winchester] a few weeks ago. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" It seemed like old times to hear a church bell & sit in a fine building to hear preaching. For as a general thing we can-

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-hardly tell when Sunday comes by looking around us. For wagons are running to & fro, soldiers are coming & going, couriers are passing & repassing, & all is noise & confusion. None of that quite & repose we've been want to enjoy at home in the days of "long ago". There is no church bell to call us away from our busy scenes, up to the sanctuary. Yet when we think of home & friends, then the dictates of our better natures bid us "Remember the Sabbath day, &c.", for there we learned it long ago.

The roads are in a miserable condition, & the wagons can scarcely get along at all. Surely 'twould be a bad time for to make a retreat. But hope we'll not have to retreat. The men are getting sick fast & a great many lives will be shortened by this expedition.

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Jan 22nd 1862

Romney

'Tis cloudy this morning & the Mountains around here are white with snow. Yet the roads are not frozen over at all & are very deep. Have orders to march soon tomorrow morning, & 'tis thought our route will be towards Winchester. In fact the two 24-pounders have started ahead, so as to give them a fair pace. 'Tis reported that even our brigade is going to W—[Winchester] to winter quarters. Gen [General] Loring going to stay here. Hope 'tis a fact, For I do want to get out of

this mud-hole of a place erelong; one out-of-the-world place too, for can't hear any news here. This place is like it was on the verge of civilization, for are not far from the lives of Yankeedom.

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Jan 23rd 1862

Capon Bridge

Were aroused at 4 this morning, to get breakfast before marching, which some did & others did not. Left the town before daylight & ere the stars had paled in the eastern sky, we were 3 good miles from the far-famed town of R—[Romney]. Our Co—[Company] marched with ours & the H-Qr's [Head Quarter's] wagons, so went in a hurry as the town of Winchester was our destination & Winter Qr's [Quarters] our long cherished hope. The order of the day is as follows: Gen [General] Loring's command is to winter in & around Romney, Gen [General] Garnett's Brigade (alias Stone Wall) to winter low and around Winchester & brigade of "The Malish" at Bath & one in Martinsburg. So guess the Campaign for the winter is over. I sincerely hope so at least. Marched to this place 23 miles to day. And have gotten a house to rest our weary bones in. Quite a treat. Passed by Hanging Rock the scene of the defeat of the militia & captain of their cannon. 'tis a narrow defile & could be defended by a small force of resolute men against 10 times their number.

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Jan 24th 1862

Head Quarters. Winchester

Arrived in town safe & sound about two in the evening. Quite a good march for us 42 miles in a day & a half. Bet the nearer we came to the town the faster we travelled. And when at last we saw the spires & turrets of this beautiful town our hearts fairly leaped for joy. Our company left on Jan 1st, with about 35 boys & marched into town this evening 18 strong & no Lieuts. [Lieutenants]. So, had disease thinned our ranks. About half the army had come back to W— [Winchester], some really sick & others to be classed amongst the pretenders. It commenced snowing as entered the town & had to pitch our old tents in same old lot. Had no house for us to go into. The brigade halted about 2 ½ miles from town; Also the Rockbridge Artillery.

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Jan 30th 1862

Head Qr's [Quarters] Winchester

Well 'tis snowing most beautifully this morning. "Most beautifully" I mean to those in comfortable lodgings, but not to the soldier in his torn & tattered tent. Well we are navigating quite smoothly & pleasantly. Some of our boys have been boarding over in town, at the Union Hotel & elsewhere. But believe the funds are getting low & they are advocating a transfer to old qur's. Mack & Watson, got home safe & sound on 21st after dodging the Militia pickets. Was glad to hear of it. Two of our boys are lying very low in the hospital here, i.e. J. Lightner, & Roberts. Miss E—Moore is here from our old neighborhood. I have been out visiting the "fair ones" of W—[Winchester], several times since our return. Have but one post at H-Q [Head Quarters] now. Our tent was lost on the trip & we are distributed around generally. The old 4th Reg't [Regiment] is in the Fair Grounds here, but the brigade & artillery is encamped 4 miles from here on the Pughtown road, where are going to put up Winter quarters—The officers, but not the privates are getting furlough now, As preference is to those for the war.

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Feb 1st 1862

Head Qr's [Quarters] Winchester

Well, stern old Winter sitting on his icy throne, still showers on us his unwelcome gifts. Snowed last night about 3 inches in depth & as ground were thoroughly wet 'tis a perfect slush this morning. But expect to move into a good house on Monday. The news afloat this morning is bad in the extreme. 'Tis that Gen [General] Jackson has sent his resignation to Richmond. The cause of which is this. He left Loring & his command at Romney, to hold the place. Loring sent a protest to the war department against this & so did some of his petty officers. Wherefore the Sec [Secretary] of Was, without consulting on the subject with Gen [General] Jackson, orders Loring to come back to W—[Winchester] with his whole army, & thus leaving the place to be again occupied by the Yanks & thus lose all that was gained on that hard & trying expedition. So Gen-

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-Jackson not being allowed to mature & carry out his own plans, his orders given in his department being countermanded unknown to him, sent his resignation to R—. Loring is a selfish ambitious man & from the time he came to W— [Winchester], he has been working against Jackson jealous as it were of him has been known to abuse him, behind his back of course. His scheming & intriguing was the cause of resigning. Guess he (L—[Loring]) thinks “now for me”, Gen [General] Jackson far excels Loring in point of capability, morality, & every other virtue due a great Gen [General]. However hope they won’t accept it & make ample amends for the insult. Our company are all out today. For his fate decides ours, i.e., whether or not we lose our good quarters & go back to the old Reg’t [Regiment]. The “Pet lambs” are fearful of being turned out of clover to browse on the barren hill sides. Hope not. But hope for the best.

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Feb 9th 1862

Head Qtr’s [Quarters]

Well have gotten into our house at last, a nice brick one on the Depot street. Nine of us are lodged in the parlor quite a change from the cold damp tent. Well, went to church twice to day as ‘tis Sunday, to the Old School Presbyterian. Have quite a nice congregation there & a good preacher too. Has been a beautiful day, altho’ here & there lie patches of snow & ice. Well great events are already casting their shadows around us now. The call for volunteers to reinlist [sic] is loud & strong. And if there was ever a time for a display of true & genuine patriotism. ‘Tis now, when the Yankees host hang around our border & like a might wave will sweep down on us as soon as Spring comes. We lose all we have gained in the last yr. [year] unless the Vol’s [Volunteers] reinlist [sic]. The blood shed at Manassas, at Leesburg at Bethel &c, we’ll all have been shed in vain, unless we again marshall [sic] our armies-

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& return with redoubled vigor to the contest. Many of our brigade have gone home on furlough having reinlisted [sic]. The conditions being 50 \$ & a furlough not exceeding 60 days. Some of our Co-, have been guilty of the same act. Myself & Bro Mack have reinlisted [sic] & expect to start in route for Rockbridge tomorrow evening. Nearly all the Rockbridge boys are going to reinlist [sic]. Some of us have our rations cooked at a wise old lady’s [Mrs. Drahl]. She cooks them we go there & eat 3 lines a day & pay her a dollar a piece per week, besides she furnished

butter & some little extras for us. So I'm afraid we'll not get into such good qr's [quarters] when we get back at end of 40 days. So feel like leaving sort of a home, but 'tis to go to my good old home. For expect when we get back here we'll doubtless have to post off somewhere after the Yankees &c.

Back Cover reads:
Ends Feb 9th 1862