

1864 Diary of Alfred W. Benson, Co. D, 154th N.Y. Vols.

Friday, January 1, 1864

This birth day of the year 1864, dawns upon me in the Army of the Cumberland at Lookout Valley Tenn. This day I have by order assumed the duties of Actg. Adjt of the Regt. It is a bitter cold day. This morning I recd a New Years present. Gloves & socks from home-- Thank you brother!

Saturday 2

Another cold & windy day I have made out with the good help of Clk Farlee An Annual Return of Casualties, on 63, The commissary having no rations, we fast with the exception of a few beans for dinner.

Sunday 3

Another cold & windy day hard at work all day in the office-- no mail or news from home

Monday 4

Rainy & a little warmer. have made out the Annual Return of casualties for 1863. One of the Pioneers fell a tree a limb of which struck my tent, breaking it down, but happily injuring no one

Tuesday 5

Nothing unusual happened to day--wrote a letter to sister. Attended recitation in Tactics this evening at Regtl. Hd. Qrs.

Wednesday 6

Everything passed off smoothly in the adjt office to day. Chaplain Lowing having received his discharge, delivered his farewell address to the Regt. on parade, A meeting of officers was held to adopt proper resolutions in regard to that Gentleman of which I was made Sec

Thursday 7

Still very cold. Chaplain Lowing left for home to day--after receiving a copy of our resolutions expression of regret

Friday 8

This morning Mother Earth is covered with snow a novel sight to us in the Army. Nothing new

Saturday 9

Nothing except a letter from home (W.H.) stating they had not heard from since the fight, cant get a letter through.

Sunday 10

wrote a letter home Felt considerably puffed in consequence of some matters going wrong in the Office

Monday 11

Passed off smoothly No letters. No nothing

Tuesday 12

All quiet in Lookout Valley to day

Wednesday 13

As usual this day has brought no news, or changes of importance to me.

Thursday 14

To day Col. Jones recd a letter from W.H. enquiring about me. Hasnt heard from me, since the fight--yet I have written regualrly. I recd a letter from Annie W__ all serene date Jan 1st

Friday 15

A little warm to day--have not been very busy--no mail--

Saturday 16

Nothing of importance occurred The weather was very pleasant.

Sunday 17

A beautiful day. recd a letter from W.H. & H Sunday Inspection passed off with interest.

Monday 18

All serene

Tuesday 19

Same as yesterday

Wednesday 20

ditto. One letter from W.H.

Thursday 21

One Letter from W.H.

Friday 22

One Letter from W.H. enclosing Ten (10) dollars

Saturday 23

A very beautiful day

Sunday 24

Another most beautiful day--the air is soft and feeling like that of Spring. About 9 o'clock--sitting at my desk engaged in writing a communication to the Democrat, the Orderly entered bearing the Doubting Order the 154 will move at 8 o'clock AM.

Monday 25

Regt marched at 8½ o'clock to Kelleys Ferry--I staying behind for transportation wagons arrived at 2 P.M. and we loaded up the Adjts tent &c and moved to Kelley's Ferry--

Tuesday 26

Col Jones is in command of Post--I am appointed Post Adjts. The Regt has fine quarters recd two letters from W.H. & H and MJ--

Wednesday 27

Mounted guard the morning from 3 AM & our Regt. at noon recd order to march back to Hookers Hd. Qrs. very warm and pleasant found a miserable camp and feel lo

Thursday 28

Fixed up somewhat have lost of work to do--The boys are moving over timber from the old camp

Friday 29

Work of improving Camp progresses--have been hard at work on monthly returns &c--Genl. Inspection at 2 P.M.

Saturday 30

Sent in "Monthly report" Report of "Changes in Com. Off"--
"Sutler report" "Report of Off Servts" Monthly Report of C. & G.
Equipage Ordnance &c, Friday

Sunday 31

Another beautiful day Inspection Dress Parade &c as usual

Monday, February 1

Rainy this morning--but fair with sunshine in P.M. A large Picket detailed from our Regt. this morning

Tuesday 2

All quiet in Lookout Valley recd letter from H.W.C--

Friday 5

Batt'n drill at 2 P.M.

Saturday 6

Recd one letter from WH & 1 from J.H.

Sunday 7

Went out with JMG & W.S.C. and visited with some Tenn ladies
F M De Jeens went home on furlough

Tuesday 9

Picket guard of 39 men & 1 officer

Sunday 14

Waters & Johnson dischg'd

Thursday 18

Paid My Maj Campbell \$523.40

Sunday 21

Had divine Service Agent of Christian Commission officiating

Monday 22

Went ^{to} Chattanooga & expressed by Adams Express Co. \$400.⁰⁰ to
W. H. Benson

Saturday 27

F M DeJean returned from Furlough. Bringing me a Valise packed with clothing from home

Thursday March 3

Went on Lookout Mt. rather tiresome traveling but paid well-- fine view

Friday 4

Every thing goes wrong to day--Martin made a fuss about going on Picket and "Horse sheded" the Col in the --expect to live through it all however--

Tuesday 22

Woke up this morning and found the ground well covered with snow and the same falling very fast--Rather a new experience in Tenn.

Sunday 27

Pleasant day took a horse-back ride to the summit of Raccoon Mt. fine time gay friends

Wednesday 30

Regt. marched in "Raid" in direction of Trenton Ga I remained behind

Friday April 1

Regt. returned somewhat worn out with marching

Wednesday 13

Watch Game of Ball between 33 Mass & Gen. Hookers Cavly Escort 33 wins

Thursday 14

Grand Review. 1' & 2' Divns Reviewed by Maj. Gen. Thomas.

Friday 29

Was this day relieved from duty as Actg Adjt by Lt A Crosby Adjt.--and assumed command of Co. 'D'

Saturday 30

Mustered for pay by Lt Harding AAGl

Wednesday May 4

Broke camp and marched over the road around the point of Lookout Mt. in direction of Rossville encamped about 2 mis South by west Chattanooga

Thursday 5

Marched this PM in rear of Train in direction of LaFayette Ga. camped at 10 P.M.

Friday 6

Marched on to Peavine Church & camped arriving at noon

Saturday 7

Marched in direction of Gordons Springs passed through that place & camped near it

Sunday 8

Marched to Buzzard Rocky faced Ridge--a high, very steep Mt and the stronghold of the Rebels in this quarter. Our Brigade formed line of battel at the foot and marched on to the height in the face of a galling fire we were repulsed at the summit--after having planted our flag there. My company lost 7 killed & wounded

Monday 9

Lay near Gen. Geary's H^d.qrs. built breastworks at night

Tuesday 10

Lay in breastworks all day recd news of Grants victory over Lee near the old Chancellorsville battle ground

Wednesday 11

~~Marched to Snake Creek Gap and camped. very cold~~

Thursday 12

Marched to Snake creek Gap and through camping with Gen M^CPherson's Forces--together with the 1st & 3^d Divs of ours C. R. Brown of my co failed to arrive at night--he threw away his gun in the late fight & since has lurked in the rear.

Friday 13

Moved by slow marches & frequent halts in the direction of the R.R. south of Dalton fighting in front all day--Recd news of the capture of Dalton by Gen Howard slept in breastworks at night

Saturday 14

Heavy fighting on our left. Moved late at night to the support of Gen. Howard on the left.

Gen Hooker saves a battery by a little presence of mind

Sunday 15

Were ordered to be ready for action this morning. Advanced by "battalion in mass" on the rebel works and carried them at a breakneck speed until dark. Our Brigade were sent in front of a rebel fort at night & met with a unpleasant adventure.

Monday 16

Our Army advanced to Resaca and found the enemy gone. moved in south in pursuit a fine country and a hot day

Tuesday 17

Crossed the Canasota River at dark and camped on the south bank

Wednesday 18

Marched by a circuitous route through a fine country. very recently left by the rebs camped at 9 P.M well exhausted.

Thursday 19

The Corps moves on to the south--our Regt remains behind as rear guard I am on picket with 30 men. A very warm day. Some fighting in front this morning.

Moved on with train at 4 P.M. camp at 10

Friday 20

Remain in camp near Cassville, a pleasant village of about 1,000 inhabitants

Saturday 21

In camp near Cassville

Sunday 22

In Stat u quo

Monday 23

Marched at day light in direction of Etowah River. Crossed the River on Canvas Pontoons and camped on the South bank Col. Buschbeck took his Leave C. R. Brown deserted

Tuesday 24

Marched on to Burnt Hickory Ridge and camped for the night

Wednesday 25

Crossed Pumpkin Vine Creek about noon and soon heard firing at the head of the column. We form line of battle and ascertain that we now met the Rebels in force marching to intercept us at P.V. Cr. At 6 P.M. Our Corps charged upon and drove them 3 m^s. loss heavy-- but slight in our Regt

Thursday 26

Laid on our arms last night through a bitter rain storm at daylight threw up breastworks under fire of the enemy. Our Batteries moved into position. heavy skirmishing but no general engagement

Friday 27

Remained in Breastworks under fire

Saturday 28

In Stat u quo

Alarm at night and heavy firing caused by supposed advance of the Rebels--great panic among cooks & Teamsters

Sunday 29

Remain under arms. Continual skirmishing going on--We are getting pretty well worn out

Monday 30

Same as above

Tuesday 31

Ditto

Wednesday, June 1

Our Corps relieved by Logan's (15th). we march to the left and camp in the woods, of which we have been an inhabitant since crossing the Etowah--Our Regt on picket to night

Thursday 2

A heavy rain storm moved at noon in support of 23^d A.C. which charged upon & drove the rebel left 3 miles

Camped in the "woods" of course

Friday 3

Remained in camp Skirmishing in front

Saturday 4

Remained in camp Rebels retired--23^d A.C. occupies their works

Sunday 5

Remained in camp somewhere in the woods

Monday 6

Left these "woods" and marched till noon when we arrived at an old log hut in the "woods". got dinner and camped near by building breastworks. Our camp near Acworth--4 ms

Tuesday 7

Recd order from Gen Sherman that we would march on the 9th

Wednesday 8

All quiet except some skirmishing in front

Thursday 9

Packed up but the order to march was countermanded so far as concerned our corps. 4" A.C. passing all day

Friday 10

Ordered to be ready to march at 8 AM but we didnt go rainy
Surg Day Capt Crosby & "y.t" went on a "raid" to Acworth a pretty little village on the line of the W & A R.R. seen but few "cits"

Saturday 11

Ordered to pack up again this morning and fall in. but it proved a fizzle so here we are still in the woods Raining

Sunday 12

Ordered to pack up and march but didnt do the latter Went down to the train and took dinner with Q M Shannon black beans Raining hard 3 letters from home

Monday 13

Ordered to march but didnt
Raining very hard

Tuesday, June 14

Moved at 10 A.M. 1 mile to the rear and went on Picket duty. At noon rec'd orders to march--marched up within sight of the Rebs and went into camp for the night

Wednesday 15

Our Brigade marched at noon to the front and formed line of battle in a dense wood our Regt was deployed as Skirmishers for the Brig we had hot work driving the enemy about 2 ms when the battle became general our loss 3 killed 24 wounded built breastworks all night.

Thursday 16

Built breastworks last night. Moved this morning to a position in 2^d line of battle D. A. Brand killed & Capt A. Crosby wounded
Built breastworks at night.

Friday 17

Found the enemy had left our front and at day light advanced into their rifle pits found them very strong At noon the Army moved on finding the enemy near Kenistaw mountain here we had the fiercest artillery fighting of the campaign built breastworks at night rainy

Saturday 18

Rained very hard Heavy artillery fighting Remained in our entrenchments keeping skirmishers in our front Jas M^CFarling wounded

Sunday 19

Found the enemy withdrawn from our front moved on through the mud to the eastward Rains as hard as I ever experienced. Formed line of battle as usual in the woods about 10 A.M. Were soon ordered up to the support of Bundy's battery Did not become engaged and built breastworks at night

Monday 20

Our Brigade relieved the Third lying in the front line on our right. All quiet

Tuesday 21

Were relieved by a Brigade from 4th Corps. Marched by the right 1½ ms and intrenched

Wednesday 22

Moved ½ mile to the front and again intrenched Enemy in plain view across an open field. About 5 P.M. The enemy advanced in three lines and attacked the 1st Div furiously Our Div moved into line on their left and built works in great haste. The enemy was repulsed with great loss

Thursday 23

Strengthened our works and expected an attack

Friday 24

Remained quiet on the skirmish line to night in a very exposed point All the dignitories expected an attack

Saturday 25

All quiet

Sunday 26

On Skirmish Line at a secesh mansion vacated by its former occupants. cool shady spot Plenty of bullets whizzing in the air

Monday 27

Our Div moved by the left and formed line of battle Our Brig in front with 2^d & 3^d in reserve--Charged at a double quick driving the rebs within their works and established ours a half mile in advance

Tuesday 28

Worked some upon our line of breastworks

Wednesday 29

All quiet except the usual picket firing in front McBride Co. "G" killed and Willover Co I wounded

Thursday 30

Mustered for pay. Were relieved at night and marched till day light relieving a portion of 23^d A.C. went on skirmish line as soon as halted

Friday, July 1

Remained on Skirmish Line till dark

Saturday 2

Remained in Breastworks

Sunday 3

Enemy retreated last night we follow on capturing many stragglers reach the rebel position at night and camp

Monday 4

Remain in camp bands play--the only thing to remind one of the day. very warm go on picket at night

Tuesday 5

Rebels "retired" last night. we follow on find their works the most formidable I ever saw. Reach a point on Nickajack Creek near Chattahoogee River where the spires of Atlanta can be seen

Wednesday 6

Find the enemy in front remain in camp till 4 P.M. when we move 2 ms to the left

Thursday 7

Take up position between 14" & 15 corps and go into camp

Friday 8

All quiet made pay rolls for co

Saturday 9

Worked finishing Pay Rolls Feel decidedly unwell.

Sunday 10

Unwell a fine day but very hot

Monday 11

All quiet

Saturday 16

Made Ord Return for 2^d Qr 64.

Sunday 17

Sent on Ord Return moved at 3 P.M. and crossed the Chattahooche at Pages Ferry at 10 P.M. marched till midnight and bivouacked

Monday 18

Moved slowly toward Atlanta slight skirmishing ahead crossed Nancy's Creek at noon--formed Line of battle and marched through a dense wood--finding no rebs--but some black berries

Tuesday 19

Crossed Peach tree Creek at 5 P.M. the Div fortified

Wednesday 20

Advanced a half mile and halted by Roadside Went on Skirmish at noon advanced line of mile and was driven back by a rebel charge--several engagement resulting as a total repulse to ye rebel hordes

Thursday 21

Remained in breastworks turned over to Maj Warner 7 guns and accouterments

Friday 22

Moved forward across a Rebel work on a steep hill Just evacuated Established our Line on a hill commanding Atlanta Heavy arty firing in P.M.

Saturday 23

Remained in Posish

Thursday, August 4

Recd letter from W.H. notifying me of the death of his wife
Hard fighting on the right

Friday 5

Two alarms in the skirmish Line heavy fighting on the right & demonstrations all along

Saturday 6

On Picket

Thursday, August 11

Recd S.O. No 219 ordering me to Bridgeport for Regtl Records Books &c

Friday 12

Started at 9 A.M. with Chap Fletcher & Adjt Moyer on horse back to Marietta Got a good dinner of a Lady there fine place took train at 12,45 P.M.

Saturday 13

reached a pt near Acworth and run of the track by "Gorrillas"
Breakfasted on corn bread & milk at a farm house--Train went back to Big Shanty we stand at A--and were obliged to go on foot to Alltoona

Sunday 14

~~Breakfasted on corn bread & milk at a farm house dined ditto
Train moved back to Big Shanty. we remained at A--and were left--
footed up to Alltoona--5 miles~~

Track torn up

Monday 15

~~Took a train~~

Having arrived in Chat last night we got our pay this morning and purchased clothing &c stopped at Crutchfield House

Tuesday 16

Stayed at Crutchfield very hot

Wednesday 17

Hired a nigger with his wagon and paid a visit to our old camp at Chattanooga i.e. that is Lookout Valley--pleasant time. lots of peaches & 2 good square meals

Thursday 18

Nothing new

Friday 19

Went ot Bridgeport found the baggage all right put up wall tent and made ourselves comfortable

Saturday 20

Staid in Bridgeport living on vegetables

Sunday 21

Staid in B--heavy rains

Monday 22

Went back to Chattanooga with our baggage

Tuesday 23

Came on to Marietta reaching that place at 10 P.M.

Wednesday 24

Came on from M--to the 3 mile post reached camp at 2 P.M.

Thursday 25

Remained in camp

Friday 26

Marched at 8 P.M. (our Corps) to Paces Ferry reached that pt a little after Daylight

Saturday 27

Breakfasted and begun work felling trees preparatory to fortifying A Great move supposed to be progressing on our right

 Took up posish and built b_W_

Sunday 28

Fell trees in our front--built camp &c

 Badly poisoned my right eye--considerably swollen

Monday 29

Moved to the right 1½ mile and camped in Breastworks Went on Picket to night

Tuesday 30

Nothing new--relieved from picket at 5 P.M.

Wednesday 31

Mustered for pay for July & August

 Worked on pay Rolls

Thursday, September 1

Worked on Pay Rolls and clothing acct.

Friday 2

Recd the News at 1 P.M. that Atlanta was ours. Marched for that city reaching it at Dark. Camped near the Court House A fine town--

 Took quarters on the porch of a fine Secesh Mansion

Saturday 3

Waked up after a good nights sleep. Everybody has 2 or 3 plugs of tobacco.--The town is full of it. Moved out into a large fort south of city and pitched tents heavy winds and rain

Sunday 4

Moved South and took up a new position.

Monday 5

All quiet. went to town. Saw some pretty women

Sunday 11

Went to see the Buoke family--fine girls

Monday 12

Detained on board of Survey at Div Hd Qrs

Thursday 15

Lt Cameron arrived from home looking well glad to see him

Friday 16

On duty as Adjut of the day

Saturday 17

Review of 2 Brigade by Gen Geary

Sunday 18

Went to Church in town--moved into the large Brick house just vacated at rear of our camp

Tuesday 20

Signed pay Rolls

Thursday, October 6

Went to Atheneum in city--most miserable piece of minstrelry--

Wednesday 12

Recd Pay to Aug 31-64

Saturday 15

Mustered out as 2^d Lt. and mustered in as capt to date Oct 16"64

Wednesday 19

Detailed on G.C.M. of Divn

Thursday, November 3

Recd an month & 15 days pay of Maj A.M. Nichols U.S.A. \$100 check on N.Y. No. 1220

Tuesday 15

Started out on a campaign--Atlanta is burning. And all the Depots Storehouses &c are being destroyed marched out to Stone mt & camped.

Wednesday 16

Marched at 8 AM to the east ward had fresh pork & sweet potatoes for supper

Thursday 17

Marched at day light toward Madison
fine country plenty of provisions & forage

Friday, December 9

1st Div met the enemy in 2 small forts 16 ms from Savannah. forts captured one Cassion--2^d Brigade moved to the right flank out were not needed

Saturday 10

Guarded train until noon--& moved up to the 5 mile post heavy cannonading all day

Sunday 11

Rainy this morning heavy cannonading in front. Inspection this morning preparatory to action

My Name. My Country
What are they to thee
What whether high or low
My Pedigree
Perhaps I far surpassed
All other men
Perhaps I fell below
All other men What then
Suffice it stranger
That thou seest a tomb
Thou knowest its use
It hides no matter whom

MEMORANDA.

Ordnance

May 3 Turned in for Transfitn
one (1) E R Musket complete
" 4 Turned in for Transportation
one (1) Musket & accouterments
in full--Kerr

Shoes Issued May 20

A. Williams	1 Pr
J D Campbell	1 "
B F. Phillips	1 "
C R Brown	1 "
J Johnston	1 "
Chas Bookman	1 "

June 7

J. R. Crowell	1 "
J Mc Farland	1 "
Stockings	
D Brand	1 "

June 13-64

J Mc Stay	1 pr socks	1 pr shoes
J Crowell	"	"
A williams	2	"
B Bently	2	"
C Bookman	2	"
W F Beach	2	1 " "
J Morris	1	"
West	1	"
J Campbell	1	"
D Phillips	1	"
O F Adams	1	1 " "
A. B. Weast		1 " "
McFarland	1	"
B. F. Phillips	1	"

June 22-64

F.L. West 1 pr shoes
H.E. Locke 1 "
B. F. Bently 1 pr socks
O F Adams " "

June 28

C. Bookman 1 pr Dwrs & 1 shirt
J Mc Stay 1 " "
A B Weast 1 shirt
J. Morris 1 "
A Williams 1 Blouse
Chas 2 pr socks

Aug 30

M.P. Burdick
1 Pr Bootees
S Moore
1 Pr Trowsers & 1 Shirt
A Lowe
1 Shirt & 1 Trowsers
G. Graves
1 Shirt
B. F. Bently
1 Shirt

Ordnance

June 21

Turned in to Maj L. D. Warner
5 Guns & A.C. Co. D
2 " " " " I

Aug 6

Turned over to Maj Warner
2 Guns & A.C. Co D

Clothing July 25

Presley 2 shirts 1 Drs
C Bookman 1 shirt 1 shs
F Mc Clure 2 " " "
A.R. Dillingham 1" 1 "
Dud Phillips " "
J.D. Campbell " "
W. F. Beach 1 "
O. F. Adams 1 "
B.F. Phillips 1 " " shs

Aug 15

C. G. Sutton 1 Blouse