

THE HUNTSVILLE HISTORICAL REVIEW

Summer-Fall 1999

Volume 26

No. 2

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Daniel Coleman
(Courtesy of Francis D. Coleman, Tuckahoe, NY)

DANIEL COLEMAN DIARY
January 1863 – August 1864

Transcribed and Annotated by Norman M. Shapiro

On September 7, 1863, Captain Daniel Coleman wrote the following in his diary, "Today is my birthday and I am twenty-five years old and am celebrating by marching in the dust and hot sun preparatory to meet the enemy – the ruthless invaders of our soil – better than to be celebrating it over the wine cup and the luxurious dinner though!" It will be evident that this last was said without tongue in cheek, for Coleman believed with all his heart and soul in the cause for which he was fighting. He had already experienced much fighting and personal tragedy and would see much more before the war was finally over.

Daniel Coleman was born in Athens, Alabama, September 7, 1838 to Judge Daniel Coleman and Elizabeth Lockhart Peterson Coleman who were both descendants of distinguished colonial Virginia families. He received his early schooling in Athens and at Hanover Academy in Virginia and was graduated with honor from the Wesleyan College at Florence, Alabama, and later from the law school of the University of Virginia. He was admitted to the bar in 1860, and practiced for a short time before the war. During that time, he and his brother John Hartwell Coleman bought and edited a newspaper, *The Athens Herald*.

The brothers joined the Madison Rifles March 26, 1861 and first saw service in Pensacola, Florida, with the 7th Alabama Infantry Regiment. After several months, Mr. Coleman was transferred to the army in Virginia as an aide to his second cousin, General Philip St. George Cocke. General Cocke died in December 1861 and Mr. Coleman was transferred to the western army to the staff of General S.A.M. Wood's Brigade, Cleburne's Division. When his brother, Captain John Hartwell Coleman of Company B, Hawkins' Battalion of Mississippi Sharpshooters, was killed in the battle at Murfreesboro he became captain of the same company. He remained with the unit through the battle of Chicamauga where another brother, Lt. Richard Vasser Coleman, of Company A of the same battalion was killed. He was assigned to the 33rd Alabama Infantry Regiment for a few months and then to General Roddey's Cavalry in North Alabama until the end of the war. Although never wounded, Daniel Coleman had two horses shot from under him (one at Shiloh and one with Roddey in Alabama).

After the war, Mr. Coleman, having been stripped of all his possessions, taught school to support himself and to secure an education for his younger brothers. After some time at that occupation, he resumed the practice of law in Athens. In 1872, after serving as solicitor for Limestone County, he was elected state senator from Limestone and Lauderdale Counties. He held his seat in the senate for three sessions and resigned in 1875 to practice law in Huntsville. Soon after, he was

elected solicitor of the eighth judicial circuit by the general assembly, and held the office for six years. Mr. Coleman married Miss Claude LeVert, daughter of Francis and Ann Eliza Withers LeVert of Huntsville, June 17, 1873. He was a delegate to the national democratic convention in Chicago at which Grover Cleveland was nominated for president. In 1886, he was appointed by President Cleveland to the consulship at St. Etienne, France. Always an active and devoted member of the church, he was a Senior Warden at the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville. He died in Huntsville, June 29, 1906. [1] (Ed. Note: Numbers in brackets refer to endnotes.)

A photocopy of the 157 page, hand-written diary was obtained from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1996. [2] Following is the history and description of the contents which introduces the diary.

The history of this volume, purchased from a dealer in October 1957, is unknown. The fly-leaf shows that was written by D. Coleman, who in the summer of 1863 was captain commanding Company B, Hawkins Battalion, S.A.M. Wood's Brigade, Hardee's Corps. Entries in the book reveal that that Coleman's home, his mother and sister Mattie were at Athens, Alabama, and that he had brothers Ruffin, Richard, and Frank. Another brother was killed at Murfreesboro, and brother Richard was killed at Chickamauga in September 1863.

The diary entries were written almost continuously from January 26, 1863, through February 18, 1864, and there are 8 additional pages containing entries written in May, June, and August 1864. Each entry is from five lines to three pages long. The diary contains vivid descriptions of military activity and details of daily camp life and full expression of emotions, especially in connection with the deaths of Captain Coleman's brothers and the plight of the family in Athens, Alabama. The entries contain mention of Generals Bragg, Johnston, Pillow, Cleburne, Hardee, Breckenridge, Wood, Buckner, and other officers.

D. Coleman Diary¹

Monday, Jan. 26th, 1863. Nothing of much interest occurred. Weather cloudy threatening rain my time nearly all taken up with my company having pay and muster rolls fixed – and in studying tactics. Major Hawkins² has a class in which he is very strict – Making some progress in tactics. Hope I may become more proficient in it by diligent study and application – My main desire is though that I may become more thoroughly drilled in tactics that will fit me for the great battle of my life – the battle that the Christian Warrior must fight -.

Tuesday, Jan. 27th. Snowing today and very disagreeable in camp – Do not mind it much though as we have a good chimney to our tent - meager living now small rations and I am sorry to say it goes hard with me and makes me complain- Mr. Vasser³ arrived in the evening bringing letters and eatables from home – Oh how good and kind are the dear loved ones at home in attending to every want as far as they can – *God bless my dear Mother and Sisters and may his guardian ever be around and about them during my absence in the Army* – Genl Joseph E. Johnston arrived at this place today. His presence will no doubt put fresh zeal into the troops – He is regarded as one of the great chieftains of the age –

Wednesday & Thursday, Jan. 28 & 29. Day dull – weather snowy and bad – enjoy the eatables sent from home very much -also Lt Henry Bethea⁴ - all of us getting supplies the same day – Thank God for good health – My health is fine now – and I hope it will continue so that I may be better able to do my whole duty to my country-.

Friday, Jan. 30th. Mr. Vasser left us today carrying letters to the dear ones at home – My brother-in-law Thach⁵ came to see me in the evening – glad he was so thoughtful – he was on his way home on detached service. Been much prevented in the last few days from religious meditation by one thing or another – I allow myself too easily turned aside by little thongs – *God help me to keep my thoughts fixed on eternity and that Heavenly land to which dear Father and Johnny have*

¹ In transcribing the diary, we have retained the punctuation and spelling of the original except in a few cases where it might be confusing. We were able to identify most, but not all, of the individuals mentioned. It will be noted that some of the entries were probably made some time after particular events occurred. We have also taken the liberty of italicizing his frequent prayerful comments.

² Major A. T. Hawkins is Commander 15th Battalion, Mississippi Sharpshooters.

[3]

³ Richard W. Vasser, lifetime friend and former business partner of Judge Daniel Coleman.

⁴ 2nd Lt Henry Bethea, Co B, 15th Battalion, Mississippi Sharpshooters.

⁵ Robert Henry Thach married Eliza Lockhart Coleman.

gone – *Oh my brother⁶ dearer to me than all earth? besides, because of your genius and lovely character how can I give thee up – Life seems all a blank now – and when peace comes I will not appreciate it because I will not have your companionship to make me enjoy it – Yet I ought not to ask thee back – It is selfish in me – Thou art happy and thy brother is left here to mourn – May he who loveth us with a love that is more than love help me – Oh God be with me and sustain me in this deep affliction – One month tomorrow since he fell –*

Saturday, Jan. 31st. This Brigade reviewed today by Genl Joseph E. Johnston – Review passed off well – The old hero looked well – firm – healthy and confident – He is no doubt rightfully considered one of our greatest generals. One month today since the battle of Murfreesboro – that bloody battle where so many of our noble spirits – our brave men fell – *Ah it was there that you my J, my loved brother, a part of my own self – with the fire of enthusiasm burning in your eye, and your heart all aglow with a love of country, fell a sacrifice, a victim upon your country's altar -*

Sunday, Feb 1st. Day rainy and disagreeable – Kept my tent all day – Heard no preaching but read my Bible and some of Barnes' meditative pieces –

Monday, Feb 2nd. Began drill for officers in manual of arms under Major Hawkins – A little _____ in the morning but better and quite well at night – I wrote to my sister and brother in the evening –

Tuesday, Feb 3rd. Went to town to see an old friend, _____ Brown of Va- Disappointed he had gone – Day too cold for drill – read and studied tactics - ***** (remainder of page illegible)

Wednesday, Feb 4th. The same routine is gone through that we go through every day. Weather too bad for drill – Confined to my tent nearly all day and passed the time in reading & reflection – Some think there will soon be peace but we have been so often deluded that I cannot put much confidence in it – Have become enured to the army now and it has become like a second home to me – But it is the suffering of others that gives me pain – God help our poor soldiers and alleviate their sufferings – At night thoughts of “J” come to me – His noble form when I saw him last upon the field – bearing himself so bravely – *Oh Father may that form ever be with me amid the battles now and in the quiet scenes of life, may his heart beat in mine and his spirit breathe in mine-*

Thursday, Feb 5th. *Notwithstanding the great affliction that God has sent upon me in removing my noble brother from me, yet my trust is in him – He will not*

⁶ John Hartwell Coleman (1840 – Dec. 31, 1862). Capt. C. S. A., killed at battle of Murfreesboro.

*desert me nor forsake me – He is my stronghold and hiding place for all the
_____ of earth – Continue thy mercies towards me oh God!*

Friday, Feb 6th. Received a letter from her he loved so dearly – *Oh poor broken heart who knows the deep sorrow of thy heart.* She asks that I would pray that God may take her to be with him – I cannot do this yet I do not believe there is any earthly happiness any more for her –

Saturday, Feb 7th Received a letter from sister M.⁷ Their letters pain me they are so full of grief – They seem so unresigned – *Oh Father help me to write them kind gentle loving words that will be the humble means of making them resigned to thee – and help my own poor heart –*

Sunday, Feb 8th Day mild & pleasant – heard preaching – Read my bible but could not meditate as I liked - my head hurt me- *Help me to serve thee better Oh Lord – I would enjoy religion more if I had some companions who had some respect for Christianity – but there is not one in our Battal. that has – God pity them & bring them in the right path.*

Monday, Feb 9th. Day beautiful and bright as spring – “A struggler from the files of June” – Had a review of our (Wood’s) Brigade for the benefit of some ladies from North Ala – It seemed to inspire and cheer the men very much- The ladies seemed charmed and spoke encouraging words to us – I went up to shake hands with two of them Mrs. W⁸ and Miss F⁹ – It made me think of my own dear ones at home – my mother and sisters – *Oh Father thou knowest how dear they are to me!* At roll call appointed my non-commissioned officers – seem to give satisfaction –

Tuesday, Feb 10th. Drilled in Battal. drill & made an unsuccessful effort to get some conscripts for my company – Such constant drilling keeps my thoughts off from my sorrows – *Yet in the still hours of night how will thoughts of him my dear brother come to me – I dream of him and dream that he is not dead, that it is a mistake, and wake to find it all a dream – Oh it is too true – gone! gone! But it is selfish to wish him back – I feel that he dwells in the bosom of the Father secure from the possibility of harm from piercing bullets or from a despots rule –*

Wednesday, Feb 11th. Busy drilling and studying tactics – have not much time for anything else – take much interest in drill – Have never gone through battalion drill much in the line before – Like anything that will prepare us better to defend our country.

⁷ Martha (Mattie) Coleman (Aug. 10, 1834 – Dec. 3, 1906). Unmarried.

⁸ This is, almost certainly, Mrs. Susan Turner Williamson [4] of Huntsville, Alabama, with whom he had a slight family connection.

⁹ Probably one of Mrs. Williamson’s cousins (Jane, Elvira or Mary Fackler) also of Huntsville, Alabama.

Thursday, Feb 12th. Beverly returned from home bringing me provisions and a letter from sister M - Bless their dear hearts how dear and kind they are to me - The box is full of everything so nice - But what grief do their letters show - Time does not soften their sorrow - *Oh may they find consolation where only true consolation can be found* Received at the same time a letter from a dear friend in Va telling me of affliction in his family - He writes me that my cousin Lewis M. Coleman was seriously wounded at Fredericksburg on the 13th Dec - He fears that he will not recover - Ah what sad, sad news this is to me - He was my teacher, the best I ever had. But he felt also like a second father to me - I am greatly indebted to him for what I am if I am anything - He was always my standard of the Christian scholar and gentleman - *Oh may he be spared - He is so useful and so good -*

Friday, Feb 13th. Two executions took place today - one of a spy who was hung - named Kinny, another of a soldier for insubordination, shooting and mortally wounding a man who was sent to arrest him - Both were justly executed no doubt but it is a painful comment on humanity - Awful must be the evil where such terrible remedies have to be resorted to -

Saturday, Feb 14th. This is St. Valentines Day - But there is no celebration of it here - War and its attending circumstance are too stern realities to permit us to enjoy the festive days we were wont to celebrate. And besides there need be no such day for me - For there is none with whom I could take such playful privilege - And it is well that it is so now - For my heart will be more confined to my home & country & I to God - *Oh Father in Heaven I pray thee that I may never have my heart divided from these dear objects again by any vision of beauty however enchanting - Thou hast been witness that I have been deceived twice by a spirit of evil in the guise of beauty - I pray thee my Father that it may never be so again -*

Sunday, Feb 15th. No preaching on account of bad weather - Spent day in conversation and reading - I feel more the need of religious association than ever-

Monday, Feb 16th. Still raining - which keeps us in our tents - We keep dry however and spend the day in reading. Some however I am sorry to say pass the time in playing cards and other vicious amusements-

Tuesday, Feb 17th. Nothing to do - confined to tent all day - Find to great a disposition when idle to indulge in frivolous jesting -

Wednesday, Feb 18th. The same routine - no drill - no mails - idleness - Play chess a little - read some in Carlyle's "French Revolution" - What a volcanic writer he is & what a picture he gives of that great revolution - no doubt a true one - A wonderful genius is Mr. Carlyle - Who will there be to paint the scenes in

our revolution – They will be put on canvass – They will be sung in song – They will be recorded in history – But that will be in the far off future –

Thursday, Feb 19th. Day bright and beautiful – Genl Wood thinks of sending me home on detailed service – Hope I may go –

Friday, Feb 20th. Confined to tent all day by rain and bad weather – Read and study – Can't think much – So hard to concentrate my thoughts in camp –

Saturday, Feb 21st. Day still rainy & bad, still confined to tent – Got two letters from home at night & have the application for me to be sent home approved. How kind is Providence to permit me to see them again once more so soon –

Sunday, Feb 22nd. Start home by cars - Have many reflections while on the cars. Today is the birthday of our great Washington – the day on which our new government was organized –

Monday, Feb 23rd. Arrive at home – great surprise to the dear loved ones – They were not expecting me – Visited the grave of my brother with my sister – *Oh how was the old grief renewed – Help me Heavenly Father to accomplish that wish of my heart –*

Tuesday, Feb 24th. Found but little encouragement in the mission on which I was sent – viz to get men for my company – Visit that dear sad broken hearted one – my sister now – *Oh it is so sad to see her – Oh my Heavenly Father have pity on her –*

Wednesday, Feb 25th. Day was so bad I could not attend to my mission – Heard Genl Pillow speak on Government matters – I have a better opinion of him.

Thursday, Feb 26th. Had my leave of absence extended 5 days –

Friday, Feb 27th. Ah how beautiful a day – How spring like how balmy – The flowers are blooming out- Went to see that dear girl again – Ah how sad it is to see her – She came out home in the evening and brought flowers for his grave – I gathered some little violets and gave her and she put them with some beautiful japonicas to put on his grave – Ah what love, what love is that my “J”, that causes such sorrow now - You thought you were loved, but could you see that stricken heart as she bathes your grave in tears and covers it with flowers then you would form some idea of how you were loved –

Saturday, Feb 28th. Lt Col Chaddick (sic)¹⁰ arrived from Huntsville – He has come to preach his funeral – *Oh my brother how strange it sounds! To preach his funeral!* –

Sunday, March 1st. His funeral was preached – It was well preached – He told of him as a man, a soldier & as a Christian – He portrayed his character truthfully – How thankful I am that Providence brought me to hear it – His Text was Book of Job 10th & 14th verses –

Monday, March 2nd. Had to leave home for my command which is at Huntsville. It is not far – yet I do not know when I will see those dear ones again – Went to take leave of that dear stricken heart – She cried all the while I was with her – and oh how it wrung my heart to see her thus – *Oh Father be thou near to her* – And then I had to tell my mother and sisters good bye – My sister Mattie so lovely – so dear to me. How she wept on my shoulder as I kissed her- *Weep our dear loving, loved hearts – Those tears will relieve the deep grief of your hearts - & if you will look to Him, God will give you strength to bear it* –

Tuesday, March 3rd. Took command of my company again – The men were glad to see me I think – Entered on my duties & it is a relief to my mind – Received a letter from my cousin Lucy Cocke¹¹ – She writes such beautiful Christian consolation - *Oh how thankful am I for such dear, dear friends – I thank my Heavenly Father for such good friends* –

Wednesday, March 4th. Changed our camp – moved three miles from town – remained at camp all day –

Thursday, March 5th. Received orders to be ready to move at a moments notice – Supposed to be going back to Tullahoma – Went into town in the evening – Had my Negative taken for a Photograph for sister Mattie – Saw those that Mr. Frye¹² is painting of our dear loved brother – I think that they will be good – He is looking sad in the picture – Ah yes he was sad – He seemed almost to have anticipated that bloody fate – How these pictures bring up to me his dear noble image – visited at night a lady friend Mrs. W¹³ and heard her sing “with her bird like voice” those songs of hers I love so much –

¹⁰ Lt Col William D. Chadick, pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama, and Chaplain of the Fourth Alabama Infantry Regiment.

¹¹ Lucy Cary Cocke, daughter of General Philip St. George Cocke.

¹² William Frye (1819-1872), a native of Bavaria, settled in Huntsville in 1848 and painted portraits of many prominent citizens of the South.

¹³ Mrs. Susan Turner Williamson (later Todd) was an accomplished singer. [5]

Friday, March 6th. Sure enough we take the cars to Tullahoma at 5 o'clock A.M. Do not get there until 12 at night – March out to camp & find most of our chimneys destroyed – Our own fortunately however our own is left. Get news of the capture of 1300 prisoners by Genl Van Dorn ¹⁴–

Saturday, March 7th. Pitch our tents in the same place they were before – Today the thought of home rushes over me and under – Those dear, dear hearts I left there but a few days ago yet when may I see them again – I feel depressed today – The war seems to me interminable – *Oh Father show me some light and teach me to be submissive to thy will* –

Sunday, March 8th. No services today – I hope as the spring comes on that we will have preaching more frequently now - I do not feel right without hearing the word of God preached on Sabbath – The President calls us together on the 27th of this month as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer –

Monday, March 9th. Have an inspection of the Brigade by Major General Cleburne – Write to my cousin Lucy Cary Cocke in answer to her recent letter –

Tuesday, March 10th. Prisoners captured by Genl Van Dorn press our quarters - Have 1300 officers and men – Looked rather blue – raining hard all day –

Wednesday, March 11th. Go through the usual routine of drill – Receive a letter from my dear friend Capt Cocke full of Christian feeling and sympathy with me in my affliction – Poor fellow – He too has had his own grief of the heart – but it is not like mine – What a pity it is to have those who do not love us in return as we would have them love us – but this is from our Heavenly Father doubtless for some wise purpose –

Thursday, March 12th. Vague rumors of the defeat of some of our forces and of a flank movement of the army through Nor Ala – I hope they are not so and do not believe either of them – Everything indicates that this is a critical juncture with us - Our enemies are straining every nerve for one more vigorous effort – Our solace must be our God - We can do with _____.

Friday, March 13th. Day balmy and beautiful a lovely spring day – Oh how lovely is all nature while we are so unhappy – The ravages of war mask the loveliness of nature –

¹⁴ In an engagement with Union forces near Thompson's Station, Tennessee, on March 5, 1863, Maj Gen Earl Van Dorn's troops captured about 1300 of the enemy, and killed and wounded about 500. Confederate losses were 349 killed, wounded and missing.

Saturday, March 14th. Wrote to my sister trying to comfort her & Ma in our sad bereavement – But what are my few words – *Oh Father be with them and be thou their comforter* –

Sunday, March 15th. Attended preaching in the morning – Dined in the 16th Ala with Lt Sherrod¹⁵ – Wrote letters in the evening hours – Letters from home by Frank¹⁶ –

Monday, March 16th. Our Battalion was consolidated with the 16th Ala Regt temporarily and drilled and inspected by the Lt and Major Generals commanding, Hardee & Cleburne – They seemed to be satisfied – I was not satisfied with my own part – I made too many mistakes –

Tuesday, March 17th. Had camp policed, ditches dug & I wrote a letter to my sister R¹⁷ – Poor girl, her letter to me was so sad – *Oh may He who hears the prayers of his suffering children have mercy on her – and comfort her, and all the dear loved ones who loved him so* –

Wednesday, March 18th. Day beautiful and balmy – spring like – *Oh Father may this horrible war cease and we enjoy the blessings of peace once more “ under our own vine and fig tree ” unmolested* –

Thursday, March 19th. Great review today of Genl Hardee’s whole Corps – Genl Joe Johnston, the Commander in Chief, was present – We were drawn up in two lines – Genl Breckenridge in front – Great many spectators present – among them many ladies looking bright and hopeful – The scene was imposing – It made us feel a pride in our Army and our Generals – *But we do not trust to them Oh Father – The issue is in thy hands – Oh help the weak – “With thy help the battle is not to the strong nor the race to the swift” – Be thou with “us”* –

Friday, March 20th. The usual routine of drill – Receive a letter from my dear sister M – *Oh she is so dear to me now – Oh blessed Heavenly Father look in tender pity upon those dear - loving – sad hearts at home* –

Saturday, March 21st. Day spent as usual in drill – Slept in the evening after dinner and slept too much –

Sunday, March 22nd. Our Battal 2 small companies moved up to Normandy on N & C RR to guard a bridge – It promises to be a pleasant place – Hope we may be

¹⁵ Lt Frederick O. Sherrod, 16th Alabama Infantry.

¹⁶ Franklin Coleman (1849 - ?). Daniel Coleman’s youngest brother.

¹⁷ This is evidently the loved one of brother John Hartwell Coleman whom he claimed as his “sister” in the entry for February 24.

permitted to remain here – Good water and a chance to forage some -

Monday, March 23rd. Occupied ourselves in making our camp comfortable – Very good ground to camp on – good water but a mighty poor little town & surrounding country – Everything seems paralyzed here –

Tuesday, March 24th. Cold – rainy day – exceedingly uncomfortable in camp –

Wednesday, March 25th. Went through usual drill – Received daily papers in the evening – no news-

Thursday, March 26th. The anniversary of my enlistment in the C. S. service which was two years ago today at Ft Morgan – *Ah what changes since then – How many of thou noble boys have gone from this to another world –* Acting officer of the guard today-

Friday, March 27th. Visited Beechwood Col Irvings (sic)¹⁸ place near Wartrace – Went to see Miss Roe¹⁹ Webster but found her gone – no one at home but Mrs Irving (sic) who was very kind to me – She had sent off nearly everything south – It made me feel sad to be here – I had heard Lillie and Him speak of having so much pleasure here – I could not stay long – had to return in the evening – It is the day set aside by our President for fasting - humiliation – prayer – *Oh our Heavenly Father may a new light shine upon our afflicted country bowed in humility before thee today – Grant us peace and independence and a speedy relief from our enemies –*

Saturday, March 28th. Wrote home to my Mother from whom I had received a letter a few days before complaining that I did not mention her in my letters & that I had forgotten her – But oh my mother how you are mistaken!

Sunday, March 29th. No services today near camp – Dry cold & blustering – windy – visited one of the citizens houses in the evening – received us kindly and we enjoyed the comfortable fire-

Monday, March 30th. Day cold, sleeting & raining – Nothing done today –

Tuesday, March 31st. Three months today since that bloody battle! Ah what associations – how painful – does this day of the month bring up – *Spirit of my J look down upon me from thy dwelling place in the skies and assure me thou art happy –*

¹⁸ Beechwood was the home of Col Andrew and Mary Jossey Webster Erwin.[6]

¹⁹ Miss Roe (Rowena) Webster was Mrs. Erwin's sister

Wednesday, April 1st. A day suited to its name “all fools day” for it certainly has fooled us – it is but the lingering remains of March – windy & cold - - heard firing in the front – received a letter from cousin L.C.C. Belmead Va.- What a sweet girl she is and how sweetly she writes – Ah poor girl - she too has had her grief -

Thursday, April 2nd. A beautiful and balmy spring day – Thank God for pretty weather! – usual drill and recitation in tactics – Have a chimney to our tent now so as to have a fire at night –

Friday, April 3rd. Went to Tullahoma this morning to draw pay from QM - Everything dull and quiet there – no sign of movement –

Saturday, April 4th. No drill today – Wrote a letter to my cousin L.C.C. in reply to her letter received a few days before –

Sunday, April 5th. A beautiful balmy spring day today – Attend a little country church near the little village – Many of the Battalion attend – It was a privilege I enjoyed very much – Wrote home in the evening to Lilie -

Monday, April 6th. The anniversary of the bloody first days battle at Shiloh -& a day bright & beautiful as that – Ah the terrific slaughter of that day how it recurs to my memory today – And what cause have I to be thankful that I have been spared thus long to witness the return of the day again –

Tuesday, April 7th. Glancing over a paper today found the sad announcement of the death of our noble good and talented cousin, Col Lewis Minor Coleman – He was formerly Principal of Hanover Academy and it was there that I went to School to him for two years – He was afterwards Professor of Latin in the University of Va, held that position at the opening of the war – He resigned his Professorship soon after the war began and was made Captain of an Artillery Company – He was afterwards promoted to Lt Col of Artillery and was nobly discharging his duty at Fredericksburg when he was struck in the leg by a minie ball – He lingered sometime after he received the wound receiving every attention from his devoted family – nursed by his devoted wife & Mother & Sisters – But it at last proved fatal and thus another member of our family & name been made a victim of our cruel and barbarous enemy – He was a profound and finished scholar, an accomplished gentlemen, possessed of a gigantic, brilliant intellect, but above all he was a devoted Christian -& may the God whom he loved comfort his heart-broken family –

Wednesday, April 8th. Lt H. V.'s ²⁰ boy returned from home bringing a box of eatables and a letter from sister Mattie – How kind they are to me! – Bless their

²⁰ Lt Harry Vasser, oldest son of Richard W. Vasser.

dear hearts –

Thursday, April 9th. Much excitement about the attack of the enemy at Charleston – They were repulsed with a loss of one of their best ironclads²¹ –

Friday, April 10th. Received an accession of 3 men to my company – 1 good one – 2 very poor –

Saturday, April 11th. Day hung heavily and dull, nothing to read -

Sunday, April 12th. No preaching – Read my bible – What a deep sadness hangs over me like a pall - *Oh Father I pray thee to dispel & let me see the sun light of heaven* –

Monday, April 13th. Nothing occurred today worthy to relate –

Tuesday, April 14th. Went to Tullahoma to draw the men's pay – Paid them off –

Wednesday, April 15th. Rained nearly all day –

Thursday, April 16th. Usual drill – Nothing new –

Friday, April 17th. Nothing occurred today –

Saturday, April 18th. Went to Tullahoma to have a tooth drawn – had it drawn – had a good deal of money paid me for hire of servants – Niell authenticated report of reinforcements coming to our Army – Hope it is so – Saw Genl Johnston sitting in the porch of the house where he has his quarters – He looked calm and hopeful – Great man!

Sunday, April 19th. Received 25 men detailed from the different regiments to fill up my company – some good soldiers – some bad – More of the latter I am afraid

Monday, April 20th. Officer of the guard and _____ today – Suffer from a bad head ache all day –

Tuesday, April 21st. No occurrence today worthy of note –

Wednesday, April 22nd. Portion of the troops move up from Tullahoma today to the front to Wartrace –

²¹ U.S.S. Keokuk, sunk April 8, 1863, off southern end of Morris Island, South Carolina.

Thursday, April 23rd. Enemy made a raid on McMinnville²² – burn a factory – Depot buildings & Genl Morgan narrowly escapes – They also come up to Tuscumbia – reported three Brigades – causing us North Alabamians a good deal of uneasiness about our homes –

Friday, April 24th. Nearly all the troops from Tullahoma move to the front – our brigade goes – Look every moment for orders to move ourselves – Receive in the evening a letter from my friend Mac Fleming giving me full details about the death of our cousin Lewis Coleman – He fell in the meridian of life a martyr to the cause of liberty – He was a noble Christian scholar – He is gone from among us but his useful life and his great example still live on – I received a sweet letter from my cousin L.C.C. – I have half a mind to be in love with her – but – Yes – I am afraid –

Saturday, April 25th. Go on the river sunning with the boys – Did not go in the water with them – Quite successful – Catch a good many trout - Am under the painful necessity to day to arrest 2 of my men for threatening to desert –

Sunday, April 26th. Wrote home – wrote also to my cousin L.C.C. – No preaching anywhere to day – Major Wood and Chaplain Kimball²³ called in the evening –

Monday, April 27th. The beautiful spring days with April showers are upon us – Everything looks joyous with the new beauty – All nature seems to rejoice – only man is sad because of the terrible hand of affliction laid so heavily upon him in this cruel war – But even the poor soldier seems to catch the infectious brightness and his joyous laugh may be heard to ring out occasionally on the air - Merry boys – They are in fine spirits now – but how soon will the carnival of death soar - to begin, lay many a one now so bright beneath the green spring - *Oh Father prepare their souls for the summons -*

Tuesday, April 28th. Suffer a good deal to day from Dysentery – I have two severe attacks of it before – this is the third and promises to be severe. I pray God however that it may soon pass off and that he will soon give my wanted good health –

Wednesday, April 29th. Suffer still more to day from my painful disease – *but my* trust is in God that it will not be serious – take medicine to check it – find it

²² On April 21, 1863, detachments of the Fourth Michigan Cavalry and Seventh Pennsylvania Cavalry attacked McMinnville, Tennessee and routed the Confederate forces which included units of the Second Kentucky (Morgan's) Cavalry.[7]

²³ Captain F. A. Kimball, Chaplain of the 16th Alabama Infantry Regiment.

difficult to get proper diet while thus affected – My servant Frank though who is very attentive to my wants finds me a chicken and some milk –

Thursday, April 30th. Find myself much better this morning but do not yet go on duty – Thank God for keeping me from being sick – Much news from North Ala in the evening that the enemy are advancing up the valley, unchecked – It gives me great uneasiness – Got a letter from my Sister saying that the family will all leave home if the spoiler? Returns – Oh I pray God to avert this painful necessity – Yet I am glad they have determined to leave if the enemy come – Quam – diu! O Quam – diu!²⁴

Friday, May 1st. To day is the bright May day – News from North Ala uncertain – Genl Wood and his aid Capt Simpson visit us to day – Our Command mustered to day for pay – It exhausted me to go out in the field and I got worse again – The inspector complemented our quarters, and general appearance –

Saturday, May 2nd. Still feel worse – but trust that it will soon pass over – but come what will I will put my trust in God – Get letters from home that make me feel very sad – They bring tears to my eyes – one from sister Mattie, one from Lillie and one from dear little Frank – Sister encloses me some sweet touching lines written by Mrs Duncan? On the grave of our loved brother – They are very touching and affected me deeply – Thank God that the news comes in the evening that the enemy are repulsed and in full retreat from the valley – What a nice little letter my little brother writes – He is smart and I think through the mercies of God will be very good –

Sunday, May 3rd. Quite sick still – but feel much better in the evening – The medicine has had the desired effect I think and I hope the disease has passed – Thank God for his continued services - Am much grieved to day to lose four of my best men – good soldiers from the 3rd Confed Regt – by order of Genl Hardee – And especially am I sorry to lose them, because not wishing to come to me first, and having run away from the Company well, they had by intercourse with me became to like me and wanted to stay with me – News in the evening represents Genl Forrest was entirely successful in North Ala and the enemy in full retreat ²⁵– I thank the Giver of all victories for this! -

Monday, May 4th. I am much better to day and feel that I am getting well – Write letters to my sister Mattie and little Frank – It moves my feelings to write them – especially to the latter – I urge on him to give his little heart to God –

²⁴ Quamdiu: Latin – Such a long time

²⁵ Gen Nathan B. Forrest accepted the surrender of Col Abel D Straight's Union Force on May 3, 1863, and ended Straight's 17 - day raid through the hills of northern Alabama.

And if they are the last words I am ever to write him Oh Father I pray that they may make a deep impression on him and be the means of bringing him to thee! –

Tuesday, May 5th. Make a visit with Major H to a house in the neighborhood – Mr Roseborough's ²⁶ – spend the day very pleasantly with his two daughters – Miss Flora and Miss Faunie – They give us a good dinner and urge us to come back to see them – Very refreshing thus to get away from camp a little while and see the inside of a clean house and sit down to a real clean table – News by the evening mail of the wounding of Genl Stonewall Jackson in a late battle on the Rappahannock – Ah how it would sadden our young nation were this great Christian General to be taken from us – But we pray God that his wound may not prove fatal –

Wednesday, May 6th. Day dull and rainy – no mail today – My prayers go up to Heaven for our cause and our great and good Chieftain Genl Jackson –

Thursday, May 7th. Thank God the wound of that great and good man is thought not to be fatal He had his left arm amputated and I pray he may soon recover – Genl Lee telegraphs the President that God has given them another victory – Thanks to the giver of victories our cause seems to be brightening – May this be the forerunner of peace and independence –

Friday, May 8th. I go on duty to day – my health almost entirely recovered – Practice the men in target firing – distance about 150 yds – Some of them fire with remarkable accuracy – The average is good – At night while hearing the lesson in tactics, received a painful wound in the foot from a bayonet which fell from Capt Stegar's ²⁷ hands accidentally striking in my boot – near the big toe joint – Suffer a good deal with it during the night and have to take morphine for the first time in my life to sleep – I apprehend that it will be a bad place and take me from duty for several days -

Saturday, May 9th. Still suffer a good deal with my foot – I feel some apprehensiveness about it on account of the danger of lockjaw as it was a rusty bayonet – I believe I am timid naturally anyhow and if it were not for my trust in God I would be a coward – But I try to submit everything to him – *In thy hands Oh Father do I leave the issues of life and death –*

Sunday, May 10th. Am deprived on account of my foot, which still continues very painful, of the privilege of going to church – But try to compensate myself by reading my bible in my tent, and meditating upon the commandments and

²⁶ Mr. John Roseborough, farmer, of Shelbyville.

²⁷ Capt Thomas M. Stegar, Co. A, 15th Battalion of Mississippi Sharp Shooters, a resident of Hamilton, Georgia.

goodness of God – Receive a letter from my dear Mother, more dear to me than ever to me now – She is disturbed in mind and unreconciled to the deep affliction that has been sent upon us – *Oh God be thou her shield and hiding place – her strong support in this hour of affliction –*

Monday, May 11th. The painful news comes to day of the death of that Christian warrior Genl Jackson – I hope that it may not be so – What a calamity it would be to us – If our cause depended on man alone it might prove fatal – I pray God that if it is so, that he will enable us to submit to his loss with fortitude and not murmur – *Thou didn't give him to us Oh Father – He was thine own servant – If thou hast taken him to thyself help us to bear it kindly – It is our loss but his gain*

Tuesday, May 12th. Ah! Too true is the news of the death of Genl Stonewall Jackson! He expired on the 10th (Sunday) at 3 ½ P.M. And thus has God in his Providence taken from us one of our greatest and best Generals – In the language of one of our spirited editors – “The fall of Stonewall Jackson – that great and gallant spirit – that pure and lofty soul – that rare Knight errant – who turned the tide of defeat into a flood of triumph, who rose above the gloom of the last year like a banner, and led us out of the red sea of disaster, even as Moses did of old, whose name thenceforward went forth only to inspire and conquer – whose deeds have sent a thrill through every land – grand old Christian gaunt and grim of fashion but transparent within, with the fire of true genius – martial and manly – the loss of such a chieftain is to be lamented more for more than a dozen such victories are to be vaunted – His spirit has gone to meet its God who gave it – *Oh God may we imitate his example as a nation and cherish his memory and his virtues in our hearts – and do not permit his death, Oh Father, to paralyze our efforts for freedom – Have mercy upon us and do not forsake us –*

Wednesday, May 13th. I have been much interested for the last several days in reading “The War in Nicaragua”²⁸, a book written by the lamented Genl W.H. Walker – It is written in beautiful style, is exceedingly entertaining, and has given me a still higher idea of the genius of that wonderful man – What an acquisition he would have been to us, had he lived to draw his sword in the defense of his native south – I believe that his motives were pure and lofty – and that hereafter what he sought to accomplish will be effected by some man who undertakes it at a more fortunate period – Wrote a letter in the evening to my younger brother Ruffin encouraging him to a life of piety – My interest is very deep in those boys – May God draw them to him by the cords of his love – Get the order in the evening to leave Normandy and move up to Wartrace – Sorry to leave such a pleasant place but must obey orders – There will be many pleasant associations connected with our stay here –

²⁸ Walker, William, *The War in Nicaragua*, Mobile, New York, S. H. Goetzel & Co., 1860.

Thursday, May 14th. Arrive at Wartrace to day – pitch our tents on a pleasant grassy slope – It is a beautiful country and the army seems to be in fine health – I find an interesting religious revival ²⁹going on the 16th Ala Regt – I pray that it may result in much good in elevating the morals of our whole Brigade –

Friday, May 15th. Visit my friends in the 16th Ala Regt – find that many of them have become better men & turned unto God – I attend preaching at night – There were many seeking the way of salvation - News comes of our being driven by an overwhelming force from Jackson Miss ³⁰– Causes much depression –

Saturday, May 16th. My being disabled in my foot keeps me from drilling and the time hangs heavily upon me for the want of something to do – I hope that I will soon be ready for duty again –my foot is nearly well –

Sunday, May 17th. Attend preaching in the 16th – Many of the new converts unite themselves in a Christian association – They seem to be in earnest – I pray that they may continue in the faith they now possess – I send home today a sick recruit Jim about whom I am very uneasy – send Frank with him –

Monday, May 18th. Look for Richard³¹ today but am disappointed –

Tuesday, May 19th. News today – Mr Vallandigham³² of Ohio sent to Tortugas for treason – The enemy pays unexpected tribute to Genl Jackson their papers speak of him thus – He was a great general, a brave soldier, a noble Christian, and a fine man – even our enemies praise him – They call him the Napoleon of this age –

²⁹ Bennett [8] discusses in much detail the “wonderful revival” that appeared in the army of the West in the winter 1862 and flourished in the spring of 1863. And, in particular, he writes, “ In General Wood’s brigade a meeting of great interest has for several weeks been under the supervision of Rev. F. A. Kimball, Chaplain of the 16th Alabama, assisted mainly by Colonel Reed, Chief of Provost Marshal Department, in Hardee’s corps, and Col. Lowery, of the 45th and 32nd Mississippi, the result of which has been one hundred conversions”.

³⁰ This is the Battle of Champion’s Hill

³¹ Lt Richard Vasser Coleman (1844 – Sept. 20, 1863), Co. A., 15th Battalion Mississippi Sharp Shooters.

³² Vallandigham, Clement Laird (1820-1871), served as a Democratic member of the United States House of Representatives between 1858 and 1863, representing Ohio. He advocated states' rights and was a bitter opponent of the American Civil War (1861-1865). He became the leader of the Copperheads, a group of northern Democrats who opposed the war. Convicted of sedition in 1863, he was eventually banished to the Confederacy but returned to the United States in 1864.

Frank returns – brings letters from the dear ones at home – also brings a box of provisions most acceptable –

Wednesday, May 20th. News from Miss is bad and great apprehensions are felt about our position there – Hear a sermon at night from Dr McFerrin³³ of the M.E.C. – He was broken down from speaking in the open air so much but showed flashes of genius – The religious interest continues unabated – Richard returns from home at night

Thursday, May 21st. All quiet to day – we lounge about on the grass and occupy ourselves trying to keep cool & comfortable – Attend preaching at night – Lt Col Reed³⁴ preaches an excellent sermon – He is a noble man, tall, graceful, and eloquent – a man of exalted character – his sermons put one to thinking and carry great force with them

Friday, May 22nd. We had just eaten dinner and thrown ourselves comfortably on the grass for a nap when here comes the order to “fall in” and put ourselves on the Bell Buckle road leaving enough men in camp to cook supper – We are soon on the march - the sun burning hot, the roads very dusty, and very little water to drink – the men seemed to suffer very much – After marching five miles we halt in a shady grove and rest – the cause of this march was that the enemy had made a dash on some of our cavalry surprising and capturing some 60 or 80 men – Disgraceful!³⁵ – They soon retired however when the infantry was marched up and we were ordered back to camp which we reached about 9 o'clock at night – tired and wore down – I found me a horse to ride back my foot still hurting me some with my boot on –

Saturday, May 23rd. Make a visit to some dear friends – Mrs Irving, Miss Roe Webster, Mrs I E Moore & Judge Moore³⁶ – the two latter staying with Mrs I – I had the honor of becoming acquainted with Lt Genl Hardee's two daughters – Miss Annie and Miss Sallie – nice and interesting young ladies – My visit was a very pleasant one –

³³ Dr. J. B. McFerrin was in charge of missionary work for the Confederate States Army.

³⁴ Lt. Col Wiley M. Reed was Provost Marshal on Hardee's Staff and a Cumberland Presbyterian minister. A native of north Alabama, his first church was at New Hope, Alabama.

³⁵ Union forces under Maj Gen David S. Stanley completely surprised and routed the camp of the 1st Alabama Cavalry near Middleton, Tennessee, destroying arms and capturing many horses as well as prisoners.

³⁶ John Edmund and Letitia Watson Moore of Florence, Alabama. Moore, a brother of Huntsville's Dr. David Moore, was Judge Advocate on Genl Hardee's staff.

Sunday, May 24th. By invitation I go out and breakfast with Mrs Moore – taking Richard with me – Our walk gave us a good appetite and we enjoyed our breakfast hugely – I was almost afraid we would alarm them these hard times, but they are old and dear friends who cannot be so easily disturbed – We go with them all to church – myself walking with Miss Roe & Miss Hardee – And after a shady walk we reach the little country church I enjoyed the service – to hear once more and it might be for the last time the blending of sweet female voices accompanied by a sweet tuned melodeon, brought up pleasant but sad reflections – After we returned Mrs I gave us a delightful lunch – Genl Hardee came in to be with his daughters – It was the first time I had ever met him socially – He is very agreeable and pleasant – a finished and polished gentleman – possessing the gentlest feelings, with the stern manliness of the soldier – My short intercourse with him increased my already high opinion of him – He seems to be a tender and affectionate father – May his life be long spared to his country and family – At night I attend preaching in the 16th Ala – Lt Col Read preached a beautiful and touching sermon on the love of Christ – The sacrament was administered and though I felt unworthy I participated in the solemn service – taking the emblems of the broken body & shed blood of our Savior – *Oh may God help me to lead a new life from this time and to renew my covenants with him –*

Monday, May 25th. Received orders to march in the evening – Made a march of 10 miles after 5 o'clock to Hoovers Gap – arrived there about 10 o'clock & bivouacked sleeping well although it was cool at night – The evening was very hot, the roads dusty and the march exceedingly fatiguing – put out pickets at night

Tuesday, May 26th. Ordered back to our wagons to cook rations – being relieved by a regiment – remain here all day enjoying the cool shade after our hot & fatiguing march – Favorable news of a repulse to the enemy comes from - Vicksburg - puts us in good spirits – Receive information that Mr Vallandigham has been sent within our lines by the Northern Despotism – It is somewhat surprising – The great question is what to do with him – We admire him as a great man and a powerful defender of constitutional freedom – But then is he in favor of our independence? He has not said so – My own opinion is that he ought to be permitted to remain here if he wishes it, making our country an asylum for an unfortunate and victimized man until such time as his own countrymen may recall him under new auspices –

Wednesday, May 27th. We return to camp at Wartrace dirty, hot, and tired – wash off – eat something, and make ourselves comfortable under the cool shade of the trees –

Thursday, May 28th. Ordered out without arms to hear Bishop Elliot³⁷ preach – But lo he didn't come – ordered out in the evening and disappointed again – I think it would be better to let this matter be optional with the soldiers and not make it an order –

Friday, May 29th. Greatest anxiety felt about Vicksburg – She still holds out bravely! – Our prayers all go up to him who has blessed us thus far so abundantly

Saturday, May 30th. Day dull and rainy – nothing happens of interest –

Sunday, May 31st. Heard a fine sermon today from Bishop Elliot of the Methodist Episcopal Church - It was full of deep piety & lofty patriotism – Our whole brigade was present – Genl Bragg – Genl Polk – Genl Hardee & other Generals were there – I pray that it may yield much fruit – to the honor and glory of our Heavenly Master –

Monday, June 1st. Have company drill in morning, Brigade drill in evening –

Tuesday, June 2nd. Good news comes from Vicksburg to day – I hope it is true – *Oh God remove the dark cloud that hangs over us – and may it break in mercy over our heads – Confound and bring to naught the schemes of our enemies - & smile upon us Oh God our heavenly Father!* –

Wednesday, June 3rd. Nothing occurred to day – News still continues good from Vicksburg –

Thursday, June 4th. March to the front to day to Bell Buckle – Raining hard & roads muddy – Poor soldiers – It is preferable I think to dust & the hot sun –

Friday, June 5th. Return to camp without a fight – I wish the enemy would come and meet us and let the terrible issue be decided here – the final result at Vicksburg is still uncertain –

Saturday, June 6th. I find a sick boy belonging to us I hired as teamster, very sick – I fear he will not recover – Get a letter from home saying that Ma & Sister think of coming up to see us if they can get a place to stay which I fear they cannot do –

Sunday, June 7th. Send off poor Beverly very sick, home – I feel very uneasy about him – poor fellow – An order comes for my company to go early in the morning to guard a bridge – about a mile off –

³⁷ Stephen Elliot was the first bishop of the Episcopal Church of Georgia. His son, Brig Genl Stephen Elliot, Jr., was critically wounded at the Battle of the Crater, Petersburg, VA, 30 July 1864.

Monday, June 8th. March to the bridge over Garrison Fork & relieve the guard there – It is a pleasant place – retired – good water & good opportunities to forage some –

Tuesday, June 9th. Go around to see some of the citizens to become acquainted – but lo & behold: in the evening here comes a company to relieve us and we get ready to go back to the old camp –

Wednesday, June 10th. We go back to the old camp – In the evening reviewed by our Brigadier General – General Wood – Had a hot time –

Thursday, June 11th. Did anyone ever see such changing about in the world – what sense is there in it – Here comes an order again this morning to go back to the bridge again – Co A goes to a bridge lower down – on Duck river –

Friday, June 12th. Establish ourselves comfortably at our new position – The bridge which we guard is over Garrison Fork Creek –

Saturday, June 13th. As our guard duties are so heavy we have no drill consequently but little to do – The time hangs heavy and dull – The only relief from the monotony is getting the papers – An ominous silence about the affairs at Vicksburg – Let us hope though for the better and put our trust in that God who has never yet forsaken us –

Sunday, June 14th. Went to preaching in the 10th Ala Regt – Capt Kimble preached a good sermon about why Christians are kept in the world after they are converted – It is that they may assist in carrying out the great plan of salvation – In the evening an old school mate whom I had not seen in 6 or 8 years came to see me – It was the same old Billy Harrison – Doodle we used to call him – I don't know why for surely it could not have any reference to Yankee Doodle – for he is one of the staunchest rebels I know – He is in a Texas Regiment 1st Lt in Churchills Brigade – that went up at Arkansas Post ³⁸ –

Monday, June 15th. Went visiting in the neighborhood and spent an hour or two very pleasantly at Mrs Murphy's close by – she has a very nice young daughter – This is a delightful country – abounding in grass and grain fields - The wheat is ripening and promises an abundant yield - I hope that our remorseless & cruel enemies will not come on us now & destroy them –

³⁸ Fort Hindman at Arkansas Post, AR, was captured by Maj Gen John a McClernand's Army of Mississippi on 11 Jan 1863.

Tuesday, June 16th. Write to cousin L.C.C. in reply to her last – Cousins are dangerous aren't they? – Well I will beware – Write home – It is there where my heart is – with those dear loved ones so bowed down with sorrow –

Wednesday, June 17^t. We get some good news from Va to day about the capture of Winchester³⁹ but nothing from Vicksburg –

Sunday June 20th. Moved with our company up to Duck River Bridge where Co A is on guard –

June 21st 22nd 23rd & 24th. Enjoy the quietness and beauty of the country on Duck river – We bathe, get plenty of fruit and vegetables – But guard is rather heavy –

June 25th & 26th. Heavy firing in front – Enemy reported advancing with whole force⁴⁰ – Our troops suffer much from being exposed in line of battle in heavy rains –

Saturday, June 27^t. Our whole force pulls back to Tullahoma to our breastworks –

Sunday, June 28th. Go into camp here – A great battle will be fought no doubt - in a few days – *Oh God be with our army & give us the victory* –

Monday, June 29th. My company ordered in position as skirmishers on the left of Tullahoma – Heavy rains come up – ordered back – take position in line of battle near Genl Woods' H'Qrs – bivouacked in line in apple orchard – night beautiful, stars shining brightly – The enemy reported advancing on our right – A battle supposed to be imminent – Thoughts much occupied about home and the suffering it will bring there if we have to give up this place –

Tuesday, June 30th. Moved over about ten o'clock to the right of Tullahoma – Meet General Buckner while changing position – The whole Division cheer him enthusiastically – He used to command us – We never saw him look better – I believe he is the favorite of this army – While halting awaiting orders met an old friend Col Jas D. Webb⁴¹ of the Ala Cavalry – grasped him warmly by the hand -

³⁹ Lt General Richard S. Ewell's troops cleared the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley of Federals with this victory which was a part of the initial leg of Lee's Gettysburg campaign.

⁴⁰ In a series of feints and flanking manoeuvres, June 23 – July 3, 1863, Union Maj Gen William S. Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland forced Gen Braxton Bragg's Army of the Tennessee to withdraw and retreat to Chattanooga, thus ending the Tullahoma Campaign.

⁴¹ Lt Col James D. Webb of the 51st Alabama Partisan Rangers in Wheeler's Cavalry.

and revived many associations – How little thinking that in less than 48 hrs he would fall, another victim to the hate of the enemy – Ala has lost a noble man and the country a gallant defender – Our Brig sent out to engage the enemy to hold him in check – Every indication of a battle – My company with another is sent out as skirmishers – We can hear the Cavalry videttes in front cracking away – We look every minute to engage them ourselves – we move forward short distances and halt – but no enemy appears – Night comes on – we assemble the skirmishers in groups of fours – one watches while three sleep – 9 o'clock at night – What does that constant rattling of weapons mean – Can it be that they are evacuating Tullahoma – surely not – It must be artillery moving over to the right – 12 m – Order comes – assemble skirmishers & move towards Tullahoma – understand now the rattling of weapons – the retreat has begun – *Oh God* – and must we leave our homes and our loved ones to the mercy of the ruthless foe again and that too without an effort to prevent it –

Wednesday, July 1st. Evacuated Tullahoma – marched about 10 miles – Crossed Elk River and halted about 2 miles on the opposite side of it – weather excessively warm but plenty of water – I go to Richards in the evening and telegraph home for them to move out immediately – God grant that they may escape from the clutches of the terrible foe –

Thursday, July 2nd. Ascended Cumberland Mountain halting for the night about 8 miles from the top –

Friday July 3rd. Marched on top of the Mountain about 15 miles halting about 8 miles from foot – passed the sight of the intended great southern University – The marches are exceedingly exhausting on account of the hot weather –

Saturday, July 4th. Marched down mountain 14 miles to within ½ mile of Jasper and about 2 miles from mouth of Battle Creek This march exhausted us more than any – Many stragglers from ranks and some fainted – Only 13 in ranks when we halted for the night – I have ascertained that two are missing from the company who I think have deserted – Little do we suspect today while on the fainting _____ march, retreating from the foe – that a scene is going on in another part of our poor country involving a greater disaster and calamity to us than has yet befallen us – To day, we hear a few days after our arrival at Chattanooga, Vicksburg capitulated to the enemy, being forced by starvation –

Sunday, July 5th. Marched 8 miles and camped on bank of Tennessee – We get a good rest here –

Monday, July 6th. Crossed Tennessee on Pontoon bridge at Kelly's ferry – marched 8 miles & camped on N. & C. R.R. at foot of Lookout Mountain and 4 miles from Chattanooga –

Tuesday, July 7th. Halted here to day and rested –

Wednesday, July 8th. Moved in cars to Tyner's Station 10 miles from C on East Tennessee & Virginia R. R. We remained at Tyler's nearly one month doing nothing worthy to relate.

Wednesday, July 28th. Our brother Frank arrived from home. The poor little fellow is taken very sick with Rheumatism in the thigh giving him great deal of pain and rendering him perfectly helpless – We feel a great deal of uneasiness about him – and he bears it so well

Thursday, July 29th. Mrs Anderson kindly consents for Frank to be taken into her house – Our anxiety about him still continues. He seems no better – It is great gratification to Richard and myself though to be with him as one of us are all the time – My prayers for him are offered up daily and nightly to our Heavenly Father - God bless the little fellow and raise him up from his bed of pain is my constant prayer –

Friday, July 30th. Frank no better – still continues helpless – It pains me so to see the little fellow suffer – Our Father has afflicted us so heavily that I begin to fear that this is another of his severe afflictions - I determine by the advice of the Doctor to take him to Cartersville Ga where he can be tenderly attended to by some of our Athens friends –

Saturday, July 31st. Occupied most of the day in getting leave of absence for 24 hrs approved by the generals – Got back from Chattanooga late at night with it approved and make arrangements to have Frank moved to Chickamauga on a litter – Our Brig receives orders to move to Harrison the next day – I was very much struck with the kindness of Genl Hill (our new Lt Genl) when I presented my application to him –

Sunday, August 1st. Our Brig marches to Harrison and Richard and myself take Frank to Chickamauga – The day is beautiful but extremely warm – we remain there all day with him until 5 P.M. at the house of Mr Moore – a preacher whose family was gone - It was a sweet sabbath day to me thus to be isolated from the army a little while with my brothers – Frank seems much better and I feel very hopeful about him – at 11 o'clock I arrive at Cartersville and get a place on the floor of the parlor of the hotel for us to sleep – Brother Jim's faithful servant Jake comes along with us to nurse Frank –

Monday, August 2nd. I look up our friends to tell them about Frank to get them to help me get a place for him to stay during his sickness – Fortunately one of these

Mr Press Turner whom I shall be grateful to kindly consents that he shall stay at his house – I secure a competent physician to attend him – Dr Thompson – and thus having secured good attention for him and had him comfortably fixed I feel much better though my anxiety still continues – in the evening Miss Rebecca⁴² and Miss Patty Vasser⁴³ come to see him and to give him their tender care. Many of our friends come to see him and offer kind favors – The visits of none of them are more grateful than Rebecca's in whom we all feel such a deep interest – on account of peculiar circumstances – I go to see her and am made glad to see that the settled melancholy that once threatened her has passed away and that she seems to bear more cheerfully her deep affliction – *May our Father help her in her efforts to bear it resignedly – Such grief as hers can only be softened by the sweet dews of heaven* – Frank suffers from his trip and does not seem well today -

Tuesday, August 3rd. I leave Frank and our friends to return to my command with a sad heart – My thoughts are continually on my little brother – I reach Harrison at night and find that our Battalion and the 32nd & 45th Miss have gone to Blythe's Ferry about 20 miles up the river – I stay all night at the 16th Ala –

Wednesday, August 4th. Take up most of the day in trying to find a way to get to the Ferry – find that an ordnance wagon is going next morning and determine to avail myself of the opportunity –

Thursday, August 5th. Get up before day and start for the ferry in the wagon – arrive there about one o'clock – The accounts of the place are rather unfavorable – The people are ignorant and inhospitable – However we find it after a while much better than we anticipated – being able to get a good deal of forage after a while – We remained at this place nearly a month guarding at Doughty's Ferry and Blythe's Ferry – The duty was not heavy and the time passed off rather pleasantly – about ten days before we left the enemy appeared on the opposite bank at Blythe's Ferry and gave us some excitement – our command though did not get to fire at them any –

Wednesday, August 11th. Moved at sunrise to day to dig rifle pits on the bank of the river at Doughty's Ferry – we are engaged several days in this work and in felling timber – Our sport here is bathing in the river which is delightful – The river is shallow here and affords fine opportunities for going swimming to learn well – We also have a little bateau that we enjoy rowing a good deal – intelligence that dear Frank is much better and getting well – Thank God! – Everything is

⁴² Rebecca Vasser, a daughter of Richard W. Vasser, and quite likely the loved one of John Hartwell Coleman (see 18). She married twice after the war and died February 3 , 1924.

⁴³ Patty Vasser (1843 – 1892), a daughter of Richard W. Vasser.

exceedingly quiet here, the monotony being disturbed only by the occasional rumor of some are avoiding the guards and crossing the river –

Friday, August 21st. A day of fasting and prayer appointed by the President – I observe the fast as far as I can and pray to our Master in Heaven that a new era of hope may dawn on our unhappy confederacy – we were to attend preaching in the 32nd Miss by invitation – but the enemy appeared on the opposite bank of the river and prevented our having services – This same day they shelled Chattanooga and killed several inoffensive citizens – For several days they came to the north bank of the river keeping us continually on the alert –

Wednesday, Sept 2nd. We are relieved by the 3rd & 5th Confed Regts and leave Blythe's ferry for Harrison marching about 9 miles and halting for the night –

Thursday Sept 3rd. Start at Daylight for Harrison – The road is exceedingly dusty and the day very hot – We arrive at Harrison about two o'clock and camp on a high hill near a brick female college – There is a splendid cave spring at the foot of the hill – the water of which is pure & cool – We took a good wash in the evening and felt much refreshed – Frank my servant arrived from Cartersville today and tells me that Frank has gone home – I am delighted to hear that he is well – and feel thankful to our Heavenly Father for restoring him –

Friday, Sept 4th. We remain perfectly quiet in camp – I went to the river bank to look at the enemy on the opposite bank – saw one or two of them –

Saturday, Sept 5th. Lay in camp – still quiet – no signs of moving except a great dust kicked up by policing – an ominous sign

Sunday, Sept 6th Marched at day break 6 miles to Ooltewah 1 mile east of Tyner's Station – at 3 o'clock marched to Chattanooga 13 miles – arrived there about 11 o'clock – This was a terrible day on us – There was some mistake about the route-

Monday, Sept 7th. Received our rations – ate our breakfast and marched to McFarland's Spring at Rossville and halted until night – To day is my birthday and I am twenty-five years old and am celebrating by marching in the dust and hot sun preparatory to meet the enemy – the ruthless invaders of our soil – better than to be celebrating it over the wine cup and the luxurious dinner though! How delightful it was to stop at this good spring (McFarland's) and rest in the shade and drink the cool water – Here Mr Donnell⁴⁴ & Capt Malone⁴⁵ and several of our friends from the 50th Ala come to see us – Poor Richard my dear Brother did he think that this was the last time he would see them – he seemed so glad to see

⁴⁴ 1st Lt Robert Donnell, Co I, 50th Alabama Infantry, of Athens, AL.

⁴⁵ Capt James Henry Malone, Co. E, 50th Alabama Infantry, of Athens, AL

them – Ah we enjoyed this day as soldiers did and little did we think that we too – the last two of us were soon to be separated – at night we take up the line of march again and camp near Lee & Gordon's Mills - & about 15 miles from Lafayette –

Tuesday, Sept 8th. We begin the march again about 11 o'clock – We march all the day and arrive at Lafayette about 9 o'clock at night & camp in an open field near a mill and race which afforded us good water –

Wednesday, Sept 9th. Marched about a mile across the race into a pleasant woods – some of the boys bought a bee hive and we got some honey from them which was a great luxury to us - about 11 o'clock we moved back near the place we camped at night near a _____ and cooked rations – While we were halted here some friends of the Cavalry Harry Christian⁴⁶ & Harry Donegan⁴⁷ Came to see us – Lt Little⁴⁸ & myself took a good wash in the Mill race about 3 o'clock in the evening – we marched again a very circuitous rout – and went about 8 miles to get two miles on the Alpine road from Lafayette – My company halted near a good spring on the road & & Capt Steger went out on picket –

Thursday, Sept 10th. My company relieved Capt Steger's on picket - We lay on picket all day – I got a good breakfast at some kind peoples house on the Alpine road - About Dusk we received an order from Genl Wood to rejoin the Brig at Dug Gap about 7 miles distant – We set out and made this hard march by about 10 o'clock being nearly wore out when we reached there –

Friday, Sept 11th Were moved out very early and deployed as skirmishers – While we were thus deployed saw Genl Wood & he told me the plan was for Genls Hindman & Buckner to come up McLemore's Cove & assail the enemy - that he would try to get out through Dug Gap where we were & that we would there meet him – We waited here some hour or so & heard nothing of the guns we expected to hear on our right from Hindman. About 11 o'clock we were ordered to move forward until we met the enemy – After moving over precipitous hills, the climbing of which with the heat of the day almost exhausted us, we met the enemy's skirmishers who were concealed and poured a volley into us as we came up - Capt Steger lost several men killed and wounded – I lost none fortunately – We lay on the side of the hill here for several hours firing continually at the enemy concealed in some houses – About 4 o'clock Lt Genl D.H. Hill came up and ordered us forward and went with us himself thus attracting our admiration for the Lt Genl who was not afraid to go with his front line of skirmishers – About dusk we were called in and moved back to the top of the mountain where we camped

⁴⁶ Harry F. Christian, Adjutant, Russell's 4th Alabama Cavalry, of Huntsville, AL.

⁴⁷ Pvt later Sgt Maj W. Harvey Donegan, Co. F, Russell's 4th Alabama Cavalry, of Huntsville, AL.

⁴⁸ 2nd Lt B. F. Little, Co. A, 15th Battalion of Mississippi Sharp Shooters.

the night before – Maj Hawkins complemented the Battalion on its gallantry in the action & said we had more golden opinions from our commanders [9]–

Saturday, Sept 12th. We were moved back about a mile and a half to rest for the day –

Sunday, Sept 13th. Moved again to the front and deployed as skirmishers – built little works and lay behind them until night when we were moved back to the Gap

Monday, Sept 14th. Laying quietly at the gap doing nothing but watch the enemy over in the Cove –

Tuesday, Sept 15th. Some picket firing during the night but did not disturb us –

Wednesday, Sept 16th. Still lay at the Gap – all quiet

Thursday, Sept 17th. Col Russell's & Col J. T. Morgan's Cavalry go down into the Cove – saw several old friends in Col Russell's Regt – They came in in the evening – Col Estes of the 3rd Confederate was killed –

Friday, Sept 18th. Left the Gap at day light passed through Lafayette and marched about 11 miles halting about two o'clock about two miles from Lee & Gordon's Mills – were deployed as skirmishers – Heard cannonading & small arms some distance off – were relieved at night –

Saturday, Sept 19th. Were deployed early in the morning at the same place we were the evening before – Cannonading begins again – every prospect now of a battle – Were called in about 10 o'clock & marched to about 10 ½ o'clock in the direction of the firing – We marched about 10 miles, wading the Chickamauga, & double quicking about a mile when we come to our position – We had already passed about 2 ½ miles of the field over which the battle had been fought all day – good accounts reached us from the field – we felt hopeful – About 5 P.M. we reached our position – About 6 ½ P.M. we moved forward in line of battle through the woods – The sun was nearly down – I had no idea of meeting the enemy that evening – but we had not gone far when we met him fortified behind a fence – We engaged him fiercely & drove him from his position about ¾ mile – We fought the 16 & 18 U.S. Regulars in Genl Johnson's Division – It soon became too dark to see what we were doing & we were halted about 8 o'clock & lay all night holding the ground that had been fought over three times that day – Several of my men were wounded but none killed – My anxiety about my brother Richard during this engagement was great but he came out of this safe only to fall dear boy upon the bloody field next day – About 9 o'clock at night my company was sent out as skirmishers to double lines with Col Lowrey's regimental skirmishers – We went in among the dead and dying – The wails of the wounded were awful The weather

was very cool – and exhausted as I was, from the chilly night & the groans of the wounded I could not sleep – The enemy too about 400 yds off kept up a considerable noise chopping & cutting down trees as if making breastworks – I don't think I got a minutes sleep –

Sunday, Sept 20th. I was relieved by Capt Steger's company, and took my company back to the line – on the right of Col Lowry's Regt - We waited here and cooked our rations and eat our breakfast - Genl Bragg & his staff rode up about 9 o'clock and rode down the rear of our line – About 10 ½ A.M. we were ordered forward – we moved rapidly and soon engaged the enemy terrifically – The enemy poured musketry, grape & and canister & shell into us with powerful effect – It soon became evident that the enemy had the advantage of us – He was fortified behind his log breastworks – Several of my men fell wounded at the first fire from the enemy – We then laid down – but the contest was too unequal – It was soon discovered that the line on the left had been repulsed – that on the right had already given way – Col Lowrey acted most gallantly here cheering his men nobly - & gallantly did they act – But after holding our position about 2 hours the order was given to pull back – We fell back in good order – Maj Hawkins had his leg shot off while we were moving back After we had retired some ¼ mile some of Capt Steger's company began to come in – but I did not see my brother among them – This made me uneasy – I enquired if any of them had seen him – none of them could tell me anything – This made me feel awful – I sent some of them back to our position as I could not leave to see if they could find him – they reported that he was not to be found – Oh God could he be killed – I feared the worst – I knew he would be with his company unless he was killed or wounded - My mental agony was too terrible – We were moved to different points of the field but were not under fire any more during the day – About 8 o'clock at night we were halted and while we were passing the 32nd Miss Regt I heard an officer call me – I asked him what he wished and he asked me if I was a brother of Lt Coleman – I told him yes and asked him if he knew anything of him hoping he was wounded – but Oh God what was it he said – Killed – I found him on the field and got his sword & pocket book - & thus it is that two of my brothers have fallen in this cruel war at the hands of our wicked enemy – and I alone am left now – This dear sweet boy only 19 years old, so good, so fine, so gentle fell pierced through the heart by a cruel foe – *Oh God help me to bear it aright and not to bear revenge or malice* – We gained, through the blessings of our Father, a great victory over our enemies but little did I think of this in my great grief for my dear Richard – I thought of my Mother and Sisters – how terrible a blow this second great affliction would be to them – I could get no peace until I turned to my Heavenly father and committed my grief to him – I knew that he was a Christian and that he was with God and this reflection was balm to my wounded

heart –⁴⁹

Monday, Sept 21st. At day light I took one of his men Jim Hill & the infirmary and went to look for his body – We soon found it – I found him myself – He was shot through the heart, in the groin, in the thigh, in the leg – Oh poor boy – He must have been shot several times after he was killed – I had him put in an ambulance and carried to a white house I had seen where we crossed the Chickamauga, Mrs Ledfords – It turned out to be Genl Stewart's Div hospital – Rev Mr. Moony⁵⁰ our friend was there & he kindly attended to the burial of his body - He was buried near Genl Cheatham's Div hospital, Mr Alexander's house – by the side of Lt Madden⁵¹ (sic) of the 16th Ala Regt – Lt Cherry⁵² and Brig Genl Deshler⁵³ – At night we marched until two & a half o'clock & halted at Red House ford –

Tuesday, Sept 22nd. Started at 9 ½ o'clock & marched to Missionary Ridge & down into the valley to within 1 ½ miles of Chattanooga – It was thought we would try to storm their works that night – Some shelling from the enemy guns that day & night –

Wednesday, Sept 23rd. Moved back to the top of Missionary Ridge where we have been ever since – occasionally going out on picket and back to the wagons to wash –

Tuesday, Oct 6th. My brother-in-law Mr Thatch & brother Ruffin came up to see me to get my brother's remains to carry them home – if they can't do that to find the spot where he was buried & make a memorial _____ of it –

Wednesday, Oct 7th. I go with them to the battlefield – I take them where we fought & where he fell but we had been misinformed about where he was buried – we did not find the place –

Thursday, Oct 8th. We went out with the 16th on picket and Mr Thatch & Ruffin went again to look for dear Richard's grave They found it this time and being unable to get a conveyance for it he determined to come back again with

⁴⁹ A transcription of Capt. Coleman's report of the fighting on Sept. 19 and 20 in proper military format and language from the Official Records [9] appears as Appendix I.

⁵⁰ Rev Welborn Moony of the Tennessee Conference M. E. Church

⁵¹ 1st Lt Isaac Madding, Co. B, 16th Alabama Infantry Regiment, of Lawrence County, AL.

⁵² 2nd Lt Robert H. Cherry, Co. I, 16th Alabama Infantry Regiment, of Lawrence County, AL.

⁵³ Brig Gen James Deshler (1833 - 1863) of Tuscumbia, AL.

everything arranged for conveying his dear remains home – President Davis comes to visit our army & thanks us in the name of the country for our hardy courage –

Sunday, Oct 18th. Genl Hill issues his farewell address to his Corps – having been relieved of duty here on account of disagreement with Genl Bragg – It causes minimal regret –

Monday, Oct 19th. Rumors of a victory in Va – Great division among our Generals here – There seems to be great dissatisfaction with Genl Bragg – The President holds to him with great tenacity –

Tuesday, Oct 20th. Rumor of a victory across the Mississippi - Nothing definite – no papers – We grow very restless waiting here on the Ridge in the rain & bad weather which continues – Sickness begins to break out - *Oh our father find peace before the winter comes* –

Wednesday, October 21st. Boy Jake returns from hospital bringing intelligence of the death of Maj Hawkins - He was a gallant man & a good officer –

Thursday, Oct 22nd. Moved to a new camping ground where we could get wood more convenient – Lt Vasser receives leave of absence for 3 days – Paper of captains of Regts asking for their name to be returned & our Battalion to be broken up comes back with Genl Bragg's endorsement that the organization shall remain as it is –

Friday, Oct 23rd. Rains all day long – Lt Vasser leaves for home –

Saturday, Oct 24th. Still rains – cold & uncomfortable – How hard on our soldiers – God help them to bear the exposure – sent a letter to sister Mattie & brother Jim⁵⁴ -

Sunday, Oct 25th. _____ raining – day bleak and cloudless - no preaching

Monday, Oct 26th. Mr Moony came to see me – He is a good man & his cheerfulness always comforts me – I wrote a letter to my dear mother *trying to* comfort her – It is my constant prayer to our Father that he will _____ & comfort their poor broken hearts –

⁵⁴ Rev James Lockhart Coleman (Jan. 29, 1830 – 1896) Oldest son of Judge Daniel and Elizabeth Lockhart Peterson Coleman. Minister Methodist Episcopal Church South.

Tuesday, Oct 27th. Went with a friend to the top of Lookout Mountain – We got there late in the evening – We could see nothing below scarcely for the smoke in the valley – visit unsatisfactory - It had been 16 mos since I was there – which was in the summer (Aug) when the woods were beautiful green & fresh – Now they were all dead – in the sear & yellow leaf – It sadly reminded me of the desolation that had come over my beard in that short time –

Wednesday, Oct 28th. Receive an order at two o'clock to be ready to move at a moments notice – in motion at 2 ½ - March over the Ridge & then march back again - something like the King of France only we reversed his performance – Cannonading all day on the left –

Thursday, Oct 29th. Rained nearly all day – Lt Vasser returns from home at night – bringing some supplies –

Friday, Oct 30th. Another rainy day – Harry's brother Joe⁵⁵ and cousin Terrell Crenshaw⁵⁶ enlist in Company B –

Saturday, Oct 31st. Dry, bleak and cold – Muster for pay to day – Lt Vasser gives me a letter from home – Poor dear hearts they seem so uneasy about me now just as I supposed - & dear sister urges me to try and get some position where I will not be exposed – I appreciate her feelings about me but I write her the only answer I could give viz., It would be incompatible with conscience and a strict sense of honor for me to do so - & she must pray our Heavenly Father to spare me for their dear sakes –

Sunday, Nov 1st. Mr Moony comes over to see me – He preaches to our Battal (a strange thing) – His sermon was a good one – I _____ his hymns for him – something unusual for me – I enjoyed the services – The day was mild and lovely

Monday, Nov 2nd. Went to Maj Walt⁵⁷, Brig Q.M., to draw pay – drew pay to 31st Aug – paid a due bill of \$60.00 that I did not know I owed & which I thought I had paid – I am too careless about my money affairs –

Tuesday, Nov 3rd. Went to Genl Buckner's H.Q.'rs to see Maj Mastin⁵⁸ – I saw several North Ala friends there – learned of an unpleasant feeling between Genls

⁵⁵ Pvt Joseph Price Vasser (1845-1869), Co. B, 15th Battalion of Mississippi Sharp Shooters.

⁵⁶ Pvt Terrell Crenshaw (1839-1868), Co. B, 15th Battalion of Mississippi Sharp Shooters, was a cousin of Joe Vasser.

⁵⁷ Maj Martin Walt, AQM on Cleburne's staff.

⁵⁸ Maj William F. Mastin, AAG, Buckner's staff. died while Mayor of Huntsville, Alabama, 5 Oct, 1871.

Buckner & Bragg – Wrote to John Noe's ⁵⁹father of his death also to _____
Bolling Greenville Ala of A. J. Brown's ⁶⁰death –

Sunday, Nov 8th. Went with Dr Wilson to top of lookout Mountain – The view
was grand – one cannot help being impressed by such sights

Monday, Nov 9th. Capt Steger & myself sent for by Genl Lowrey⁶¹ to consult
with in regard to consolidating our two companies into one and reducing the
number of officers - We gave our consent & it was decided that the men vote to
decide who should remain with them – Capt Steger was selected getting 35 votes
& I was thrown out getting but 6 votes – My men considering the race so unusual
on account of Capt Stegers having a so much larger company did not vote – Lt
Vasser also thrown out by small vote – Do not know where I will be assigned but
trust that it will all be right – Write to Col Moore⁶² to see if I might be assigned to
his Dept –

Tuesday, Nov 10th. Received a letter from cousin L.C.C. enclosing me the Gospel
of St John in nice tract form – with the 14th Chap marked with pencil – I pray it
may be great comfort to me –

Wednesday, Nov 11th While waiting to see where I will be sent review my tactics
– very dull they are –

Saturday, Nov 21st. Received a leave of absence for 24 hrs and went to Ringgold
to get a boy Caesar out of jail – Got him without any difficulty –

Sunday, Nov 22nd. Returned with Caesar – Waited at Chickamauga until evening
– met our Brig on its way to Chickamauga to take cars for East Tennessee –
turned back & stayed at C all night –

Monday, Nov 23rd. Myself and Lt Vasser are assigned to the command of Co A in
the 33rd Ala Regt – Lt Brown ⁶³ & Dillard⁶⁴ are assigned to duty in the same Regt
– We lay near Chicamauga until evening waiting for the cars – About 9 o'clock
P.M. receive an order to go back to the Ridge – the enemy having attacked &
driven in our pickets – We arrive on the Ridge at night & sleep in line of battle –

⁵⁹ Pvt John R. Noe, Lawrence County, AL, killed at Battle of Chickamauga, 20
Sept. 1863.

⁶⁰ Pvt. A. J. Brown, Jones County, GA, killed at Battle of Chickamauga, 20 Sept.
1863

⁶¹ Col Mark Perrin Lowrey was promoted to Brig. Gen. 4 Oct. 1863

⁶² Probably Col John Edmund Moore (see 35).

⁶³ 2nd Lt Andrew Brown of Florence, AL.

⁶⁴ Adjutant Henry B. Dillard of Huntsville, AL.

It rained but not enough to wet us much

Tuesday, Nov 24th. Send out large _____ details to cut down trees & fortify the Ridge – The enemy appear in large numbers in the valley showing evident signs of attacking us – Heavy cannonading begins early and is kept up through the day – also small arms are heard at a distance – About 11 A.M. our Div is put in motion & carried around to the extreme right and put in position near the Tunnel – It rained nearly all day – Clears off about 7 P.M. & the moon shines out clear & beautifully – Heavy cannonading & musketry firing is heard about 9 P.M. in the direction of Lookout Mountain – The enemy must be attacking that stronghold –

Wednesday, Nov 25th. Sure enough the enemy did attack Lookout last night and carry it – It is a great blow to us – Reported that a large portion of _____⁶⁵ Brigades was captured – We are aroused early and in line – Genl Bragg & his staff ride by us – His presence with us indicates _____ work at our point to day – Several Brigades come up to reinforce us – About 8 ½ A.M. we are moved from our position at the tunnel & carried still further to the right – put in position on the side of a hill & ordered to prepare temporary breastworks – The enemy are close upon us as shown by our skirmishers in front & a ball passed occasionally through us while we build our log breastworks – About 10 ½ A.M. we complete our works & take our position behind them – They are very rude but give us a good deal of shelter – At about 11 A.M. the enemy are seen moving in line of battle against the Brig (Smith's) on our left - from behind our works we observe them calmly – without danger – It is the first opportunity to observe without participating I had ever had – The enemy move in bad order – Their line becomes broken at the first halt to fire & they retreat in confusion pressed by our men before they get within 200 yds – Our men fired too soon – They ought to have waited until the enemy came closer when they would have done more execution –The enemy retire but soon come again to the charge only though to be again repulsed – Again & again they charge only to be again & again repulsed – They show great determination but our brave troops are not to be moved – At the last repulse our gallant fellows leap their works & pursue the enemy capturing several stand of colors & many prisoners – We hold our position against every attack until dark when the order comes for us to move back quietly – our line on the left & centre has given away in confusion & while Cleburne's gallant division had won imperishable on this trying day, & done its whole duty, yet on account of the disgraceful conduct of the troops on other parts of the field we have to retire – We soon reach Chicamauga & there we find out what has taken place – Everything is confusion – stragglers innumerable hunting their commands – Cleburne's Div's alone seems to maintain any order – Ah the bitter humiliation of this disastrous day – That day should not

⁶⁵ The name of the Brigade was illegible but the Official Records do not indicate that a large portion of any of the brigades involved was captured.

have been lost - There was bad conduct somewhere & I don't know where - Time will develop - We bivouac near Chicamauga Station sleeping about 3 or 4 hrs -

Thursday, Nov 26th. We wake at day -pursue the retreat very slowly - Our Div is the rear guard of the army being the only one in which real order is left - We halt and form line east of Chicamauga awhile waiting for the wagons to get off & the supplies at Chicamauga to be burnt - About 10 A.M. we start again moving very slowly on account of the wagons - we move a little ways and then halt & so on until nearly dark when we reach Graysville - here we strike a brisk step & march very fast resting but very little until we get to the bank of the little Chicamauga which is about 10 P.M. - We bivouac here until day when we are waked up to wade the creek which is buttocks deep & quite wide - It is a great bugaboo to us but we made it without any difficulty warm and dry on the other side & feel very comfortable - After it is all over Ringgold is about a mile distant, through we march at a brisk pace & halt on the other side waiting for the trains to get on - We wait here but a little while before we hear skirmishing - The enemy is pressing us closely & it is determined to check him - We are soon thrown in line of battle & engage him pretty hotly for some time on a high hill _____ 1 mile east of Ringgold - I lost one man killed - Eli Meek⁶⁶ and one wounded - Garrett⁶⁷ & narrowly escaped myself several balls passing near me but thank God I was spared - In this engagement we worsted the enemy considerably - successfully checking his advance & gaining new favor for the Division [10] - After engaging the enemy about 2 hrs we fall back about 1 1/2 miles & take up a new position in line of battle against which the enemy do not advance - At dark we again retire & arrive about 11 P.M. at Tunnel Hill where we bivouac for the night worn out with three days fighting, marching and loss of sleep we could but sleep soundly -

Friday, Nov 27th. We go into line of battle about _____ miles south of Tunnel Hill where we await the movements of the enemy

Monday, Dec 7th. Build breastworks in front of our first position about 1/4 mile -

Tuesday, Dec 8th. Take a new camping ground where we begin to build Winter Quarters -

Monday, Jan 11th, 1864 Receive leave of absence for thirty days to go to North Ala - to see if I can hear from home -

⁶⁶ Pvt Eli Meek of Coffee County, AL.

⁶⁷ Pvt Joshua H. Garrett of Coffee County, Alabama

Saturday, Jan 16th. Arrive at Decatur – Stay with Mr Harry Fennel (sic)⁶⁸ – Am within 15 miles of my mother and sisters and little brothers and cannot get to see them –

Monday, Jan 18th. Went over to Athens under flag of truce in hopes that the enemy would permit me to stay at home – But this they cruelly refused nor would they permit them to come from home to see me – Lillie and Frank however came and saw me for a while – We were at the Picket post – By permission of Lt Col Phillips⁶⁹ the flag of truce party stay all night with Dr McDonald⁷⁰ – Enough of flags of truce for me – and trusting to the generosity Yankees – Send a letter to my Sister telling her to get a pass to come over the river to see me.

Tuesday, Jan 19th. Anxiously look for my Sister but am sadly disappointed when she does not come –

Wednesday, Jan 20th. My sister does not come – The cruel Yankees will not let her – I hear that she was seen leaving the office of the Post Commandant crying – Oh what feelings this produces in me – The whole week is passed with anxious hopes to see my Sister – hopes only to be blasted too sadly –

Sunday, Jan 24th. Hear of a contemplated move of a portion of Genl Roddy's Command – It is suspected that Athens is their destination – Here is an opportunity now to see the loved ones at home in spite of the Yankees –

Monday, Jan 25th. Meet Genl Roddy at Brown's Ferry in the evening – He tells me he is going across the river & will attack Athens at daylight next morning – I ask for permission to go with him which he cheerfully grants me – We cross the river, surprise the Yankees and drive them from the town – capturing 20 prisoners – burning & destroying & carrying off much clothing & stores of different kinds⁷¹ – The most of the fighting is carried on around our house – I find my mother and sisters much agitated – It was but a poor gratification after all to see them under such circumstances – I could not stay but a little while – I captured 11 horses in my mother's stables – retaining only two for my own use – this I did as there is a possibility of my being transferred to Genl Roddy's Command –

Tuesday, Feb 2nd. I hear that the enemy after their return to Athens – brutally assailed my Mother's house sacked and pillaged it and drove the family from home – Oh my Lord what creatures have we to deal with! – Are they human beings or are they fiends! To thus make war upon innocent women and children –

⁶⁸ Henry Fennell (ca 1810-1869), a prominent citizen of Decatur, Alabama.

⁶⁹ Lt Col Jesse J. Phillips, Ninth Illinois Mounted Infantry.

⁷⁰ Probably Dr. Jonathan McDonald

⁷¹ A newspaper account of the raid appears as Appendix II.

I find my sister and my brothers Ruffin and Frank in Decatur wither they have been sent, banished from their home – the home that our Father left us – What feelings does this produce in me - Oh Father can weak humanity longer bear this – *Oh God may I be the humble instrument in thy hands of avenging these cruel wrongs* – My sister relates to me all the facts – After the men returned they entered the house sacked and pillaged it from top to bottom – took the bed clothing – and destroyed the furniture, my Father’s and Mother’s portraits – all the little gathered tokens of years – letters from loved ones – My Mother appealed to the Major for protection (Major Kuhn⁷²) – He replied damn you I have no protection for you – pitch into that house men and sack it – One man set fire to the house - my sister attempted to smother it with her shawl – but he bravely seized her by the arm and with a hissing “damn you” between his teeth he violently thrust her from the house ⁷³ – Their injuries cannot be enumerated – Every time I see her she tells of some new little valuable they took - - And these are the soldiers of the greatest government the world ever saw – the gallant defenders of the Union, the constitution and the _____ - How long Oh God shall these things be? How long shall the innocent suffer and the wicked go unpunished – *Oh Father avert thy wrath from us – and lift from thy suffering children the burden of suffering & oppression that now rests upon them* –

Wednesday, Feb 3rd. Remain with my sister for three days – She with my brothers go to Col Jas Saunders⁷⁴ house where she is kindly offered a home – for a while –

Friday, Feb 5th. Return to Dalton in company with Dr Conwell⁷⁵ of Nashville – Reach there on 11 Feb the very day my leave is out – Find that the whole army has re-enlisted nearly to a man –

Saturday, Feb 13th. Being a supernumerary and only temporarily on duty with the company that I now command viz. Co A – 33rd Ala, I make application to Genl Johnston to be ordered to report to Genl Roddy’s command where I am offered a permanent place –

Friday, Feb 18th. My application being vigorously urged is finally granted and I am greatly to my gratification ordered to report to Genl Roddy –

⁷² Maj. John H. Kuhn, Ninth Illinois Mounted Infantry.

⁷³ A newspaper account of this incident appears as Appendix III.

⁷⁴ Col James Edmonds Saunders (1836-1896) of Lawrence County, AL, and author of *Early Settlers of Alabama*.

⁷⁵ Dr. Ira Conwell of Nashville, TN.

Sunday, May 29th. The whole of Genl Roddy's Cavalry force engaged a large force of the enemy coming out of Decatur⁷⁶ – Roddy skirmishes with them back to Courtland and finally fights them on Sunday morning at Danl Hodges⁷⁷ near Moulton – On Friday previous, Major Williams⁷⁸ a gallant Christian gentleman and an excellent officer is killed in a skirmish – Roddy lost many good men in the Sunday fight – Major Dick Johnson⁷⁹ of Johnson's Regt, a gallant soldier, was mortally wounded and died after lingering a good while – Having been assigned to duty with Patterson's Regt 5th Ala Cav & was acting as Major in the fight – A good Providence spared me from being hurt – I had a good horse named Daniel Lewis killed – a serious loss as horses are so scarce and so high–

Wednesday, June 1st. Go down to Mr Jack Pride's⁸⁰ where my sister & younger brothers are staying to get another horse that I had left there – Find on getting there that she is not in condition to ride having had her back hurt – Was detained there a week – During this time I visit the home of Robert Goodloe⁸¹, an estimable gentleman, who has two charming daughters⁸² whom I call cousin and whom I love as such although we are but distantly related – I could very soon lose my heart here were I to permit myself – But this is not a time for young men to be falling in love – The country demands all their care and affection, all their time and talent – Besides I have already had one affair du coeur in this region which did not terminate happily and I think I had better desist from any further efforts here – Poor fellow – I am to be pitied – doomed to go through the world unblessed with the heart that I love & that I believe loves me – The chief pleasure I experience in my visits here is being with my Sister and trying to comfort & cheer her in her exile – It is true that there is my sweet pretty cousin whom she stays with that I love to see too – but cousins are dangerous things it is said and I would not be surprised if there was some truth in it – After remaining here in the Nation⁸³ about a week I return to my Command and receive orders to report to Major Stuart⁸⁴ at Danville – I do not remain with him however but a few days

⁷⁶ In this fight, Roddey lost 15 killed; total loss 30. The Federals lost 4 killed and 14 wounded. [11]

⁷⁷ Daniel Hodges, a wealthy farmer who lived near Moulton, Alabama.

⁷⁸ Major James T. Williams, killed at Courtland, Alabama.

⁷⁹ Major Richard W. Johnson, wounded at Moulton, Alabama.

⁸⁰ John F. Pride of Colbert County, AL.

⁸¹ Robert Atlas Goodloe (1814-1882) of Colbert County, AL.

⁸² Sarah Louise (Sallie) Goodloe (1841-1893) and Mary (Sis Pop) Goodloe (1843-1874).

⁸³ This part of Northwest Alabama was once a part of the Chicasaw Nation, hence the appellation "Nation".

⁸⁴ Major James H. Stuart, commander of Stuart's Battallion which served in North Alabama from the summer of 1864 until the close of the war and was frequently engaged in scouting and skirmishing.

before I am ordered on a Genl Court Martial at Tuscumbia to assemble on 17th June –

Monday, June 20th. Arrive in Tuscumbia – Several days are spent before any business is ready for the Court – I procure boarding at Mrs Grilly’s - a nice quiet place – somewhat out of town where there is plenty of retirement which I so much love – It is a great gratification to me to get such a pleasant place to stay at while I am here – especially as I am not well and need rest and palatable food – This is a happy respite for me – When the Court adjourns in time I go down to Mr. Pride’s to see my Sister & spend the night there, returning in the morning to be at Court – I have made many pleasant friends and acquaintances in Tuscumbia - & shall regret when I have to leave very much – While I am here a great revival of religion is begun and carried on at the Methodist Church – A great many make a profession of religion of course though mostly girls and young ladies – The preaching is a great enjoyment to me as I have been denied the great privilege while in the army – One of the preachers Dr Petway⁸⁵ is truly a gifted man – My own heart was kindled with a new religious zeal under his preaching – He is a good man and I am glad that God has blessed him so in his efforts to do good – I have had my heart much touched while witnessing the sorrow and penitence of those sweet amiable sorrow-stricken girls who have lost brothers and fathers in battle – In giving their hearts to their Savior they seem to look forward with new hope to the future – Ah truly there is a reality in the religion of Jesus Christ – And this religion is a beautiful ornament in the character of the young – *I pray thee Oh Father that I may have more of this vital religion in my own heart & that I may love & serve thee more faithfully* –

Sunday, Aug 14th. Today take my leave of the Nation – It makes me sad – For in leaving here I leave Sister and my young brother Frank –and I leave too those sunny eyed cousins with their bright smiles and winning manners and more than all, their kind hearts - They have won into my heart more than I had thought - There is Cousin S with her large sweet dreamy eyes & “her heart as a river without a main”- There is Cousin P with her sprightly humour, her bright sunny face, sweet & attractive in all her _____.

⁸⁵ Dr. Ferdinand S. Petway, formerly Chaplain of the 44th Tennessee Infantry Regiment.

ENDNOTES

1. Owen, Thomas McAdory, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*. S. J. Clarke Pub. Co., Chicago, 1921.
2. D. Coleman Diary, January 1863-August 1864, M 3317, Southern Historical Collection, The University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
3. From the Battalion Muster Roll: A company of Sharpshooters was formed in Wood's Brigade, Army of the Mississippi, May 21, 1862, of men temporarily detailed from the 16th Regiment Alabama Infantry, the 32d and 33d Regiments Mississippi Infantry and the 44th Regiment Tennessee Infantry. Another company was formed in the same brigade about July, 1862, which was composed of men temporarily detailed from the 16th and 33d Regiments Alabama Infantry and the 32d and 33d Regiments Mississippi Infantry. Commencing the latter part of December, 1862, the two companies served as one command, known as Hawkins' Battalion of Sharpshooters. The commander, A.T. Hawkins is shown on the 1860 Census for Madison County, AL, : Abner T. Hawkins, Age - 30, Born - N. C., Occupation - Carriage Maker, Residence - Southern Hotel. He enlisted in the 7th Alabama Infantry Regiment 26 March , 1861.
4. Shapiro, Norman M., *The Star of the Collection*. The Huntsville Historical Review, Vol. 22, No. 1, Winter-Spring 1997, p. 6.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 5&6.
7. *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series II.*, Vol. XXIII., Part I. Reports. pp 271-273. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1897.
8. Bennett, William W., D. D., *The Great Revival in the Confederate Armies*. 1876. Sprinkle Publications, Harrisonburg, Virginia, 1976.
9. *War of the Rebellion, loc. cit.*, Vol. XXX., Part II. Reports. pp 172-173.
10. *War of the Rebellion, loc. cit.*, Vol. XXXI., Part II. Reports. pp 753-758.

11. *Confederate Military History – Extended Edition*, Vol. VIII., Alabama, Confederate Publishing Company., p. 365.

APPENDIX I.

Report of Capt. Daniel Coleman, Fifteenth Mississippi Battalion Sharpshooters.

Hdqrs. Hawkins' Sharpshooters, Wood's Brig.,
In Front of Chattanooga, October 6, 1863

Captain: I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by Hawkins' Sharpshooters in the battle of Chickamauga September 19 and 20:

On Saturday, September 19, were ordered from where we had encamped the night before, and began the march for the battle-field about 11 a. m. We marched leisurely, and did not reach the field until 5 p. m. About half an hour was consumed in arranging the lines, when we were ordered forward. The battalion moved forward in line with the brigade. Its position was on the right of the Thirty-second and Forty-fifth Mississippi Regiments, and we were ordered to conform our line to that of Brigadier-General Polk's brigade, on our right. We did not move far before we met the enemy's line of battle, sheltered behind a fence. They engaged us hotly for some time, but finally gave way before the impetuosity of our troops. They fell back across the field and formed again in the edge of the woods on the other side. By this time night had come on, and the position of the enemy could only be told by the blaze of their guns. The last position was hotly contested by the enemy, but they again gave way, and this time they seemed to be in much confusion. We continued to advance, and had gone about a mile, when, on account of the darkness, we were ordered to halt and throw out skirmishers in front of the line. Company B, commanded by myself, was ordered to be deployed 400 yards in advance of the line, and to unite with the skirmishers from Colonel Lowrey's regiment (Thirty-second and Forty-fifth Mississippi), so as to double the line. This company was deployed and remained in this position during the whole night. We were within hearing of the enemy, they being not more than 400 or 500 yards from us. They seemed busily occupied in felling trees and chopping. The enemy did not advance, and there was no firing during the night.

Early the next morning this company was relieved by the other company of the battalion, viz, Company A, commanded by Capt. T. M. Steger, and my company returned to its position on the right of Colonel Lowrey's regiment. We remained thus all the fore part of Sunday morning, receiving our rations and eating breakfast quietly. About 10.30 o'clock we were

again ordered forward, and moved in quick time, and part of the time in double-quick time, until we ascended a ridge and came in contact with the enemy's line concealed behind their log breastworks. There was so little protection here, the trees being very scattering, that our men were ordered to lie down. The engagement soon became furious. The enemy's shot and shell plowed through our ranks with telling effect, and owing to their protected position I do not think we injured them much in return. We remained there about an hour and a half. The brigade on our right had been repulsed and had given way sometime before. We soon heard that the left of our brigade had also given way, and the left of the Thirty-second Mississippi, owing to this fact I suppose, soon began to give back, but, by the gallantry of the colonel, the regiment was soon steadied in its position, notwithstanding its ranks and those of our own little command were being fearfully thinned by the enemy's deadly fire. It was soon discovered that it was useless to remain where we were, and upon hearing Colonel Lowrey give the command to his regiment to rise up and about face, I repeated the same command to my company, and ordered it to conform to the movements of his regiment. Owing to the gallantry and coolness of Colonel Lowrey, his regiment fell back in fine order, and this inspired my own company (which was all of the battalion now, the other company being deployed as skirmishers) so that it fell back also in good order. The good order preserved under so hot a fire was remarkable.

While we were upon the ridge many brave and gallant men were killed and wounded, and it gives me pain to state that it was here I lost a brave and gallant young brother, Second Lieut. R. V. Coleman, of Company A, who fell pierced with four mortal wounds while nobly discharging his duty. I have the consolation to hope that his pure young spirit is happy with the God he delighted to serve while on earth. He is the second brother to fall with this command.

The men, with few exceptions, behaved well and stood to their posts.

I would not make any invidious distinctions, but I would mention Third Sergt. R. L. Finley and Corporal Wallace of Company B, as acting with peculiar bravery: also Sergeant Cunningham, of Company A, who fell discharging faithfully his duty as a soldier. The former, Sergeant Finley, is in every way worthy of promotion.

I regret to state that while we were falling back from our position the gallant commander of the battalion, Maj. A. T. Hawkins, while reluctantly moving back with my company and exhorting the men to keep good order, had his leg shot off with a cannon-ball. The service will lose for a time, if not permanently, a cool, brave and useful officer.

After we fell back the command was not under fire any more until late in the evening, when Captain Steger's company was sent out in front of our lines and skirmished about an hour with the enemy. He lost no men, and night coming on, the enemy having given way on all sides, the engagement ceased.

Respectfully,
DANIEL COLEMAN
*Captain, Commanding
Sharpshooters.*

Capt. O. S. Palmer
Assistant Adjutant-General

APPENDIX II.

BRIG. GEN. RODDY'S CAPTURE of ATHENS*

Official Intelligence from General Roddy's movement on Athens has been received. He crossed the Tennessee at Brown's Ferry, on the night of the 25th of January, with 260 of his cavalry dismounted and 75 mounted, and two pieces of artillery, and marched rapidly to Athens. – a distance of about 16 miles – and met the enemy in front of his camp at 4 o'clock, A. M. on the 26th, in position. After a sharp fight of 30 minutes, he drove them back, through their camps, and through the town to the North-Eastern extremity when their retreat turned into a route.

Gen. R., then, withdrew and destroyed his entire camps and equipments, a large amount of quartermaster and commissary stores. He then, marched back to the Ferry, and re-crossed safely, at 2 P. M., on the 26th, with 20 prisoners, 50 to 100 horses and all the clothing, blankets, boots, medicines, and other plunder, his men could carry. His loss, reported, was 4 men killed, including a Lieutenant, and 17 wounded – and the enemy left, at least, three times this number in our lines when they retreated.

Col. Johnson crossed the river near Florence to pass up on the North side of the river to cooperate with Gen. Roddy, but met a brigade of the enemy from Huntsville and Mooresville, moving Westward, and had a sharp fight with them, lasting from 3 P. M. till dark. A courier to Gen. Roddy said that, when he left, they were in sight of each other and the fight was, so far, a stand-off – that it was desperate and our loss considerable.

*From *The Huntsville Confederate*, published in Dalton, Georgia, Feb. 8, 1864.

APPENDIX III.

FROM ATHENS ALA.*

Capt. Daniel Coleman, who has displayed his gallantry on many a well fought field, happening to be in the Tennessee Valley on leave from the Army of Tennessee, volunteered to accompany Gen. Roddy on his late expedition to Athens, the Captain's home, and rendered most efficient aid. When Roddy's force retired to the South side of the Tennessee, the cowardly Yanks, who fled before men, avenged themselves on the females of Capt. Coleman's family. They went to the house of his mother, the widow of the late Daniel Coleman, broke up her furniture, cursed and abused her and her daughter, Miss Mattie Coleman, struck the former and thrust the latter out of the house, and set fire to the house and would have consumed it, if some one of them, more civilized than the rest, had not run off and reported the fact to some superior officer, who had the fire extinguished. The assault in the house was made by a party under the lead of a flop-eared Dutchman, named Kuhne (sic), the Major of the Regiment, who used to be a deck hand on a steamboat that ran between Decatur and Knoxville. Mrs. Coleman appealed to him for protection, and his chivalric response was, "Go away from me, old women. G - D d - n you. I have no protection for you. Pitch in, men, and sack that house and burn it."

On the faith of this brute's misrepresentations, Mrs. C. and her daughter were ordered out of the Federal lines, by Col. Phillips, but Mrs. C. was suffering so from a bruise on her and , that Phillips rescinded the order as to her. Miss Mattie C. was taken to Decatur and, there, Phillips offered to rescind the order as to her, too, but she declined to . Capt. C's brothers, Ruffin and Frank, 16 and 12 years old, respectively, were put in jail, and, the, sent out of the lines, on the suspicion that they had given information to Roddy that Phillips had taken off the larger part of his command, leaving but a small garrison behind. The dwelling of Mr. R. H. Thach, brother-in-law of Capt. C., was, also, set afire, secretly, at night, but it was opportunely discovered and extinguished.

*From *The Huntsville Confederate*, published in Dalton, Georgia, Feb. 15, 1864.

HUNTSVILLE 1910-1911: TOUCHED BY GREATNESS

Chris Hauer

Jacob Z. Lauterbach (1873-1942) was among the greatest Judaica scholars of his generation. He served as Professor of Talmud at Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio, from 1911 until 1942. He was granted retirement at his own request in 1934, but continued his teaching, research and publication, living his last six years among his students in the college dormitory. His published bibliography of books and articles runs 8½ pages, plus an additional 9 pages listing contributions to encyclopedias, principally the monumental *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901-1905) (Lauterbach 1951:3-20). His magisterial three-volume Hebrew/English critical edition of the Halakic Midrash, *Mekilta of Rabbi Ishmael* (Lauterbach 1949) is probably his most notable monument.¹ But his posthumous *Rabbinic Essays* (Lauterbach 1951) occupies a special place in my affections. It was invaluable to me in my graduate school courses and in my dissertation research and over the forty years since, it has seldom been far out of reach from my desk.

I came early to an appreciation of Lauterbach because my great teacher at Vanderbilt, Rabbi Lou H. Silberman, has been his student, his secretary and finally, his literary executor. But I had never connected him with Huntsville, Alabama. That is, not until after our return to Huntsville, when I received a letter from Professor Silberman in which he said, "Oh, lest I forget. Do you know that my teacher, Jacob Lauterbach, was once rabbi of the Huntsville congregation?" (Silberman 1998). Indeed so! The historical essay in the 1994 Temple B'nai Sholom Rededication booklet records:

Rabbi Jacob Z. Lauterbach served the Congregation from 1910-1911. While here he wrote several scholarly books. He later served for many years as a professor at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Rabbi Lauterbach proudly showed his students a gold pocket watch presented to him by members of Temple B'nai Sholom upon his departure from Huntsville (Marks and Kirshtein 1994: 15).

The pocket watch was an intriguing point, so I asked Professor Silberman if he remembered it. He responded, "I remember it very well. It had a black fob with

¹ Midrash is the Hebrew word for Biblical commentary. Halakic midrash, which seeks to explicate and clarify authoritative laws and customs of the Biblical Torah can only be made on the books of the Torah itself, principally Exodus through Deuteronomy. (Mekilta covers selected passages in Exodus, from chapter 12:1 through 35:3.) Hagadic midrash is inspirational, and may be made on any part of Scripture.

intricate gold initials.” (Silberman 1999). It bears noting that Rabbi Lauterbach came to Huntsville as an established scholar. His extensive contributions to *The Jewish Encyclopedia* were already behind him, and he was called to his professorial chair in the year he left B’nai Sholom. There is a lacunae in his bibliography of books and articles after 1903, presumably reflecting his concentration on the encyclopedia project. His publications resumed in 1911 and continued down to his death. He left one of his important essays, “Jesus in the Talmud” (Lauterbach 1951:473-570) in a first draft, but with a number of notes on revisions, which Prof. Silberman used in bringing the work to press (Silberman 1951:xii).

The minutes of the Board of Congregation B’nai Sholom record that the Board voted in a called meeting on 10 July 1910 to elect Dr. Jacob Z. Lauterbach as Rabbi for one year, beginning 1 September 1910 and ending 31 August 1911, at an annual salary of \$1,000. The months of July and August were designated as vacation (Bnai Sholom Board Minutes 1910:100).²

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_____, *Rabbinic Essays*. Cincinnati, Ohio: The Hebrew Union College Press. 1951.

Marks, Henry S. and Kirshtein, Doris, “In Retrospect,” *Temple B’nai Sholom Rededication September 30 – October 2, 1994*. Temple B’nai Sholom, pp. 13-16 (pages in original not numbered) 1994.

² For purposes of comparison, the Session Records of the First Presbyterian Church for 13 April 1913 reported an annual pastor’s salary of \$1,500. The Vestry Minutes of the Episcopal Church of the Nativity for 17 January 1907 record a call to a potential rector at a salary of \$1,500, and a payment of \$1,530 for rectorial services (15 April, 1909). However, a call to a new rector dated 21 April 1909 included a salary of \$2,000. Both the Presbyterian minister and the Episcopal rector also received the free use of a house.

Silberman, Lou H. "A Note on the Editing of the Essays," Lauterbach 1951: xi-xii.

_____ 1998 Personal correspondence.

_____ 1999 Personal correspondence.

Annual Report of the Treasurer
HUNTSVILLE-MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
July 1, 1998 - June 30, 1999
Norman M. Shapiro, Treasurer

Checkbook Balance, June 30, 1998	5573.71
Savings Account Balance, June 30, 1998	1120.67
Certificates of Deposit, with interest, to date	<u>5893.12</u>
TOTAL	\$12,587.50

Receipts:

Dues	3314.00
Donations	126.00
<i>Historical Review Sales</i>	119.00
Map Sales	60.00
Photo Sales	507.00
Ala. Hist. Assn	138.72
Interest on Savings	16.89
Interest on CDs	<u>238.06</u>
Total Receipts	4519.67
Funds Available	17,107.17

Disbursements:

<i>Historical Review Printing</i>	2259.56
Invitations	484.30
Postage & Mailing	391.48
Administration	268.96
Storage	449.00
Meeting Room	85.00
Photos	479.00
HSV Times Ads	373.00
Marker Correction	277.44
P.O. Box	40.00
Arts Council Dues	<u>50.00</u>
Total Disbursements	5157.74

Checkbook Balance, June 30, 1999	4680.69
Savings Account Balance, June 30, 1999	1137.56
Certificates of Deposit, with interest, to date	6131.80
TOTAL BALANCE	\$11,950.05

MAPLE HILL BOOK PROJECT	\$9,312.50
Cash	\$1558.16
CD	7754.34

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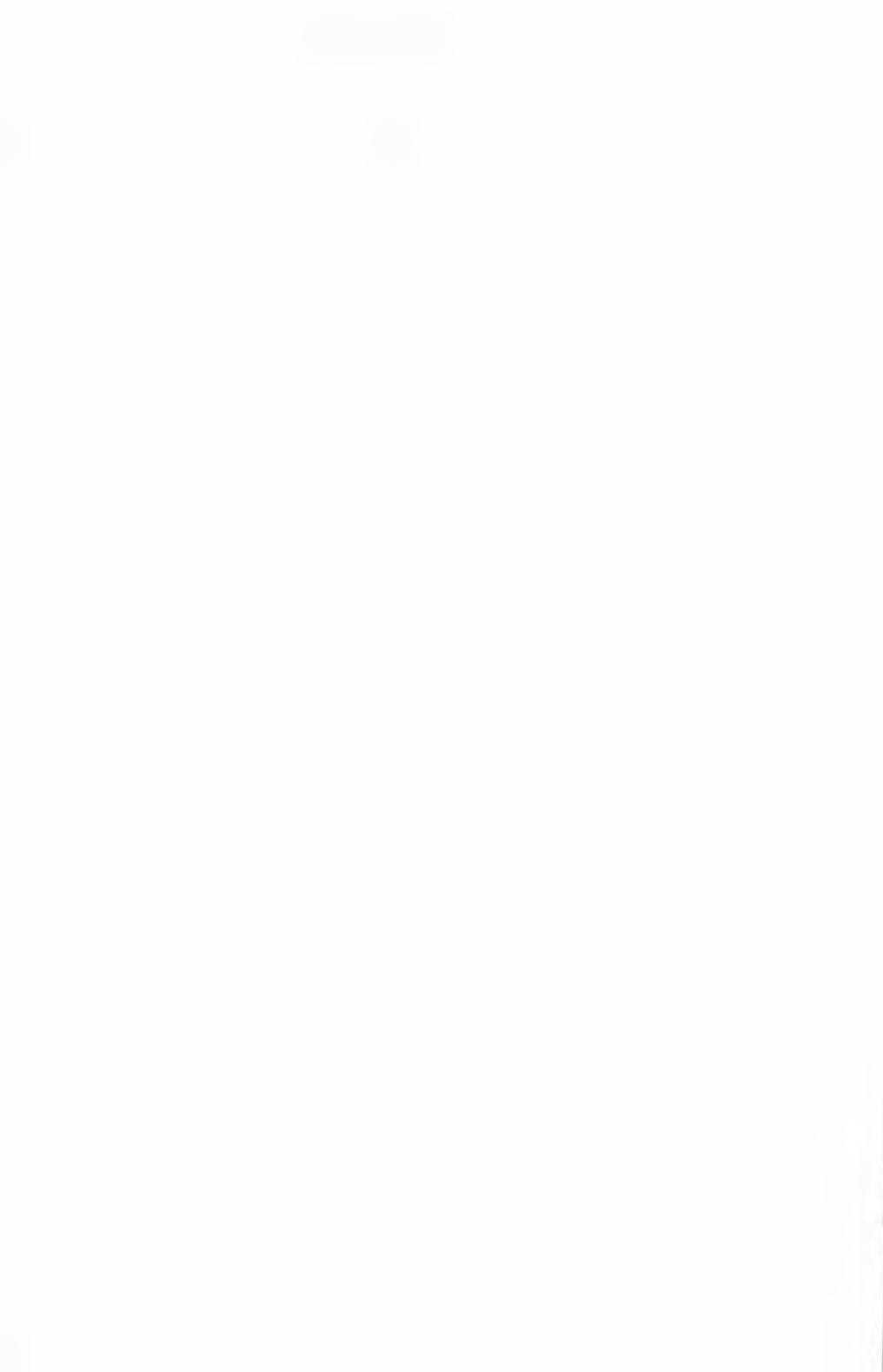
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Signature



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