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*Yankee Doodle Diary:
Union Soldier Francis Marion Johnson's Recollections
of the American Civil War (1863)*

Shelfmark

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Francis M. Johnson Diary.

May 21, 1863, to July 22, 1863.

Introduction

Francis Marion Johnson's diary is currently housed in California State University Fullerton's (CSUF) University Archives and Special Collections. While the archivists are unsure of how this diary came to be in the possession of CSUF, it is likely this and accompanying materials were donated by relatives or descendants of Francis M. Johnson. The diary itself and its pages are in relatively good condition. The front cover contains the image of a woman. All diary entries are dated and written in cursive on paper. There are an average of 20-22 lines per page with diary entries, except for Page 1 with 19 lines and Page 23 with 9 lines.

Francis M. Johnson, a native of Alton (Madison Co., Illinois), served in the Union (United States) Army during the American Civil War, namely, as Principal Musician of the 32nd Regiment, Illinois Infantry. Despite being written in the midst of the war, Johnson did not restrict his writing to military engagements. The diary was his personal account which includes the weather, daily life, troop movements, and interactions with other soldiers and civilians. Notable events include journeying throughout the South with his platoon (most often Corinth, Mississippi), several mentions of renowned Union Generals William Tecumseh Sherman and Ulysses S. Grant, and the performance of "Yankee Doodle" for civilians in a schoolhouse (Page 11, June 13th). Francis Johnson never really makes it clear as to whom he may be writing as none of the diary entries are addressed to a specific person. Following his discharge from the army, Francis M. Johnson studied at Shurtleff College in Alton, Illinois.

Francis M. Johnson's diary should be of interest to those studying military history, the American Civil War, or the day-to-day life of an enlisted soldier in particular. Johnson's account provides a fresh and personal perspective to a major conflict and turning point for the United States of America (i.e., the American Civil War). Aside from personal events, such as the theft of an ale barrel from a Sutler (Page 9, June 12th), there are several instances where Johnson displays racist sentiment through derogatory language occasionally used towards African-Americans. Educators teaching about this topic could utilize this diary to bring the

subject matter to life with a history-from-below approach and connect an ordinary person to the larger historical figures and events.

The transcription below preserves the lines, spelling, and capitalization of the original diary. Any additions are enclosed by square brackets. Loss and illegible deletions are indicated by three dots enclosed by square brackets.



Figure 1: Photograph of Francis M. Johnson (1884), University Archives & Special Collections, CSUF.

*Edition: Francis M. Johnson Diary,
May 21, 1863, to July 22, 1863*

Frontispiece Page:

IV Varicocele¹ 25 March 1862, picks 4 or 5 days, with
flux
[California State University, Fullerton Seal]
[From the Collection
of the
Patrons of the Library]

Half Title [Page]:

[Modern Hand Pencil 573403 Rare File 4]
Francis M. Johnson

¹ Enlargement of the veins within the loose bag of skin that holds the testicles.

Alton²
 Ill[inoi]s.
 1862---,63,
 [Modern Hand Pencil: Library
 Cal State Univ[ersity], Fullerton]

Blank Page

Title Page:

Francis M Johnson's,
 Note. Book.
 Alton Ills.
 March. 5. 1863.
 [Flourish]

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Page 1:

Dairy³ commencing from the
 date of leaving home. May 21. 1862.
May. 21.st. I. Cos⁴Andrew.⁵ & C. Christy.⁶ left
 home. the 21.st for the Reg[imen]t. which
 was near Corinth Miss[issippi]⁷ in Gen[eral]. Grants⁸
 Army. We went to St[.] Louis.⁹ and
 got aboard of the Steamer South West.
 in company of several others of the same Reg[imen]t.
May 22. We reached Cape Girardeau.¹⁰ M[iss]o[uri]. I went
 ashore and visited the fortifications &
 General Ashmans.¹¹ devisions were there.
 and were getting aboard of Transports
 for the Tennessee River,¹²
May 23. Passed Cairo. Ill[inoi]s.¹³ and at 4 P.M.

² Located in Madison County, Illinois.

³ Misspelling of "Diary."

⁴ Possibly the word "cousins" or "Colonels."

⁵ Unknown individual.

⁶ Unknown individual.

⁷ Located in Alcorn County, Mississippi.

⁸ Ulysses S. Grant, U.S. General.

⁹ Independent City, Missouri.

¹⁰ Located in Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri.

¹¹ Unknown General.

¹² Largest tributary of the Ohio River, located in the Southeastern United States.

¹³ Located in Alexander County, Illinois.

arrived at Paducah. K[entuck]y.¹⁴ Weather Warm.
May. 24. Passed. Fort's Henry¹⁵ & Hymen.¹⁶ Tennessee .
 where we were formerly camped. A part of
 Curtisses Cavalry¹⁷ were there and some Ohio
 Reg[imen]t. The weather was warm & dry.

Page 2:

May. 25 Passed Savannah Tenn[essee].¹⁸ and reached Pitts[burg]
 Landing.¹⁹ at 10 AM. three Gun Boats were
 lying there. also several Reg[imen]ts.
 At 11 AM we. six in all. started for
 the Reg[imen]t. which was with the. army near
 Corinth. We passed by our old camps.
 and they were desolate looking, in fact the
 whole Battle ground was, here and there you
 would see an old Muskett or Bayonett and
 Belts. Cartridge Boxes²⁰ & and a broken
 Artillery Cassion.²¹ an Ambulance or Wagon
 and in numerous places the long thron
 up ridges of Earth. marking the Burying
 places of the different Reg[imen]ts. about 12
 O clock we reached the large Spring by
 the Shiloh Church where we took a
 slight dinner. We walked on the
 ground being hilly. still We came to
 the Rear Pickett Guard²² 8 or 9 miles
 from Corinth. We there helped a teamster²³
 out of a bad place with his team. and

Page 3:

When We came to good roads We got on and
 rode a mile or so. it was a great help
 to us as We had pretty heavy loads to carry of

¹⁴ Located in McCracken County, Kentucky.

¹⁵ Constructed in 1861, Tennessee.

¹⁶ Fort Heiman, Kentucky; constructed in 1862.

¹⁷ 5th Regiment, Iowa Cavalry, organized by Curtis Horse.

¹⁸ Located in Hardin County, Tennessee.

¹⁹ River landing in Hardin County, Tennessee, on the west bank of the Tennessee River.

²⁰ Carrying case for ammunition.

²¹ A two-wheeled cart designed to carry artillery ammunition.

²² A unit of soldiers who provide timely warning and screening against an enemy advance.

²³ Person who drove a team, usually of oxen, horses, or mules, pulling a wagon.

things We were taking to the Boys &
At Sun set we reached Logans.²⁴ Devision
and found we had taken the wrong road.
We walked back about 3 miles to the other
road and it being dark We made us a
rail Pen and crawled in and slept.

May. 26. We craweld out early next morn the 26th
and started on the road. We reached
our Reg[imen]t. at 10. A.M. and had a general
shaking of hands. the boys were all right
and glad to get the things We brought. We
found the Reg[imen]t. camped in the front line
of the Army, about 2 miles from Corinth
The Reg[imen]t. had been paid the 25th so we set
about and got ours, the Pay Master was
paying of[f] the 3rd Iowa.²⁵

May. 27. We had to lay on the Coller line²⁶ all day (the
Weather warm.) while the 2 Brigade of our 4th Dev[ision]

Page 4:

Advanced to build another line of Breast
works.²⁷ there was some sharp Cannonading²⁸
and some Infantry fighting. and the
Picketts kept up a steady firing day &
night.

May. 28. We had orders to move to the New
Breast works. which We did leaving
Our tents. they were not quite a mile
from the Rebel Works and at some
places were in sight. The Picketts kept
up a steady firing all day.

May 29. A heavy noise like explosions or heavy
Cannonading was heard in the direction
of Corinth. which continued for some
time. We thought it was the Rebels
and Pope²⁹ shelling each other as we

²⁴ John Alexander Logan, U.S. General.

²⁵ Possibly 3rd Iowa Infantry Regiment or Cavalry Regiment.

²⁶ Possibly the term "Collar Line" in reference to Confederate States Army Officer.

²⁷ Breastwork; temporary fortification at breast height.

²⁸ Period of continuous heavy gunfire.

²⁹ John Pope, U.S. General.

had heard the fighting was to commence
 the 29.th The camps were all commotion
 getting ready. It was not long before
 We had the news that Corinth was
 Evacuated and the explosions were the blowing

Page 5:

up of Magazines³⁰ & the 9.th & 12th Ill[inoi]s.
 Reg[imen]ts. In company of a number of
 Reg[imen]ts. started to catch the retreating
 Foe. about 8 AM. Our Reg[imen]t. & Devison
 went as far as the Breast Works of the
 Reb[el]s. when We were ordered back to camp
 as sufficient force had been sent out
 so we turned and went back. the
 day was verry warm .and the roads
 verry dusty. All day long prisoners
 were brought in. in squads of 5 & 6 &.
May. 30.th Day verry warm. We the 4th devison
 were on Review today by Gen[eral]. Hurlbut.³¹
 We were reviewed in the old fields
 between Our Earth works & the Rebels.
 The news is that Gen[eral]. Pope and other
 parts of the Army were still pursuing
 the Rebels down in Mississippi and
 had cut of[f] a train of Cars by burning a
 bridge. prisoners still comming in.
 We put up our Tents and prepared to
 camp & dug some wells near an old creek bed

Page 6:

May. 31.st Warm. Nothing unusial . The Boys are
 scouting around seeing what is to be
 seen. No News from Pope.
June. 1st Warm I spent my time in rambling
 around between the two Breast works
 till Noon about 4 O clock. P.M. We
 received Orders to march immediatly
 three days rations, and leave every thing but
 blankets behind. We were soon on our way.
 and had searched through the Rebel

³⁰ Ammunition storage and feeding device for a repeating firearm.

³¹ Stephen Augustus Hurlbut, U.S. General.

Breast works. when we halted for Shermans³² devision to pass up. And the rain commenced to pour down wetting the boys. I had a good Rubber blanket and kept my back dry. We had to wait near two hours. and the rain falling heavy & fast. We marched through Corinth at dusk through mud & water. the town is on flat ground and is pretty good size. We left Corinth taking the road leading west. We proceeded about 2 miles and halted by the side of the road till morning, twas to[o] dark to proceed farther. about one hundred

Page 7:

Prisoners were marched past for Corinth.

June. 2,nd We started early this morn. the day being clear. We went into Camp about Noon on the Memphis & Charleston R[ail].R[oad].³³ 7 or 8 miles from Corinth. The day being verry warm. We built us brush houses as the tents had not come up.

June. 3.rd Verry warm. Orders were sent back for the Tents. Some of the Boys went back and brought up some Grub. A train passed by with troops to repair the R[ail]. Road.

June 4.th Warm. We had a heavy rain last night the Boys got good & wet. My blanket kept me dry. The Tents & came up to-day. and we went into Camp.

Nothing unusial occurred from this date, till the 10^[th] except the arrival of Mr. Glenn³⁴ from Alton to see his Son. which was on the 6.th the weather was fine.

June 10.th We had orders last night eve to be ready to march this morn. Mr. Glenn left

Page 8:

Yesterday evening. I & Andrew send \$45.00 a piece home by him. We started on the march about 9. A.M.

³² William Tecumseh Sherman, U.S. General.

³³ Completed in 1857, linking cities on the East Coast with the Mississippi River.

³⁴ Unknown individual.

the day being a verry warm one. The Country was very hilly. the road running on ridges near the shape of the letter S. We went up one hill that was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mi[le]. long and on going down on the other side came to the Tuscumbia River.³⁵ Where We halted for the Bridge to be repaired and eat dinner. About two P.M. We marched on Shermans devision stopped there. a little before sun down we reached the Hatchee³⁶ river where We Bivouacked,³⁷ till the afternoon of the 12th. The river here runs North westerly and there was a swampy bottom between the hills where we camped. & the river about a 100 yards wide. Our camping ground Occupied two large fields. the road running between them east & west. We were on the east side of the river.

Page 9:

There was a pretty considerable Orchard there and We made stews out of the fruit. We drew plenty of Sugar from the Commissary³⁸ and it made the apples quite good with hard tack.³⁹ **June 12,** We again drew rations and after Shermans devision had passed We followed it being near Sun down. In the river bottom We halted, till the teams crossed the Bridge. I walked down to the river to get my Canteen full of water. while there a crowd came rolling a barrel before them to the edge of the river and knocking out the bung⁴⁰ began to catch the Ale (it was an ale barel) in thier tin cups. an Irish man of the 5th Ohio

³⁵ Tributary of the Hatchie River, in Northern Mississippi and Western Tennessee.

³⁶ Hatchie River, located in northern Mississippi and southwestern Tennessee.

³⁷ Term for setting up a temporary encampment.

³⁸ Store for equipment and provisions.

³⁹ Hard dry bread or biscuit.

⁴⁰ Cork-like stopper for a drain in a container.

Cavalry⁴¹ tried to make the boys pay him for it. which they would not do. as they had stole it from the Sutler of the 5.0. VI.⁴² and the Irish man was the ring leader and thought to get pay. He then ran up and told the Sutler who came down in a big hurry, but all the ale was gone. The Irish man tried to lay it on some of the Boys and an old man of the 28th Ill[inoi]s. called him a liar and the

Page 10:

Paddy⁴³ made at him and was received with the old mans Musket across his head. They clinched and the old man was getting the better of him when some Officers passed them. thus ended the Hatchee⁴⁴ fight. We went that eve about 3 miles to big muddy river⁴⁵ and camped till morn.

June. 13th We moved on next morn early.

We stopped for a short for the teams to get in line and the 5.0. V.I. Sutler had his shop up selling Ale, Tripe⁴⁶ & and had a keg of pretty good Butter setting near the edge of the tent and another fellow got a tin cup full of it by slight. and it made our hard tack eat better. We marched pretty hard all day the heat was excessive and the dust nearly choked us. and water was not to be had. We camped that night at a creek called Clear Spring creek⁴⁷ and there was plenty of nice cold Springs. Just before reaching our camping ground we came to an old School house where a number of Citizens had been holding a Union Meeting they gave us a

⁴¹ Commanded by William H. H. Taylor.

⁴² 50th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry.

⁴³ Term for person of Irish descent.

⁴⁴ River in Northern Mississippi and Southwestern Tennessee.

⁴⁵ Presumably Big Muddy Creek, located south of the Hatchie River.

⁴⁶ Edible lining from the stomachs of various farm animals.

⁴⁷ Presumably Clear Creek, located west of the Hatchie River in southwestern Tennessee.

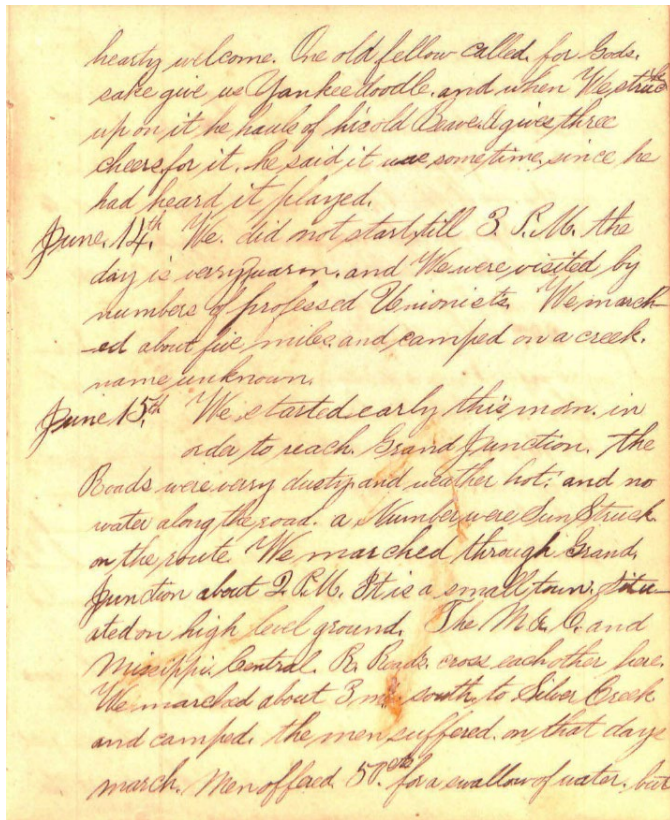


Figure 2: Page 11, Francis M. Johnson Diary.

Page 11:

hearty welcome. One old fellow called for Gods sake give us Yankee doodle.⁴⁸ and when we struck up on it he hauls off [f] his old Beave⁴⁹ & gives three cheers for it. he said it was some time since he had heard it played.

June, 14th We did not start till 3. P.M. the day is verry warm. and We were visited by numbers of professed Unionists.⁵⁰ We marched about five miles and camped on a creek. name unknown.

June 15th We started early this morn in order to reach Grand Junction.⁵¹ the Roads were verry dusty and weather hot. and no water along the road. a Number were Sun Struck

⁴⁸ Traditional American song.

⁴⁹ Possibly a cigarette.

⁵⁰ Individuals in border or Southern states opposed to secession.

⁵¹ City on the border of Hardeman and Fayette County, Tennessee.

on the route. We marched through Grand Junction about 2. P.M. It is a small town. situated on high level ground. The Memphis. & Charleston. and Mississippi Central⁵² Rail. Roads cross each other here. We marched about 3 miles. south to Silver Creek⁵³ and camped. the men suffered on that days march. Men offered 50 cents for a swallow of water. but

Page 12:

all were in the same fix. none to be had. Gen[eral] Sherman went on to Lagrange.⁵⁴ We stopped on Silver creek till Sunday the 22.nd the weather being verry warm, and We had several rains on the eve[ning] of the 17, June the 2nd Brigade⁵⁵ went to Holly Springs⁵⁶ captured several Niggers, And burned the Rail.Road Bridge and arrived back the eve[ning] of June 19.

June 22nd We, the 4th division marched to Lagrange Tenn[essee] a distance of 6 miles. We got there at 11. A.M. Gen[eral] Sherman had gone on to Moscow⁵⁷ 9 miles distant. Lagrange is a pretty nice town situated on a high hill from which you can have a fine view of the Country southwards. The top of the high bluff is level and runs back in the Country. We camped on the Wolfe river⁵⁸ at the base of the hill the soil was sandy and was covered with pine & Cypress trees. along the bottom of the river were plenty of Black berries which We got to eat stewing them and milking Cows to mix the milk with them making a nice dish.

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On our leaving Our camp near Corinth We had to leave all but two wall tents one for the Officers & one for the Orderly. & his mess.

⁵² Major railroads that can be used to identify main regions of Civil War.

⁵³ Battle taking place in northern Missouri.

⁵⁴ Union Army garrison in Tennessee.

⁵⁵ An infantry brigade in the Union Army.

⁵⁶ City in Marshall County, Mississippi, roughly twenty miles south of Moscow, Tennessee.

⁵⁷ City in Fayette County, Tennessee.

⁵⁸ Presumably the Wolf River which cuts through the heart of Memphis, Tennessee.

so We had to go without any shelter but such as We made. We staid in the bottom camp till the 29th June living in brush houses made of pine boughs. The weather was verry warm especially there where no wind could stir. Part of the time We had hard fare to eat as We were on hard tack & Pork, and no foraging allowed. On the 26. & 27th Squads of Contrabands 20 or more in gangs came in, chased by Blood hounds. & Rebel Cav[alry]. from Holly-Springs and below. and gave out that a large Rebel force were advancing on us and that the Cavalry were driving the Contras, South, Gen[eral]. Hurlbut had the Wagons sent back, North of Lagrange. and We were kept in readiness for them. The night of the 27 We had to lay on our arms all night. on the 29 June. We moved camp on the side of the hill west of town. On the 30.th June.

June 30th We marched towards Holly Springs, leaving baggage behind. We started about 5 P.M. and marched to Seaman Church by Mt. Cobb. 12 miles in all. We bivouacked in an old field still mown that night it rained. My blanket kept me dry. We marched on to Holly Springs, Va. reaching there at 2 P.M. Here we found Sherman was ahead of us for we heard him cannonading. he was killing some Rebel Cavalry near the town. A Corporal of the 4th Ill. Cav. while advancing ahead, asked a man standing in his way, if any Rebels were ahead. he said no, this was near Cold Water Creek. on our men passing the creek they were fired on from the thicket. one killed and several wounded. our Cav. routed the Rebels. we captured some and with them, this man they had passed a short time before. I heard afterwards he was hung. Sherman went on in Holly Springs and the division camped on Coldwater creek. the news was that the Rebel had fell back to that side 8 miles.

Figure 3: Page 14, Francis M. Johnson Diary.

Page 14:

June 30.th We marched towards Holly Springs. leaving Baggage behind. We started about 5. P.M. and marched to Lamar Church⁵⁹ by 10. P.M. 12. miles in all. We Bivouacked in an old field till morn that night it rained my Blanket kept me dry. We march on to **July 1**, Cold Water⁶⁰ July 1.st reaching there at 2. P.M. Here We found. Sherman was ahead of us for We heard him Cannonading. he was shelling some Reb[el]. Cavalry near the town A. Company of the 4. Ill[inoi]s. Cav[alry]. while advancing ahead. asked a man standing in his doorway, if any Rebe[l]s were ahead. he said no. this was near Cold Water Creek. on our Men nearing the creek they were fired on from the thickets & one killed and several wounded. our Cav[alry]. routed the Rebels. & captured some. and with them this Man they had passed a short time before. I heard afterwards, he was hung. Sherman went on in Holly Springs. and Our devisions Camped on cold water creek. the news was that the Reb[el]s had fell back to Waterford.⁶¹ 8 miles.

Page 15:

July 2,nd Last eve. two Reg[imen]ts. were ordered to go back to Lagrange to start early in the morn. as the report was that the Rebels were getting in our rear to bum it. (that is a Cav[alry]. force) We started this morn (the 2.) at 2. O clock Our Reg[imen]t. & the 53rd Indiana.⁶² for Lagrange, while the rest went on to Holly Springs. We reached Lamar Church by Sun rise. distance 7 miles., where We eat breakfast. I had dough nuts Coffee & meat. as our Cook cooked us some dough nuts last night Which eat first rate. We had more privileges on this march than when with

⁵⁹ Reference to Lamar Road, nearly twelve miles from Holly Springs.

⁶⁰ Presumably Cold Water River south of Lamar, near Hudsonville, Mississippi.

⁶¹ Town in Marshall County, Mississippi, nearly eight miles south of Holly Springs.

⁶² Volunteer infantry regiment in for the Union Army.

devison . as We stopped at every house
and got water, apples, & Garden stuff. and
the teamsters confiscated Mules and thereby
got better teams. We reached Lagrange at 3.
P. M, and the most tiresome part of our journey
was in the ascent of the high sand hill, on
which the town stands. We marched through
town and camped near the College, east of town.
We found the 30. Ill[inoi]s. & the 78th Ohio. Reg[imen]ts. already there

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The 53rd Indiana. Reg[imen]t. went on to Grand Junction.
Our camp this time was on a ridge running
North & South. it was covered with a young growth
of Pine trees. these we cut down. and having
but verry few tents, we used the boughs.⁶³ & of the Pines
to make huts out of. for the purpose of keeping
the dewes. and hot sun off of us. We soon had
quite a nice camp and also plenty of good water.
J[uly]. 4. On the memorable 4th of July 1862.
a salute was fired at Lagrange & one at the
Junction and after dinner we marched to
the public Square. in company with the 30 & 78.
and listened until near sundown to speeches
made by L[i]eu[tenant]. Col[onel]. Hunter⁶⁴ of the 32nd and the Col[onel].
of the 78.⁶⁵ There were a good many Citizens present
and from apperances they did not much like
the speeches. the day was verry warm but we were
shaded by trees and good grass to sit on which was
verry pleasant. The meeting was broken up at 5.
PM. and we marched back to camp. where we
went through the general routine of Camp duties &

Page 17:

July 6.th The Devison arrived today from Holly Sprin-
-gs and went into camp in different places
around town. On the 7.th the 30.th. & 78. got on the
Cars and went back to Jackson,⁶⁶ to join there⁶⁷

⁶³ Branches of a tree.

⁶⁴ Union General and then subsequent Black Codes sympathizer.

⁶⁵ Colonel Daniel Ullman.

⁶⁶ Jackson, Mississippi.

⁶⁷ 78th Infantry rejoining their division.

devison , and the 3rd Iowa Camped on thier old ground. joining us to the North in the afternoon Gen[eral] Lawman's aid⁶⁸ rode up and read a dispatch from Richmond⁶⁹ stating McClellan⁷⁰ was pushing on. and had a position from which he could shell the City &. which dispatch caused a great deal hurrahing &. We remained at Lagrange till the 18. of July. The weather was verry warm and nothing of great interest occureed. excepting one afternoon. Our forage train was run in by a party of Guerillas.⁷¹ which set the whole [...] ⁷² Camp in a flurry. One thing I will mention we had plenty of Black berries to eat while we were there, and we also had fine times a Swimming. on the night of the 17. it rained pretty hard.

Page 18:

July. 18. Our devison left La grange for Memp-his at 2. O clock P.M. it having rained in the forenoon. We reached Moscow at sundown where Gen[eral] Shermans devison was camped. We passed on across Wolfe river, which runs past the town, and camped on the hills west of the river. We were near an Orchard and got plenty of apples. &

July 19 Shermans devison passed us this forenoon We started at 1. P.M. The day was pretty warm and we made 9 miles by Sundown. and camped at Lafayette.⁷³ This place is quite a small town.

July. 20. We started before daylight this morn. and about noon we passed through Collier-Ville.⁷⁴ the day was Sunday, and numbers of people were sitting on the streets to see us

⁶⁸ Conventional term for law enforcement personnel.

⁶⁹ Confederate capital, located in Virginia.

⁷⁰ Prominent Union Army General.

⁷¹ Unorthodox ambush combat fighters.

⁷² Crossed out word, illegible.

⁷³ Presumably a small town in Fayette County, Tennessee.

⁷⁴ Town immediately west of Fayette County, Tennessee.

pass. We marched 15 miles to Germantown⁷⁵ and reached it at 5 O clock P.M. in a pretty heavy rain. We camped North of town by some Corn fields, with good green roasting ears in them

Page 19:

These we made suffer as we had stripped them by morning.

July 21st We marched to Bundys Station,⁷⁶ 6 miles from Germantown and 9. from Memphis It rained pretty hard to day while we were on the march.

July 22. We started for Memphis about 8 O clock. the heat this day was excessive. and the dust was enough to almost smother us. Along the road were numbers of Orchards full of fruit these we made suffer. The Reg[imen]t. & devisions marched in the City at 3 P. M. I and several others staid out in some of the Orchards getting fruit. We went into town and walked on down to Fort Pickering,⁷⁷ where the Reg[imen]t. had stopped for straglers to come up. They soon came up. and we marched on down about a mile and camped. This camp was in the thick woods one half a mile from the river. We staid in this camp about one week. when we moved up towards Memphis. And camped about one quarter

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of a mile east of Fort Pickering. this ground was not quite as shady as that which we had just left. The 14th Ill[inoi]s. occupied our old grounds.

Here we had a good time. not much duty to do. plenty of Pedlars⁷⁸ bringing in melons and other fruits and vegetables in abundance. In fact they troubled our boys so much that they would upset thier loads when

⁷⁵ Town located in Shelby County, Tennessee.

⁷⁶ Exact location uncertain.

⁷⁷ Fort Pickering in Memphis, Tennessee; originally a Confederate Army fort but eventually taken by the Union Army.

⁷⁸ Form of solicitation.

they came in and then play grabs.
 By the time we left, we had the
 Peddling Community down on the 32.nd
 It was little we cared though.
 The weather was pretty warm. and near
 the whole Reg[imen]t. except those who were on
 duty would go down to the river and bathe.
 or roll around under the Trees on the banks.
 On the 22nd day. We the 32nd
 marched out to Wolfe River bridge for
 the purpose of doing Pickett guard.⁷⁹

Page 21:

and to prevent the Reb[el]s. destroying the
 Bridge.⁸⁰ as they had threatened to do so.
 We found the 53rd Ill[inoi]s. there when
 we relieved from duty. Thier Band
 had made use of an old cow Shed.
 and we of course done the same. but
 not without causing some fussing.
 for some of the Reg[imen]t. tried to maintain
 they had as good right to it as the
 Musicians. We overruled them though.
 We remained on Pickett three days.
 and enjoyed ourselves hugely. swimming
 and Skiff riding. and stealing or to use
 the Soldier phrase, we camped potatoes
 melons &. The only draw back we
 experienced was our troubles with the
 musquitoes, which were in abundance
 as the grounds were marshy.
 The third night about 2 O clock AM
 we were around by what we thought at

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first to be a volley of musketry.
 I beat the long roll.⁸¹ the Reg[imen]t formed
 in Battle line waiting anxiously for the

⁷⁹ A small unit stationed to warn of an enemy advance or potential threat.

⁸⁰ On December 14, 1863, the Confederate Army attempted to destroy the railroad bridge stretching across the Wolf River. See "From Western Tennessee: The Late Fight at Wolf River Bridge: Particulars of the Affair," *The New York Times*, December 18, 1863.

⁸¹ Battle drum signal.

Reb[el]s to show themselves. as we supposed they had attacked our out posts. After the lapse of twenty minutes of silence, a messenger was sent out to know the cause of the firing. It turned out to be nothing but the falling down of a large tree. The boys were some what disappointed. and some swearing was indulged in because the Col[onel]. had made such a fool of himself as well as of the rest. but we were all content to lay down again and twas not long until all was quiet again. Several hours had elapsed since the last occurrence. when we were again startled by the report of a gun. We were not long in finding the cause of this disturbance

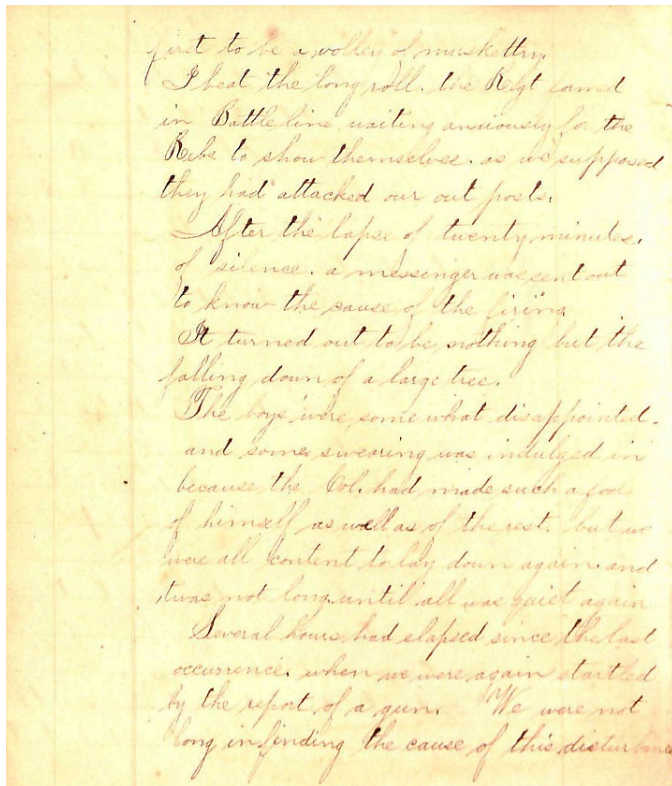


Figure 4: Page 22, Francis M. Johnson Diary.

Page 23:

It seems as though the Col[onel] was not quite at his ease since the first alarm. so he to be

sure that the guards were watchful so as to ward off a surprpise , if one should be attempted, started the rounds. He had passed several of the guards. here I will say that a part of the guard lines extended into a swampy place which was thickly overgrown with timber.

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