

Dairy of Mrs. Mix's Father Records The Struggles of Civil War Veterans

Found recently among the effects of the late E. Lewis of Coldwater, the father of Mrs. Leon Mix, of Pierce street, was a diary of the Civil War during the year 1863. Written in a school composition book, the label on the front cover bore the inscription: Lucien F. Boyington, Diary of 1863. In the "History of Battery G, first regiment, Michigan Light Artillery," written by Lieutenant T. F. Garvin, in which Mr. Lewis was captain, there was listed among the privates, a man by the name of Lucius F. Boyington. The large size of the book, the misspelled name on the cover, and the several different kinds of handwriting employed indicate that Mr. Boyington's original small pocket diary was inserted into the larger book, possibly by Mr. Lewis, and members of his family, since it was found among his things.

"This Battery, in the Army of the Mississippi, from the beginning of the year 1863 till July 4, was engaged in the siege of Vicksburg, and during the Mississippi, the Battery disembarked at Young's Point, La., opposite and ten miles above Vicksburg, and went into camp on the levee. About January 22, General Grant took command of the person and commenced the series of movements that on July 4 compelled the surrender of the besieged city. During February and March the Battery lay at Young's Point almost idle. The rainy season set in for weeks and the men were incessantly and caused great discomfort and sickness among the troops. On April 2 the advance commenced. April 19 the Battery came in sight of Vicksburg, the Confederate stronghold, and moved to within 600 yards of the intrenchments. From this time on the Battery was constantly engaged and under fire. The men were worked and the city very shelled daily. A number of extracts from the diary will serve to show the sufferings of the Battery. G went their time during 1863.

Jan. 28th, Wed.: Weather cool and plenty of mud. Spent the day fixing our camp for rainy weather. We have a good stable for our horses.

Thurs., 29th: Cooler. Went to work on except we knocked a beef over and took a little fresh beef for supper.

Feb. 15, Sun.: This A. M. at 4:30 o'clock Lieut. Alanson Conkling of the Battery died. We intend to send his body home.

Sun., 22nd: Cool. The gun boats and batteries fired at the city of Washington's birthday. Went to the canal. The men are busy digging it deeper and wider.

Wed., 4th, Wed.: Warm and pleasant. This P. M. we buried one of our boys, Seymour Straight.

Thurs., 5th: Windy. Went to boat and drew a lot of feed to lay in tents, then received orders to move in morning.

Mon., 9th: Went for wood down the river to an old plantation.

Tues., 10th: Pleasant. Went for brick to build oven so we can make our own bread.

Fri., 13th: Warm and pleasant. The boys are out after forage. We got a mail.

Wed., 18th: We filled the chests with shells. Nothing else going on.

Mon., 23rd: Rainy season. Four boys came into camp that were taken prisoners last summer.

April 1st, Wed.: Warm. This A. M. the right section marched to Richmond and went into camp there. The prisoners are building a bridge across the Bayou.

Fri., 15th: Cool. At sunrise we run our guns down the levee in sight of the Miss. river. The river was full of burning cotton and hay bales. In P. M. seven gun boats and one transport run the blockade of Vicksburg.

Sun., 19th: Rained last night. Went for boat load of corn. The boat was swamped in a crevice and one man drowned.

Fri., 24th: At daylight the boat ran up to Col. James' plantation. Gen. Grant came aboard. We then ran back to the landing, unloaded the Battery and went back to camp. The night seven transports ran over blockade.

May 1st, Fri.: At 8 A. M. the Div. started for Port Gibson. After going about one mile we came onto the rebels on Thompson's Hill. We then started the battle. The battle lasted until 5 P. M. The rebels then left, our forces capturing a good many prisoners. We lost several men.

Sat., 2nd: At daybreak we started for Port Gibson. The road from the battlefield to Port Gibson was covered with dead and dying. Burn carriages. Ammunition was scattered all along the road. Went into camp in the town.

Fri., 8th: The left section went to relieve center section on picket. The army here was received by Gen. Grant. Went foraging P. M.

Thurs., 14th: Remained all day at Raymond. Boys brought in great deal of tobacco which the rebels left.

Tues., 19th: Marched at 8 A. M. and went forward about 2 P. M. and we came in sight of the intrenchments around Vicksburg. We went into position. The rebels fired and shot at us.

Sat., 22nd: The right section was moved into the fort and at 10:30 A. M. the charge was made. We fired fast as we could and the rebels' dead rebels testified to us that we had done some firing. A good many of our boys were wounded and killed. We had no damage. Our mortars have been busy all day.

July 3rd, Fri.: Hot and sultry. A flag of truce came out. Gen. Grant and Gen. Pemberton met between the breastworks and settled the difficulty. The rebels to march out, stack their arms, cut-up the rebels in mid Garrison, cut-up the rebels to be paroled on the spot.

Sat., 4th: Splendid day. At sunrise the rebels put up white flags on the breastworks, then they marched out, stacked their arms. The troops (then marched in the stars and stripes were hoisted to the Court House top, the gun boats came up and down and landed at the wharf.

(The Battery was then ordered to Jackson, Miss., then back to Vicksburg, of New Orleans, disembark at Brazos Santiago, Tex., and the rebel fort, Esperanza, on St. Joseph's Island, which on the night of November 30 was evacuated. December had no entries in the diary.)

14th: (Boasting Jackson)

At 10 A. M. a flag of truce came out and remained till 4 P. M. when the firing again commenced. That night the band of the rebel regiment played. In the evening our boys were firing all the time into the city.

Before sunrise our Div. had fallen back and Tuttle's Div. relieved them. We then marched to the rear camp. Early in A. M. the whole force charged the rebels and drove them out, capturing a good many of the rebels. In A. M. our forces marched into town and fired every building except the State House and one or two others. We captured a box of cigars, tobacco, etc., which was needed. The city is still burning, hardly any of the small pockets of rebels left. The citizens were moved into the streets with their furniture and effects. It is a desolate place now. Companies de-failed-out of every regiment to help finish the destruction of property around the city. When the fighting was over everything will be destroyed.

Aug. 2th, Fri.: (Back at Vicksburg). The rebels had a good night with good shade. The mosquitoes are thick and trouble us.

Sun., 9th: Remained in camp all day. Drinking and enjoying myself generally.

Fri., 14th: (Ordered to New Orleans). (Fought the Battle). Soon after daylight we came in sight of Natchez. Here we landed and got a lot of provisions. The men then left and sailed all night.

Sun., 16th: At daylight commenced unloading the Battery. We went into camp on the hill in sight of New Orleans. This A. M. we buried one of our boys.

Sat., 17th: Warm and pleasant. We have plenty of grub and can't complain with nothing to do and everything easy.

Thurs., 17th: Today we had another barrel of beer and had a jolly time.

Thurs., 24th: The chief occupation of the boys being card playing and drinking during the hours they are off duty.

Sat., 26th: Cool and pleasant. Received the table and water call, then ride to city or lake, then dinner, same as A. M., then supper. Still in the city, this is the way we live at present.

Oct. 8th, Thurs: Went to city in P. M. This evening several of our boys went to church and were interested on their return to camp and put in the calaboose.

Fri., 9th: The boys were released this A. M. and came back to camp. The Provost will arrest anyone for trying to go to church so we have to stay in camp.

Nov. 15th, Sun.: (Bound for Brazos Santiago). Very pleasant all day. Saw the porpoise and firing for the first time. Sailed all day and night.

Sun., 22nd: (Disembarked on St. Joseph's Island). The troops started this A. M. Marched to the upper end of St. Joseph's Island where we went into camp. Here we found good water but wood was very scarce. Here we had a norther which was worse to me than a snow storm of the north.

Nov. 23rd: Today the whole brigade was out hunting. We had fresh beef and mutton, all we wanted. Passed the day and night in the camp.

Tues., 24th: Today the brigade crossed the Bayou onto Matagorda Island. We then marched about six miles, then went into camp near a potato patch, so we had a grand supper that night.

Under the auspices of the First State Savings Bank here George E. Buchanan, a wealthy coal merchant of Detroit, who is informed with the idea that a trip to Alaska by a normal, wide-awake boy is a liberal education for that boy, has experienced that will be of great value to him in after life. Mr. Buchanan has already helped 120 of such boys to go to Alaska, and there is enough Scotchman and Spartan in him to know that a trip like the Alaska trip should be earned. In order to make it fairly easy for ambitious boys, Mr. Buchanan, in Detroit and elsewhere, offers to pay one-third of their expenses, one-third is to be earned by the boy and the remaining one-third is to be paid by the parents. Each boy, of course, must consent to the trip. Each trip is carefully arranged and supervised by the god-father of the boys and the idea, and he tells them how to earn the money.

About 50 boys are working for the July trip to Alaska, selling coal, coal baskets, pencils, etc. Most of them earn their money in Detroit, but last week by the amount of the trip was personally conducted by Mr. Buchanan, his brother, and Jack Miner, hotel and Canadian naturalist upon whom the wild birds call without fear at his home in Ontario, one boy was from Alabama, two were from Ohio, from Kentucky and seven from Canada. The others, 61 in number, were from Detroit and vicinity.

George E. Buchanan makes no claim to being a philanthropist. His idea is that if a boy wants, this wonderful trip to Alaska, he will enjoy it more and get more out of it if he actually earns one-third of the money for the trip. Mr. Buchanan, who is now another \$125, the parent puts up a similar amount, and the boy pays the balance. At his latest rate, the youngest plucky boy on the trip was Lawrence Kelly, aged 11, who wanted to know who "white" was because when his train arrived at Banff, there was snow on the mountain top. However, before Lawrence got through with the trip through the Canadian Rockies, and up to Alaska via "Princess" Steamer, he knew a whole lot about the United States, its neighbors and its possessions in Alaska. Mr. Buchanan's idea. Tell them the glories of America, and let them get character, and business education by carrying a trip to Alaska—"Seward's Folly," the gold of which alone has more than paid the original purchase price.

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Memorial Day

May 30 1926

ALTHOUGH NO SCULPTURED MARBLE SHOULD RISE TO THEIR MEMORY NOR ENGRAVED STONE BEAR RECORD OF THEIR DEEDS YET WILL THEIR REMEMBRANCE BE AS LASTING AS THE LAND THEY HONORED.

DANIEL WEBSTER

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