# The Civil War Diary of Dr. John Henry Bass

Transcribed by Jewellee Kuenstler 6 June 2017

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## April 28, 1864

The long wished for spring has \_\_\_\_\_ forth upon us in the mountains of Georgia at last in all its loveliness and with it is stamped victory on the Confederate armies at even point – how happy and thankful ought we to be that the General (?) -King has smiled upon us and our armies are more flushed with the hope that he will soon grant to us the best of gifts, the long desired object, peace – Late indicators point to this peace for the next grand struggle instead of or – as was first Supposed here among these venomous mountains is to be spilt I hope the last drop of blood in defence of our country's cause. —our troops are moving in different directions at various points and gaps. They are being... Gene J's wise and discrete authority concentration to repell the advance of the Enemy. The battle will beupon us. Order have been issued to reduce baggage two days rations in haversacks and be ready to march at moments notice. Even now while I work can hear in the distance the booming of anon the baying of the dogs of war.

#### April 29th

Slowly but surely the conflict appears to be approaching. The roar of canon can be more distinctly heard than on yesterday – living thing is being striped for the flight and it is much wished by the conf\_\_\_\_. At 10 am the long Roll is sounded and our Brigade is ordered to the entrenchments. It has come at last to many I suppose, but...the next news is the Enemy move a rush upon our pickets – then silence, perhaps a ... preparatory to the grand struggle. After remaining five hours on the entrenchment were marched to our quarters. It is indeed a season of inexampled anxiety, crushed expectancy \_\_\_\_\_ the Confederacy, where will be fought the great battle, the Waterloo of this age is asked by all most everyone, but we have active, energetic, and tried men at the helm and it matters but little when the struggle comes off we will be successful, we will shall be free.

## May 2d, 1864

No fighting as yet – tho have been ordered to the front some two or three times in the same number of days. The Enemy within either want to ... us on or keep this army from Reinforcing the Virginia army. Indications are now that we will move forward or make a flank movement the ...from Ga. Stating that Smith has completely routed Banks overpowers us with joy. How I would like to be in the Dept? - who would not? - It would be quite cold to sleep under one blanket these nights – had a white frost this morning.

## May 8th

A long interval in which both sides are preparing for battle. Skirmishing commenced on vesterday. Today it is heavier and by to morrow it will most likely be upon us in full force. The fight commenced in Virginia on the 5<sup>th</sup>...:on the 6<sup>th</sup> we defeated them at all points. The greatwork goes gloriously on. Le the fight come and let...discard the issue.

## May 11th

The Regiment having changed position last night several times we are quite worn out today – So far have lost twelve men killed and wounded have defeated the Enemy at all points, but still they remain not whip- men in good spirits as we await the issue result most confidant of final victory.

#### May 12

The Enemy appear to be moving to both right and left - ... continues then...shelling and skirmishing...

#### May 13

Our army evacuated (?) the mountain and Milk Creek cap and Intact – night and in order R...camped in the hills of the place at 9AM

#### May 14

fighting along the entire line save the extreme right – our position towards evening the fighting became terrific indeed, and drove them from their positions on left and right hold...battleground.

## May 15<sup>th</sup>

Heavy Skirmishing along the entire – Cobb and I were wounded at 4PM.

## May 20th

After a most tiring (?) trip and much suffering we arrived on the 19<sup>th</sup>...Pat Lee Hospitol Columbus, GA. Under the Charge of Dr. Robertson. We are well provided for and as comfortable fixed as a man can be in a Confederate hospital. Several ladies called in to see us also Rev. E.K. Marshall – were much cheered at the sight of pleasant female faces. Our wounds doing very well. No news from the front oh that ...may pass through safe – How little did I think four years ago when I walked the wards of the Charity Hospital of N. Orleans that I would ever be in one on its comfortless beds away from home and friends Suffering with pain caused by a bullet from a national Enemy = Oh how many die[d] for the good of their country and cause of humanity, - Oh how many throw their bleeding bodies into the horrid chasm of Revolution to bridge the way for the triumphant ear of Liberty, which will roll over them bearing in its long train the happy millions of future generations rejoicing in all the grandeur of peace and prosperity. I wonder if they will even pause as they pass to think of the poor soldiers whose bones lie at the foundations of their security and happiness; Or will the soul be permitted from come Pisgah Summit to take a look at the future glory of the country it \_\_\_\_\_ from fanatical \_\_\_\_\_ Or will the Soul of the Soldiers be permitted to visit at evening twilight, the scenes of its childhood and listen to sweet hymns of praise that go up from the paternal altar at which it was consecrated to God = "Let us live as if we expected to die on the morrow" = The ladies God Bless them come one and all to see us, administering to the body and mind. No

country can boast of such women = We \_\_\_\_\_ a great nation with such women as we have = We must be free =

## May 21st

Hospital – The ward has always been a horrid one to me and always feard would be compelled to go into one sick or wounded and so it is, but we get on remarkably well = our wounds are going as well as could be expected. Cobb suffers considerably, but my wound appears to be healing = Keep in good spirits, but often wish for th one I love most on this earth. Will try to be content and let the world wag on + the time will come when we will be happy and peace will reign throughout the land. =

## May 22<sup>nd</sup>

Sabbath = in this city quiet reigns supreme = Wonder how it is in front. Many a hard march or perhaps a battle will be fought today = Would it not be better to suspend military operations once in seven days. God has said six days shalt thou labor and rest on the seventh. Does that not refer to nations as well as individuals – a sane man would think so = were visited by score of ladies today who express themselves kindly for our welfare, hoping we would soon get well and yet have a good time of. it [ill]. Mrs. DeMoss? [mofs?] sent us three phamphlets(sic) to read – a dear good lady.

## May 23rd

The intelligence of Johnston still retreating after delivering his battle address reached us this morning = Well our brave comrades have stubbornly and heroically contended for every inch of ground so far, but it is our \_\_\_\_\_ [inls] [singular] intention to draw them on and when he gets them sufficiently far from their base to pounce upon them and with the grace of Him who has thus far shielded us from harm, will assist us in adding another and brighter page to the annals already made so brilliant by the record of undying victories. Lets be up and doing for this is not time to tarry. Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ called again on us with strawberries.

#### May 31<sup>st</sup>

Left Su Hospital for the front nearly well. The great battle as yet not come off want to get back = Left Cobb and all doing well

# June 3d Arrived at \_\_\_\_\_ army on yesterday found every thing moving quietly on on duty with my regiment Heavy skirmishing going on in front of our lines. The Yankee army reported to be moving to our right. Of course they will meet with Gray backs where ever they may go

June 4th

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Had last night to fall back, or rather to change front; left our entrenchments at 11 o'clock at night and had a most terrible march to near Actworth where we again make a stand and have commenced. here I hope the issue will be made = Some say it is a grand strategic move on Johnston's part

# June 14th

Since the above was written there has been little fighting. But marching and countermarching has been the order of the day. Gibson's Brigade is now in line of battle in trenches about three miles from Marietta. The enemy are still trying the flanking policy and avoid all offers for battle. The Georgia militia under General Smith arrived a few days since reinforcing our army considerabley (sic) making it as strong as when it left Dalton, a rumor? has just come that Lieut Genl Poke (Poke?) was killed today by a solid shot = Another great and good man has fallen. Ah; what a price do we give for our liberty. =

## June 17th

Information has reached us today that the enemy have taken Lost (?) Mountain which may necessitate a pull back on our part = All quiet along the lines now tho we are under orders for Can't tell when we will go or what we'll do. Grant is changing his base in Virginia virtually acknowledging that he can't take Richmond = Every day is a perfect epoch in manly? history now = every day is pregnant with events = Oh that I may live to see the end of this gigantic struggle – What a glorious peace we will have – But lets wait patiently=

#### June 18th

Had today a terrible march. Raining most of the time in perfect torrents and under a most severe fire (?) one half of the day at one o'clock at night we halted and laid down with wet blankets on cold damp ground. No one knows the hardships of Soldiers not even the solider himself is aware of what he goes through = [he?] again change our [F?...] today which just in Marietta and Everything looks cheering...the enemy were repulsed by French and Walkins (6) division in the morning our division being on reserve in afternoon = [last line illegible]

# June 20th [is this underlined]

Today we are in second line of battle on the Kinesaw Mountain. the enemy throwing shell and C continually amongst us, but doing no damage as we are protected by the huge rocks and clifts(sic): No general engagement yet The weather is very bad – more rain than I ever saw in this month before – surely it is a punishment sent to us by the Divine Being = In the afternoon the left wing of our army was assaulted several times by the enemy but were repulsed.= Our cannon done good execution, it was truly terrific.

#### June 21st

Life - Kennesaw Mountain, came through Marietta to the life - of the army or rather in supporting distance a great deal of rain and roads terrible. Yankee deserters continually coming in to our lines. they report their army in a very demoralized condition=

#### June 22<sup>d</sup>

Stevenson division attacked Enemy this afternoon and drove them some distance. Our loss severe, theirs very heavy = Our division supported Stevenson but was not needed in the affray = Shells flew thick around us

#### June 23d

For the first time in nearly three weeks, today we had clear weather. In the afternoon there was most-terrific cannonading (?) on Kennesaw Mountain and the left of it.

#### June 24th

A mere casual observer would think that the situation remains in status quo, but it is rapidly assuming deeper gravity and importance than ever before. The pertinacity of Sherman in his attempt to get to Atlanta and Grant in his on to Rich. evidently shows that the great object of the Linclon(sic) government is to subdue us. no matter how many men may be butchered in the attempt. Let them come but they will loose their thousands in their forlorn desperation.

27 June	
The Enemy made a feint on Stevenson's front today at	10 am and attacked furiously. Cheathams
and Cleburne (?) Division meeting with	response. So far So good

#### June 28th

Another month has nearly gone. Summer with its scortching(sic) Sun is upon us and we have not yet gained our independence, but the future appears bright. May I not be \_\_\_\_\_\_ brighter than ever before that the late news from Virginia is not exactly what we would desire.= Petersburg seems to be in great danger and if it falls the metropolis of the South had better be on its P. and Q's. but we have Lee there and all goes right where his noble person is – The officers in this army are being clothed in more favorable gard. Sherman it appears is suddenly halted in his mad career, in his on to Atlanta, and it seems that now he will have to break through our lines before he can go farther. He has in the last few days tried that then? been gloriously defeated, but he can not retreat = for that would be a defeat which would dethrone him=

#### July 3d

We moved tonight to the entrenchments near the river closely pursued by the enemy = our troops in good spirits and health.

July 10<sup>th</sup>

After several days of shelling from both sides our Division crossed the Chatahoula River and found a new line The present prospect is that the Atlanta will be evacuated, but who know noone but Genl Johnston = Affairs are progressing slowly and becoming more complicated. The orders? now are that Kirby Smith has crossed the Mississippi and is in the rear of Sherman, or rather on his way there. Oh that it may be so. Oh that we may soon be able to drive the vandal bands back both in Georgia and Virginia and gain a peace an honorable peace. One that we will be proud of Come what will we can't be subdued, we must be free we shall be free =

## July 12th

The news generally is good today, sure that in regard to the Sinking of the Alabama by the Yankee [ram?] Kearsage The fight was desperate lasting an hour and forty minutes most of the crew with Capt Seemes were saved by an English vessel, Buckenridge [or Brickenridge] and Earl have taken Harper Ferry and [are?] in Maryland = Grant has left the front \_\_\_\_\_ Lee = Many predict Charleston and Mobile are to be again attacked. Sherman hesitates to cross the Chattahoochee River Many suppose he will retreat

## July 18th

On Picket. Our Army on south side of the Chattahoochee, the enemy on the other = All extremely quiet. [The] News of Early and Breckinridge being in 3 miles of Washington is interesting news to us = but what will we do Genl Bragg arrived a few days since

## July 18th

Today it is reported that General Johnston is relieved from the Command of the army and J.B. Hood takes charge of affairs. Moved eatward today and Bivouaced(sic) near the line of battle =

# July 20th

Stewart's Corps attacked the enemy today and drove them some distance. The Kentucky Brig crossed Peachtree Street under a heavy fire but never faltered = The captures cons\_\_\_\_\_ in three hundred men and five battery with its equipment to = Every-thing looks rather dark for us at present but we will come out all right

#### 22 July

Moved last night near the entrenchments of the city say about six hundered(sic) yards. Everything seems to be going well and coming to a focus.

## 23 July

Heavy artillery fire all day. In afternoon Handing? And Hood's corps charged the enemy driving him from their works taking five hundred prisoners and sicteen pieces of cannon. The battle raged terrible for three hours and the Enemy lost heavily ours reported slight. Oh that the all wise Being may grant us a great and glorious victory at this point McPherson of the Yankee

army was killed and it is reported that Gen Malken of our army was also. Lieut Gustini (?) wounded in the Back.

July 25th

There appears to be nothing going on in our front but occasionally heavy cannonading and continued skirmishing = Wounded continue to come in slowly. Nothing in last four days from Richmond = Weather <u>very cool</u> for July in the last two days.

July 2 th (28th)

Today will ever be remembered by our Division and especially by our Brigade = We attacked the enemy about 12 o clock M but were repulsed with heavy loss. We were at work getting the wounded off until 9 oclock at night. Laid down completely worn out 16 and 25. So did not suffer as much as other Regiments in the brigade our loss was 12 killed and wounded. The Brigade was nearly (400) hundred in all=

August 1st

Moved to about 4 miles South of Atlanta the line turning parallel with West Point Road. All quiet - no fighting since the 28th Nlter.

August 3

August 5th

Continuous shelling along our Division front today from both sides. The Enemy captured some hundred of our brigade pickets which brings it down to 400 for July. Some few wounded came in = mostly slight.

# August 6th

The Enemy charged our line in front of Anderson's Division and Findley's Brigade and Bates Division but were badly repulsed. The make up \_\_\_\_\_ out in charging our boys. Oh if we can only hold out with Atlanta and Richmond until after the nomination we will be all right. There is but little probability of them taking Richmond and I think Hood will hold Atlanta

August 13th

Remarkably quiet today, less shelling and sharpshooting than for some time = We still hold our position but have had many wounded in the last week Say about 60 = some [horribly] mangled = The news from Mobile appears somewhat more encouraging. Taylor has crossed the river and soon we hope the tables will turn = [memorium]

August 15th 1864

Oh how monotonous and how warm the weather = The shelling and the crack of the pickets rifles have become so constant that all or rather most all have become accustomed to it and mind it but little = Extra ammunition was issued last night which means fight. Now as Wheeler is in the rear we may look for stirring times soon = This must soon be brought to a close for they are getting us in a tight place

. . . . . . . . .

August 18 <sup>th</sup> 1864	
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	ently in a quiescent state. Sherman is certainly foiled at last in his great abdue the Confederacy = but little firing on
many pred	lict that the Enemy are also scarce of ammunition = Wheeler has struck
the rail-road near	and was pursuing his way on up the road.
August 19 <sup>th</sup>	
Everything	on as usual save that the Enemy cut both roads this morning and
troops had been sent in pu	rsuit no news from Wheeler
August 20 <sup>th</sup>	
In pursuit of the Yankee r	aid and it is reported we have captured a great number of them. The
Yanks are extending their	lines.
August 24	
Everything remains quiet	= News from Wheeler is very encouraging. He was at Dalton on the
19th striving (?) his best to	destroy all communications with their rear. There must soon be active
operations a fight or goot	[foot] race.
August 25 <sup>th</sup>	
Memphis with five hundre	ed personnel are Forrest = it is reported that Wheeler
	truction in the rear of Sherman. All quiet in our front Some shelling
and sharpshooting. Kilpat	iecks's raid was driven back with great loss but another is reported
coming out(thou	gh) (larger) (than) of the = Oh
that we may the	party = there is a report in circulation that the Enemy are massing in
front of Clayton's Divisio	n. Let them come and God will decide the issue.
Aug 27 <sup>th</sup>	
Last night the Enemy spen	nt in evacuating our front. Are hurling missiles or Arathi (?) in the

shape of cannon balls at them all of the time causing them to leave behind several prisoners with an abundance of stores and C = The boys lived high today. Many getting as much as ten lbs of coffee with other good things. = Many think Sherman is only changing his front but am in hopes he is retreating for certainly Wheeler had done something in the rear before this what will come

next no one knows = Some think a fight is the next on the program we will see=

28 August
A remarkable stillness prevails today = scouts report the Enemy still crossing the River = Slight
skirmishing can be heard on our left. = from other portions of the there is no
news = Will Sherman fight is now the query = Many think that he will attempt to rest one wing
of his vast army on the West Point R-R Hood will See him about that. We wait the issue with
great anxiety.
August 30 <sup>th</sup>
Left our entrenchment for East Point – traveled all night=
August 31 <sup>st</sup>
Lee and Hardee attacked this enemy at Jonesboro and were repulsed. We lost many men and
officers Lewis was shot in the heart. He died nobly leading his men = the
brigade lost one hundred and seventy two men the 16 <sup>th</sup> lost forty three.
Sept 1 <sup>st</sup>
Started back to Atlanta leaving Hardee on that Battlefield = Made a march of fifteen miles and
halted six miles from the city.
autou om maios mom une eneg.
Sept 2d
Atlanta was evacuated last night = The whole army falling back. Much straggling
Sept 3d
A great deal of stragling Brigade formed the rear guard of the entire army.
Heavy rain during the evening making the [roads] miserable. Stayed all night at
McDonough.
4 Sept
Still on this retreat untill(sic) 10 AM when the Division halted formed a line of battle in 2 miles
of Lovejoy Station
11 <sup>th</sup> September
Gone at last = The Enemy have fallen back to Atlanta and our army has settled down to recruit
and prepare for a more active campaign
12 Sept.
Reviews and drills now the order of the day. Lee and Clayton made speeches on yesterday
saying that his corps had to storm breast works and shall do it=
15 <sup>th</sup> Sept.

All quiet in camp = Nothing new – Sending women and children from Atlanta = Weather clear and cool
Sept. 17
Commenced moving – traveling all day – no one seems to know what Hood's intentions are.
Sept. 20
one wing resting near the Macon R & the other on the Chattahouchee – throwing up
Sept. 22
Hood's campaign has commenced. Hostilities are resumed. The army of Tennessee is again in line of battle. The left wing resting on the Chattahouchee. The right on Macon R R- We are again prepared to make another desperate resistance to further invasion of our beloved country by the vandal (?) foe – We did hope that the four long months of fighting would end the war that enough rich blood has been poured out. That fanatics were satisfied and that peace in all its grandeur would beam upon us but is not so – we have got to toil on – to make a more determined resistance – to fight as men never fought before. In consequence of a cartel agreed upon by Hood and Hindman exchanged prisoners are coming in daily. Many have already arrived in our Brigade. Many took the oath – Some 23 out of our Brigade – the 16 <sup>th</sup> Su Regts were separated on yesterday commanded of the 25 <sup>th</sup> and Lindsey (?) of the 16 <sup>th</sup> La Re
Oct. 2d Caught up with the army, having been on a p call (?) was left behind. Hand a little fight with the Yankee cavalry-
Oct. 3d Stewart's corps entered Big Shanty at 3PM killing and caturing a few Yanks – our army is now in the rear of the enemy – It has come down to a point of time now who can live longer on short rations – We will see –
Oct. 5 <sup>th</sup> Hard at work on breastworks – troops healthy – in good spirits and on short rations – the latter (?) troubles me but little as can do on as small a quantity of provisions as any man - Prisoners continue to pass by – taken by Stewart at Big Shanty – Weather exceedingly bad. Raining for the last four or five days. Sherman is reported to have left Atlanta on retreat at 3PM yesterday.  Today his forces are reported in few miles of our lines – The fight will soon come off it is expected – If so God grant that it may decide the gigantic struggle in our favor – We have fought long and hard and we deserve our freedom.

#### Oct. 9th

On the march for Tennessee – camped on 3 miles of the [Coosa] River.

#### Oct. 10

Crossed at 10AM the Coosa river eleven miles below Rome – No Yankees have as yet appeared. Crossed a range of at 12N. The country beautiful and well provisioned. Can the soldiers live on cornbread and beef – Our direction is north – weather clear and cool – The troops \_\_\_\_\_\_ the marching well but little straggling.

#### 12 October

Last night the 16 & 25<sup>th</sup> La stood picket on Oostanaula River. This morning we cross the river and commence intrenching(sic) near Calhoun. The men suffering a great deal with their feet – but keep up their spirits.

#### Oct. 13

Recrossed(sic) the Oostanaula(sic) River last night. Marched seven miles and formed near the Salton dirt road – the 4' La Regt went into Calhoun yesterday and captured much stores – all goes on so far very well Stewart's and Harder old corps are moving on Dalton, [heavy] firing heard in that direction during the day – weather clear & just cold enough to make it pleasant marching.

#### Oct. 14th

The news this morning is that our forces captured Dalton yesterday with fifteen hundred Prisoners mostly Negroes – Sherman is reported crossed the Coosa night before last on our trail – Today we moved in the old works of the Yanks in Smoke Creek Gap where we will remain most likely until some demonstration is made. Warmer and cloudy.

#### Oct. 15th

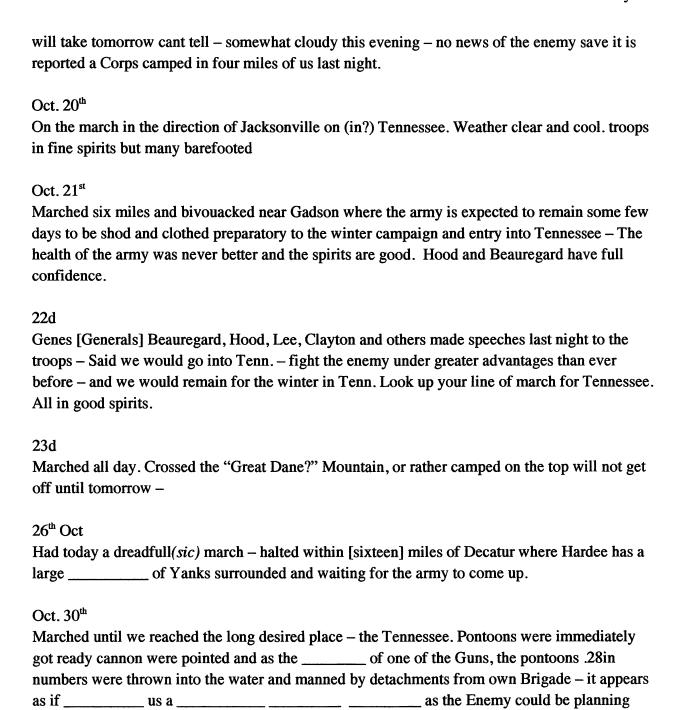
This morning the Division passed out of Snake Creek Gap blocking up the gap with trees and c to prevent the Yanks from pursuit – Tunnel Hill was evacuated by the enemy yesterday destroying twenty days rations. So far everything goes on quietly on our side.

## Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>

Today being Sunday rested.

## Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>

Took up line of march before daylight and marched 17 miles, passed through Summerville – direction mostly South west – The troops in good spirits but many bare footed – what ground we



\_\_\_\_\_ on. The opposite Bank a [few?] should from \_\_\_\_\_ dogs of war put them to fight and we landed in Florence, Ala. = took a few Prisoners but no stores = \_\_\_\_ with

Passed out of \_\_\_\_\_ & throw up works the \_\_\_\_ will a [crops?] but no \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_ the Bridge is being constructed & when completed we will take up our line of \_\_\_\_\_

the mildest enthusiasm by the ladies = All seemed overjoyed to meet us.

Oct. 31st

\_\_\_\_\_ the state of Tennessee.

Nov. 4 <sup>th</sup>
Trenchs(sic) at Florence = very cold, much sickness =
Nov 6
The Brigades separated(sic) one detachment under defends one side of the
Town while another defends the other = The Army moved on the Huntsville Road = weather cool =
Nov. 10 <sup>th</sup> The Brigade moved two miles from Town on the [wins] road = The great victory of
[F] Johnsville on the [3] is confirmed.
Nov. 16 <sup>th</sup>
Still at Florence Supplies are as this & should being shown
up [Forres?] his cavalry off one
Nov. 17
The 25 & the was detached & on guard for Pontoon Bridge
Nov. 19
The Army took up line of march from Tenn we left to guard Bridge
<del></del>
Nov. 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Left Florence this morning at Sunrise with Pontoon on was Road =
The line at 10 a.m. travelling slow only about 12 miles day = country
poor, weather cold =
25 Nov
Today most desolate country we camped in 4 miles of [Waynshord?] = Weather
becoming better =
Nov 28 <sup>th</sup>
The Enemy Columbus last night & we took this morning
detachment arrived in town 4p.m. with Pontoon 5 miles and had the Bridge by daylight next morning.
nau the Bridge by daylight heat informing.
Nov 29 <sup>th</sup>
& this morning to attract the Enemy in the when
makes demon in Front = Heavy cannonading going on.

December 1 <sup>st</sup>		
Army on the Ene	my 20 miles from this place on	when
battle ensued	heard	was Pat
Dec. 5 <sup>th</sup>		
Our Regiment left Columbia on	with 20 [Pontoons?]	