

“Passed away before life’s noon,
Who shall say they died too soon?
Ye who mourn, O cease from tears!
Deeds like these outlast the years.”

Vicksburg Surrenders.

July 4—This was the day Vicksburg surrendered. We did not know it then but learned of it afterward. The One Hundred Fifty-seventh squad moved up toward the front. Our forces occupied the town and a good many prisoners were marched to the rear past us. In the afternoon it rained hard and we got quite wet.

Burying the Dead.

Sunday, July 5—We marched to the front. The Confederates had gone. Our forces were occupied burying the dead and caring for the wounded. We were not taken to where the worst fighting had been done and so were spared the awful sight that presented itself. One of Company C’s men, Mason K. Messenger, was detailed with the pioneers [sic] and told me of the awful sights and stench that arose. We saw enough of the wreck of that battle to satisfy our curiosity for a life time. Dead horses swollen to bursting in that July sun were lying all around. It took a large force of men working several days to burn and bury the dead animals. Broken gun carriages, knapsacks, haversacks, guns and other wreckage were strewn thickly around. It was a great relief when toward evening we started in the direction of Emmetsburg and camped in a piece of woods about 11 p.m. The rain made the roads very muddy.

Some Pleasant Soldiering.

July 6—Continued our march at daylight and near night stopped at Emmetsburg. Fifteen men and myself were detailed to guard the fine buildings of the St. Mary’s convent managed by the Sisters of Charity. We were quartered in a large barn. The sisters were very kind and thoughtful, and each man on post was furnished a nice lunch some time during his two hours duty. This continued throughout the night with each relief. That was the kind of soldiering the boys liked, but the good sisters, not being military men, did not know they had overlooked one who could enjoy a good lunch as well as any private could and that was the sergeant of the guard. The only satisfaction the sergeant could get out of it was that he knew personally that it was not always thus, and so he had no scruples in filling his canteen with good fresh milk from several Jersey cows stabled in said barn. In fact he felt so well pleased that he actually delayed giving orders to fall in the next morning until each guard had filled his canteen from the same source.

July 7—We marched away at 3 o’clock with blessings on the Sisters of Charity. Whether they returned those blessings when they came to milk those cows I am unable to say.

These good sisters were among the first to arrive on the Gettysburg battlefield with a wagon loaded with provisions and other necessities for our poor wounded, and they were untiring in their labor of love, caring for the wounded of both sides.

Pursuing the Johnnies.

Evidently we were after the Johnnies in earnest for they marched us long and hard. The One Hundred Fifty-seventh squad was provost guard. When within five miles of Frederick City we turned to the right without regard to roads and marched through the fields over the Catoclin mountains. When we reached the top we could see Middletown and it seemed only a short distance away; but by the time we had reached the foot of the range on the western side it was dark and we seemed farther away than two hours before. It now began to rain hard and it seemed as though Middletown was receding from us.

We plodded on in the downpour and some time after 9 o’clock we reached the town, and in the darkness I selected a barn for my headquarters and Company C boys appropriated the haymow for a bed chamber. We had made one of the longest marches in our history, some thirty-two miles or more.

July 8—By the move the day before Meade had thrown his army between Lee and Washington. When we awoke the next morning it was still raining and I went to the house and reported where we had lodged and for 25 cents secured a first-class breakfast—the first regular home meal I had enjoyed since I first crossed the Potomac.

After doing ample justice to the good woman’s breakfast I hunted up the regiment and as it still continued to rain, went back to the barn and slept during the forenoon.

The first Corps passed through town and I saw some of the Seventy-sixth New York boys who were left, also my friend, Charley Bowen of the Forty-fourth New York of the Fifth Corps.

We then marched to Boonsborough, west of the other part of the range of the Blue Ridge mountains, where there was some cavalry fighting. On the 9th we were relieved by the Sixth Corps and marched back to Boonsborough Gap. Saw my cousin, Henry Gould, one of the One Hundred Fifty-fourth New York, and learned something of the losses in his regiment. They lay right back of us in the cemetery at Gettysburg.

Co. K

Major Carmichael in Command.

Quite a number of changes were made in our corps; among them, the One Hundred Fifty-seventh squad was transferred to the second brigade of the first division. Colonel Brown took command of the brigade and Major Carmichael of the regi-

***A REGIMENT
REMEMBERED:
The 157th New York Volunteers***



From the Diary of Capt. William Saxton

**With Appendices:
Libbey Prison Captivity of Col. Frank Place
Belle Island Captivity of Lt. R.W. Bourne
Confederate Officers' Tributes to Col. James Carmichael**

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