

Excerpt from Jerome Bliss Diary 1864 97th New York
Transcribed and donated to the New York State Military Museum by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Youker

April 14, 1864 New York.

We arrived in New York this morning at 6 o'clock . We came from Albany to New York on a steamer. We took the ferry boat and went to Jersey City. We took the cars for Philadelphia. We arrived at Haverdegrace about half past two o'clock. The provost guard came in the cars and arrested us. We had to get out of the cars and stay all night.

April 15 Haverdegrace, Delaware

They sent us to Baltimore under guard. We left Haverdegrace at 11 o'clock. We got to Baltimore about one o'clock. They took us up to the Camp of distribution and kept us here in barracks all night. It is very pleasant today. They sent a lot of soldiers today from here.

April 16 Camp of distribution Fort Fedrill Hill Baltimore

We got here yesterday about 2 o'clock. We got some rations. They are ? of my regt. They sent off a lot of men to fortress Monroe. They was a building burnt in Baltimore tonight. I bought a tin cup of a sutler here. I gave 20 cents for it. It rained here today.

April 17 Camp of Distribution Fort Fedrill Hill

We left here about 11 o'clock and went down to Baltimore and took the cars for Washington. We got to Washington about ? o'clock. We ate supper here . We staid to the Soldier's Retreat all night. It is warm here today. We laid on the floor all night. It is cold tonight.

April 18 Soldiers Retreat Washington

They told us that we had to go to the Distribution. So we gaveour furlaes and he went to the pass office and got a pass for 7 of us through to our regt. We got to the regt. about 4 o'clock tonight. I wrote a letter to Jefferson Bliss to night. It is warm and pleasant.

April 19 Camp near Culpeper Virginia

I am to the regt. I went out inspection this forenoon. I wrote a letter to Marget Fical. I sent my likeness in it. They had a brigade drill this afternoon. I & Dan didn't go out. We stayed and fixed our bunk wider. I went out on dress parade. Capt. Hall got back tonight. I wrote a letter to Louisa Phipps tonight.

April 30 Camp near Culpeper Virginia

The boys bought a ham. I gave 20 cents for my share. I cleaned my gun this morning. It is very pleasant this morning.

May 4 Camp about 5 miles of mine runn

We got here about 2 o'clock. I was detailed on brigade guard but I was sick and did not have to go on guard. We stayed here all night. It is very warm today. We crossed the Rappadan about noon. I want very well today.

May 5, 1964 Camp about 8 miles from mine (Wilderness)

We left here about 7 o'clock and went about 8 miles. Our men was a skirmishing with the rebels. They tried to break our line. We went up & formed a line of battle & then we left here & went off towards the left & we joined the 6th Corps. Our company went tonight out on skirmishers.

May 6

Morehouse Mallett was wounded. I helped carry him from the field with George Kring & Stephen Simons. We staid all night out of the woods. Our regt. had some fighting last night.

May 7 In the wilderness of Virginia

We staid here all night. Last night we moved a little ways and found the rest of our Brigade.....

May 8 Near Laurel Hill

George Kring was killed today. Our regt. made a charge & had several wounded. I staid back to the hospital. Stephen Pearl was wounded and Bill Abrams was wounded. Several more that I don't know. They had a hard fight today. It is very warm today. Our cavalry had a fight here today.

May 9 Near Laurel Hill Virginia

We moved today a little ways & then we had to move again about 9 miles. They have done some hard fighting again today. Our regt. was engaged. They are several of our regt brought to the hospital today. I staid all night with Gust Johnson.

May 10 Near Laurel Hill Virginia

They commenced fighting this morning & kept it up all day. They are a great deal of artillery firing today. Vernon was wounded & had his hand taken off. They are fighting very hard now & it is sundown. It was very warm here today. David Axelrod was wounded today.

May 11

I am to the hospital today. They wasn't much fighting today. They have been a skirmishing very hard all day. It is very cool today. I saw Harvey Valentine today. I went with him over to his

May 12 Near Laurel Hill

I went up to my regt today. It rained very hard. My regt was fighting this morning. They commenced fighting early this morning & kept it up all day. They was heavy skirmishing all night. Clothier Whitford was killed this morning by a sharp shooter.

May 13 Near Laurel Hill

We laid behind our breastworks all night. It rained this morning. They are heavy skirmishing all day. I wrote a letter to Jefferson Bliss today. They are nothing but our corps left here. We are to hold this line of entrenchment. It has rained very hard all day.

May 14

We left here last night about 10 o'clock & marched all night. It is awfully muddy. We went off towards Fredericksburg. We found them a skirmishing with the enemy. We got here about 9 o'clock this morning. Our men charged on the rebels about dark & drove them off. We throwed up entrenchments. It rained some today.

May 15 Near Spotsylvania Courthouse

We drawed rations for two days. They are not much fighting today. It is very warm today but it rains every once in a while. Our men counted 44 guns that the rebels had planted to fire at us. The boys bought some pork & sugar. We expected to move tonight but did not.

May 16 Near Spotsylvania Courthouse

We drawed rations this forenoon. We bought some tea. We got orders about 2 o'clock to move. We went about 10 rods & laid in line of battle all night. We put up a tent. It rained some here. Just dark they was some cannonading on our right about 4 o'clock.

May 17 Near Spotsylvania Courthouse

It is very cool this morning. Gust Johnson came back to the regt yesterday. I got some veal yesterday. I commenced a letter for Dan Perry but we got orders to move about 6 o'clock. We went about one mile & a half & throwed up entrenchments all night. It is very quiet today & stormy.

May 18 Near Spotsylvania Courthouse

Our regt had to go on picket this morning. We went about one mile from here to our left. We was on post about 11 hours & then we got relieved by the 6th corps about sundown. They have been very heavy cannonading all day. The boys shot a hog & cooked it for supper. It is very pleasant here today. Bill Abrams got back.

May 19 Near Spotsylvania Courthouse

I finished Dan Perry's letter this morning. The mail came in yesterday but none for me. I saw our men & the rebels exchange papers this morning. They ant much fighting today. The rebels flanked us & got in our rear. Our heavy artillery has been fighting them. We left here about 6 o'clock & came here & lay in a line of battle all night. Our men drove the rebels away.

May 20 About 3 miles from Spotsylvania Courthouse.

We advanced down to a piece of woods & then we came back. I got a lot of things last night that I found on the battlefield. It is very warm here today. Our troops advanced about one mile. We drawed some rations. They gave us some whiskey. We put up tents tonight.

May 21 About 3 miles from Spotsylvania Courthouse

They are heavy skirmishing going on this morning off towards Spotsylvania Courthouse. It is very warm today. We left here about 10 o'clock & marched all day. We went to

Mattapony River. I got a letter from Louisa Phipps, one from Frannie Lassels, one from Pernelia Mallett, one from Marian Bliss & 2 from Jefferson Bliss.

May 22 Near the Mattapony River, Virginia

We lay in a line of battle all last night. The rebels tried to stop our men from crossing the river but they did not. We left here about 5 o'clock & marched off in a line of battle. We had some skirmishing all of the way. We left here about 11 o'clock. Our regt went to a farmer & guarded forage.

May 23

We left here about 7 o'clock & went to North An River. We forded the river. Our division but they laid a pontoon across. They was heavy skirmishing when we got here about 6 o'clock. Our corps was engaged very heavy.....

May 24 Near North An River

We drewed rations last night for 4 days. The rebels fell back last night. They are a lot of rebs came in this morning & gave themselves up. We left here about 9 o'clock & went down the river about 9 miles. It is very warm here today. It rained very hard about dusk.

May 25 Near North An River

We went about 4 miles. We left here this morning about 8 o'clock & went a little ways & threwed up entrenchments. They are heavy firing this morning. I wrote a letter to Jefferson Bliss. It rained some last night. It has been very warm here today. We drewed some fresh beef tonight.

May 26 Near North An River Virginia

It rained some tonight. I wrote two letters to day, one to Permelia Mallett, one to Louisa Phipps. We left here tonight about 11 o'clock & we recrossed the North An River. We went about 6 miles. We stopped & drawed 6 days rations & some whisky.

May 27 About 4 miles from North An River

We left here about 4 o'clock this morning & went to a little place & we made some coffee & went on until about 5 o'clock & then we stopped a spell & got us some supper. I got a pass & fell out. Our rgt went on. I went on until about dark & then I stopped & went in a building & went to sleep.

May 28

I left here about 5 o'clock this morning & went on to a large plantation & got my breakfast. I got to the Pummunky River about dark. I crossed the river & went about 1 ½ miles & found my regt. I got here about 8 o'clock. Our regt is most all on picket. They put up breastworks. It is very warm toady. I saw Capt. Peterson today.

May 29 About one mile & a half from the Pummunky River

We left here about 9 o'clock & went about 9 miles & bothered a round until most sundown & then we went on up to the left of our corps. They was skirmishing. We staid here until after dark. Then we went back to Gen. Warren's headquarters.

May 30 About 4 miles from the Pummunky River, Virginia

We moved this morning up towards the front. I saw Robert Willcox today. General Lockwood took command of our division today. They was some hard fighting today off towards Hanover Courthouse. We went up there & put up entrenchments. I got a letter from Louisa Bliss tonight.

May 31 Near Hanover Courthouse Virginia

The rebels fell back last night. We drew rations last night of sugar & coffee & pork & beef & crackers & whiskey. We have got 5 day's rations from this morning. We bought some things to the commissary. It cost me 20 cents. They are not much fighting where we are today. They are some heavy cannonading to the right & left of us.

June 1 Near Hanover Courthouse Virginia

I wrote a letter to Louisa Bliss this morning. We advanced on towards Mechanicksville. We left here about 9 o'clock. We went about one mile & found the rebels. We put up breastworks. The rebs shelled like everything. We had a few wounded in our regt. We left here about dark & went off towards our left and went about one mile & put up entrenchments. We worked most all night.

June 2 Near Mechanicksville Virginia

They was some hard fighting to the right & left of us last night. We had some skirmishing today. We had one man wounded in my company. Our artillery opened on the rebels this afternoon & they kept it up until after dark. I was on guard tonight. They are hard fighting to the right of us. It rained tonight.

June 3 Near Mechanicksville Virginia

Our artillery opened fire on the enemy this morning & kept it up about all day. Our skirmishers advanced & drove the enemies skirmishers back & our men got their rifle pits. It is very wet today. We heard that the 18th army corps joined and they was very hard fighting on our left about dark. It rained some here tonight.

June 4 Near Mechanicksville Virginia

They sent a lot of men out of our regt on the skirmish line this morning. We drew rations last night. We have got 4 days rations from this morning. I wrote a letter to Frannie Lassells to day. I wrote one for Dan Perry to Jefferson Bliss. I got a letter from Eugene Bliss tonight. They are some hard fighting to the left of us this morning.. I heard that General Smith had captured _____ canons last night.

June 5 Near Mechanicksville Virginia

We left here about 3 o'clock & went back to the old church & went in the breastworks & laid there all day. We drew two days rations. We have 5 days of rations from this morning. They are one line of battle ahead of us. We had heavy firing on our left about sundown. I wrote a letter to Eugene Bliss & one to Permelia Mallett. Our mail came this afternoon.

June 6 Near Old Church Virginia

We left here last night about 1 o'clock and went to Coal Harbor. We got here about 9 o'clock this morning and have laid down & slept. We staid here all day. I wrote a letter to Amanda Bliss. It is very warm today. I drew a pair of socks. They are some canonading in front of us.

June 7 Near Coal Harbor Virginia

We are about one mile & a half from Gainses Hill where McClellan had a battle. Our mail came to us yesterday. The 9th NY went home today & the remainder was transferred into our regt. We drew rations today. I wrote a letter today to _____. It is very warm today. They drew clothing. We moved camp.

June 8 Camp near Coal Harbor Virginia

I & Dan Perry went down to the 115th NY this morning. I saw Simon Little & Philander Dokstater & Will Avard. I got back about 10 o'clock. I got a letter from Mrs. Smith & an envelope & stamp inside of it. I wrote a letter to Mrs. Smith today. I washed my shirt & drawers & socks. We moved our camp a little ways & laid it out into streets. We drew rations today.

June 9 Camp near Coal Harbor

I cleaned my gun this forenoon. It rained some here this afternoon. It has been very windy today. I wrote a letter to Simon B. Leavitt today. We drew 3 days rations of sugar & coffee & crackers & pork & beef & soap & vinegar. We had a dress parade. I am on guard tonight.

June 10 Camp near Coal Harbor

It is very warm here today. Robert Willcox came here to see me. I went up to corps headquarters & see Hue Pew. I gave 80 cents for some tobacco. I saw Fred Gillett. I was over to the 94th NY. We had a dress parade. They are not much firing today.

June 11 Camp Near Coal Harbor Virginia

We got orders to march this morning. We left here about 5 o'clock this morning. We went about 8 miles. We crossed the Richmond & York River Railroad. Near Tinstall Station we went about a mile & a half from the railroad & Stephen put up our tents. We drew 4 days rations today. Our mail came to us.

June 12 Near Tinstall Station Virginia

We had an inspection of our guns. We left here at 6 o'clock tonight. We went to the Chickahominy River & stopped & stayed here a spell & then we went down near the river and staid a while & then we crossed on a pontoon bridge. We crossed at Long Bridge We staid here until daylight. It was very cold.

June 13 Near the Chickahominy River

We left here about daylight & went on. We went about 9 miles & stopped & made coffee I & Dan Perry. Our brigade went on with the cavalry. Our cavalry is skirmishing. We got up to our brigade about 5 miles from the river. We went on up to ____ & there the

94th NY was put out a skirmishing. The rebs shelled us like fury. We put up breastworks. We got here about 1 o'clock this morning. It is very warm.

June 14 We left here after dark & went off towards the James River. We traveled until 2 o'clock at night before we stopped. We laid down & slept until after daylight. We got on the wrong road last night. We stopped near a church. We went on about 5 o'clock. We traveled until about 11 o'clock this forenoon. We stopped & put up our tents. It is very warm.

June 14 Near Charles City Courthouse

I went over to the 94th NY. I saw Abert Willcox. I got the money of our chaplain that I let him have to keep for me. It was \$20. I lent Daniel Perry \$5.00 to be paid next payday.

June 15 Near Charles Citty Courthouse

We got orders to be ready to march at daylight. We left here about 4 o'clock this morning & went to the James River & we crossed on a steamer over to Windmill Point. We got across the river about 8 o'clock. I went in a swimming in the James River. We left here about 4 o'clock. We traveled most all night. Very warm.