

Civil War Journal of Private George W. Grubb
Company E, 71st Ohio Volunteer Infantry

George W. Grubb was born in Ohio about 1841. He was the oldest child of Albert Grubb and Lydia Shelhom who were married in Knox County, Ohio on April 16, 1840. The 1850 Montgomery County, Ohio census shows 10 year old George living in Madison Township with his Father, 38 year old Albert, a cooper, 27 year old Lydia, and five younger siblings. In the 1860 Madison Township census, George W., now 19, has 8 younger siblings in the household in addition to his parents. George enlisted in Company E. of the 71st Ohio Volunteer Infantry as a Private on October 23, 1861 along with a good many young men from his neighborhood.

George's journal begins on April 10th, 1862 in Memphis, Tennessee where George and other Union prisoners of war were held after being captured at the Battle of Shiloh four days earlier. George writes first about his enlistment in October of 1861, events that occurred during training in Ohio, the Regiment's journey to Pittsburg Landing, the Battle of Shiloh itself and finally, his subsequent capture and transport to Macon Georgia.

The journal was donated to the Troy, Ohio History Room by Brad Siefke of Anthon, Iowa.

While leaving George's original spelling and sentence structure intact, I have added some punctuation for clarity and also comments for the reader in italics.

Martin Stewart
Troy Ohio
2011

Written at Memphis Tenn. Thursday April 10th (1862)

Enlisted with Collander (*Captain William H Callender, 25, Co. E*) in Dayton October 23rd 1861. Rcvd furlough for 8 or 9 days went to Dayton Thursday 1st Nov. Put up at the Lafayette house (*The Lafayette House stood in Dayton on the north side of Third Street, between Jefferson and St. Clair Streets.*) Board was very good. D A Bright returned from Ind the same day. Wm Culbert (*Private William H. Cuthbert, 20, Co. E*) enlisted on Sat 2nd with Collander.

On Sunday 3rd went to church at Presbyterian & Lutheran brethren also Sunday school. On Monday met lots of boys of my acquaintance several girls also. Went out the road with them several miles from Town. In eve men arrived from pyrmont (*Pyrmont, Perry Township, Montgomery County, OH.*) At 8 1/2 O'clock got aboard train for Troy. Names of squad: Lieut. Collander, Pvt Troxel (*Porterfield H. Troxel, 30, Co. E.*) 3 Johnsons (*possibly Privates Israel 24, Caleb 28, and Joshua M Johnson 42, all Co. E.*) E Mather (*Private Emanuel Morter, 29, Co. E.*) J Good (*Private Jerome Good, 19, Co. E.*) V Hicks (*Corporal Vynal A. Hicks, 21, Co. E.*) J. Hicks (*Private Jonathan A Hicks, 20, Co. E.*) H Farling (*Private Henry Farling, 17, Co. E.*) Aug Kochler (*Private August H Keohler, 21, Co. E.*) & self.

Saturday Nov 9th

A man of the Troy Blues was buried. The whole battalion was out. He was buried in the Simmetry. W H Culbert & S H Wilson (*Private Samuel H Wilson, 24, Co. E*) were up.

Tuesday 12th

Palmer (*Private Urias M. Palmer, 23, Co. E*), McFarland (*Private William McFarland, 25, Co. E.*) Bauchman (*Private Eli Bachman, 25, Co. E.*) S Watson (*Private Samuel M. Watson, 21, Co. E.*) Caleb Warley (*Private Caleb Worley, 19, Co. E*) came up today.

Ladies gave us a grand dinner on Thanksgiving day

I got a furlough from 20 to 26 Dec. Walked to Brookville on night of 19 with some Pyrmont Boys. Staid all night at Geo Addams (*George Adams was a hotel keeper in Brookville per 1860 census.*) Samantha (*possibly George's sister, Samantha, 17*) went home with me next day. All overjoyed to see me. Went to church couple nights. Christmas morn went to Stoners. Saw Lib

and Mrs. Stoner. Went home then and from there I started to Sharpsburg. Twas hard to leave home.

Was at a party at Lt McCully's in one. Uncle Will brought Sis up to see me 26th. Uncle Will and Henry took me to Camp - stopped a short time in Dayton. They stayed all night. Lots of boys got lots of 4 days furloughs on the same eve.

On 31st went to Piqua to grand dinner. Uncle Will came up once afterwards with Mariel & staid 2 days. Lots of rain while we were in Camp. We fared sumptuously all the time. Plenty good bread meat beans & potatoes with coffee & sugar.

On Sunday 16 Feb in night the long Roll beat. We soon formed our line and received the news of the Battle of Donnelson and with it received our orders to go to Paducah.

All day Monday we were busy preparing to leave. Took down our tents in eve. Carried luggage to the cars. Verry muddy all the time. Carried our heavy knapsacks around from place to place and about midnight or after we got on the train. About 2 o'clock 18 Feb we started. Got to Dayton about 4 o'clock, Hamilton about sunup. Cin about 10 o'clock a.m. and got on Boat. Started down the river about 5 o'clock.

Second night an alarm of fire was raised a lamp having fell in the cook room

Got to Paducah about noon but did not land till Friday. Encamped in mud 2 or 3 inches deep. Got boards for a floor.

Got light breakfast of the time at Paducah. Went to Columbus with 2 other Cos and parts of ____ under Genl Sherman. 55 Ill joined us at Cairo. Took possession of that place. Staid about 1 ½ days then went back to Paducah. on the 7 & 8 March started up the Tennessee. Were about a week getting to Savannah. Saw lots of boys who fought at Donelson. Saw the Sharp Shooters. Saw Lieut Mitchel at Mettle landing.

Lieut Toms (*Lieutenant George O. Toms, 37, Co. E*) joined us at Savannah with E Toms (*Private Emanuel Toms, 32, Co. E,*) & ____ & ____.

Were paid on the river between Paducah & Savannah. Sent my money to Myers. Above Savannah near the line we stopped in the night about 4 o'clock AM. Started out our Brigade under command Col Stuart of 55 Ill. The intention was to go and burn some bridges on the railroad. We had to wade a stream waist deep. We did not get more than 3 or 4 miles on account of water. When we turned back it rained nearly all the time. When we got back to the boat we were all wet. We fell down the river that night to Pittsburg landing. Here we staid and were allowed to go on shore on Sunday the first day.

With much work a road was made along the bank to the level ground. On this day I lost my paper in the woods. Saw the place where our gun boats cut up the woods and trees. Received letters from home sweet home.

In the eve we were ordered out with 3 days rations for march. Bivouacked about ¼ mile from river in the woods. Next morning march and about noon stopped at a distance of about 3 miles from the river. Our Co was thrown out at pickets. Were relieved at evening. Again lay out without any fires. Next morn left our blankets & haversacks & canteens and went to river for our knapsacks. Here I was on guard over our guns. When relieved we got our knapsacks and came to guns again. At 2 o'clock when we were relieved again It commenced to rain and we went to the boat to sleep.

D. A. Bright was corporal of our relief. We maked our own supper at a fire by the guns that night. Next day had to help unload boats. Late in eve started with Culbert & Bright for the camp which we reached at dark. They were pitched at the place where we stood pickets day or two before. Maked our own supper of rice. Next morn again was sent with fatigue party under Lieut Toms to assist teams but did nothing. Returned to new encampment about a mile east of the old one of the day previous. Our tent here was pitched on the side of a ravine verry slanting but a good dry place.

Here were drilled nearly every day. One Sunday Genl Sherman reviewed the troops. The same day I was on guard at Brigade Commissary. I was detailed another time for fatigue. Went to the river with the party & unloaded and put in wagons provisions for our regiment. Worked verry hard for several hours then got a lot of apples and chease and went back to camp.

Had a regimental inspection one Sunday. Another day had Grand review by Genl Grant.

Apr 2 (1862)

Was appointed Corporal, vice Johnson (*Corporal Israel Johnson*) who was promoted to Sergeant, vice J Beamer (*Private John Bemar, 21, Co. E,*) vice A C Dut Shier (*Private Abram Dukeshire, 34, Co. E,*) promoted to Corporal vice A plock (*Private John A. Plock, 24, Co. E.*)

Next 3 day I was on guard. Corporal of first relief Guards formed at 4 o'clock PM. Next day it rained verry hard. On 3rd was out with Culbert & Marshal to find Ira P foutz in the 11 Iowa. We found the Reg but Ira had left the Reg and gon with a Gun Boat.

Friday 4th:

This eve firing was heard in the west & southwest. Tthe long roll beat we formed verry promptly. A detachment of 100 men were selected and the colonels took them off. Palmer was with them. Again 200 were called for and promptly stepped forward. The Major took charge of them. I was with them. We loaded our pieces but about the time we were ready to start the Col came back with the hundred and we were all ordered back into line. We then stacked arms and were permitted to go to our tents and finish our supper. I got my canteen and went away down the ravine to the spring and filled. Came back and laid down on the ground and slept awhile with a rail for a pillow. Got awak and slipped over to my tent and got my blanket. About midnight we were awakened and quietly sent to our tents to sleep on our arms. We were not molested however. The alarm was caused by a dash from the rebel pickets

Sat 5th:

We drilled Skirmish by Moore (*2nd Lieutenant Thomas T. Moore, 32, Co. E*) in woods west of our drill field. Here the boys did pay as much attention as they should. Moore told them it was no play that there was no saying how soon we would need our drill. Little did he think of what would be enacted on that same ground.

Sunday, April 6th Battle of Pitsburg Landing

Today we were to have regimental inspection. It was a most glorious day not a cloud to be seen the sun shining brightly and the few birds that inhabited these woods were singing sweetly.

We were airing out blankets and cleaning up. I had just got everything packed up in my knapsack for inspection when Lieut. Moore (*2nd Lt. Thomas T. Moore, 32, Co. E*) came down and said for us to fall in.

We thought it strange as the first call had not been sounded yet. We asked if knapsacks were required he said not nothing but gun and accoutrements. The Co. was nearly formed when the long roll beat in our camp. We double quicked to our place in line.

By this time firing was beginning to be heard along the outer line. While we were standing in line John Wilson brought all the canteens from our tents full of water and gave them to us. They proved a great benefit during the day. Firing increased as the day advanced.

The sick were sent to the river between 8 & 9 O'clock A.M. We were marched from our parade ground down the road outside the camp to a small open place on the slope of the hill. Here we halted. Our regiment was closed at half distance, Co. E & Co B. forming the last division. This division was sent out to the right for skirmishers. Greater part of the division were deployed. A part of our Co was held in reserve.

The battle raged furiously now in the west. The cannon kept up an incessant booming while musketry rolled on without intermission. A line of Zouaves went ahead of ours. Our line was standing, the Zouaves advanced across the ravine and up the hill. Soon firing was heard scattering along their line. It grew heavier the Zouaves fell back into the ravine. They again advanced up the hill again. The firing again commenced on them. They fought awhile and then fell back again.

By this time balls fell around us pretty fast. We fell behind the Brow of the hill and lay down. We did not lay long till we were ordered back to our regiment. The regiment had all left the open

field had fell back into another ravine. We ran around till we found them up on the right of the Brigade. We fell in with them all were laying down.

By some mistake the Regiment commenced firing and kept up a fire very heavy considering they saw no one to shoot at. From here we fell back across another ravine under cover of another hill. From here the boys again commenced firing very lively. This was soon stopped by the officers. From this place we could see the rebel flag. Boys said they could see the enemy. I could not for my I was dim. I got it hurt either by Ball or Brush. They commenced firing again and kept it up a good while. I fired 3 or 4 times.

Balls whistled around lively. John Meyers was wounded (*Private John Myers, 18, Co. E.*) Wm. Skinner (*Sergeant William Skinner, 30, Co. B*) was killed. Many were missing from our company but it could not be said whether they lay on the field or were retreating to the river.

Davy Lee (*Private David L. Lee, 18, Co. E*) was very anxious about his brother Geo (*Private George E. Lee, 17, Co. E.*) He did not know where he was.

From here the men all broke away and ran. Palmer was the last man to leave. He was cool and collected and wanted the boys to stay. I started after most of them were gone. I lost sight of Palmer awhile. I hunted around and at last found him. The Co & even the regiment was broken to all pieces and scattered abroad. We concluded that all was lost and we might as well go to the river.

We went down to the river with a wounded man of the 55 Ill. Bright (*Corporal Daniel A Bright, 24, Co. E*) was along. He had lost his gun. I filled my canteen at the river and then we started back with Bright for his gun. We went probably half a mile when we stopped. Bright thought it useless to go further. Palmer proposed to me to go back and fight. I shuddered a little then concluded to go. We bid the boys; Sim Warner, Sam Wilson (*Private Samuel Wilson, 30, Co. E.*) & D.A. Bright good by and started.

In crossing a hill we found a couple crackers which we saved. We were passing along at a fast walk over the hills when across the ravine we heard somebody shouting. We looked and saw

some men beckoning us to come over. We eased over to them and found that we were going directly toward the enemy

The men were a line of skirmishers ___ thrown out. They were in a camp of 5 O.V.C. (*The 5th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry camp was located roughly ½ mile North Northwest of where the 71st OVI first formed to meet the enemy and about 200 yards east of the Hamburg-Savannah Road.*) We went into several tents. I got a haversack and some crackers. We here met our Colonel R. Mason. He said he thought Col. Kyle was dead by that time he having been wounded in the body. He was taken to the boat in an ambulance and Mason said that he was about his last when he left. At a ___ we got some dried peaches with which we filled our pockets.

Colonel advised us to go with him back to the river. We did not however go with him but got out to the edge of the woods where near a broad field on the other side of which was a line of Cavalry but they were partly hid and so far we could not tell what they were. There was a battery here so we staid with it till the Cavalry commenced to fill across the field toward us then we started down through the woods but the Cavalry soon came to the battery which surrendered and they called to us. It was to late to retreat so we surrendered.

The rebel officers ordered us to discharge our pieces. We then got on a Caisson of the battery the 2nd Michigan and were sent off under guard of some Cavalry. The rebels who guarded us were quiet civil fellows quite talkative. We went about 4 miles out down the road to their hospital. We saw a great many of the dead who lay strewn over the fields and woods. The field near our Camp where we used to drill was the scene of the bloodiest part of the battle. The trees around were all cut to pieces by Cannon grape & canister. A great many dead bodies lay strewn around.

We lay all night where we stopped. We had no blankets and it rained very hard. We had to stand and take it all. We suffered for water to. Some was brought in at last and I got a little in the morning. I felt varry bad till I got out and washed in a stream near by. This refreshed me much.

After lay awhile we marched around behind the house in rear of the greater body of prisoners. We all started again on the march for Corinth. This was a long and wearisome march. We

stopped frequently to rest but I was not right well and it fatigued me much. We drank a great deal of water. I filled the canteen 4 or 5 times. We found Corinth a pretty little place. People very quiet. Some fortifications about and out of town we got on a train and thought we would be sent down south. We did not move that night. It rained hard all night. Were so crowded in cars could not sleep. Near Memphis vegetation advanced potatoes a foot high peas foot & half.

Tuesday Apr 8th 1862

This Morn about 8 or 8 ½ O'clock started for Memphis. Very tiresome ride through poor country - but it improved some as we neared Memphis. When about 8 miles from Memphis Palmer & I got on top of the train. This was pleasant the sun shining and a good many green fields near Memphis are lots of the prettiest dwellings splendidly built and romantically surrounded by trees. We rode into town on the top of the cars. Here we got down and formed in line. 8 trains were here. We were all formed around on the depo grounds under guard. Lots of people came to see us. About dark we were marched down to wharf to several large buildings for quarters. I got up to the 3rd story rooms over 100 feet long and 30 wide. These were good quarters. We did not get anything to eat till late. Got a tarpaulin sleep on. Rain all night very hard

Wednesday Apr 9th

Report that we would leave today for some point farther south. Boys cut up the tarpaulins for blankets. When I thought they were about to start I cut up ours and got each of us a blanket. We did not however go. The owners of the tarpaulins came up and made a great fuss about them. Got a rebel paper.

Thursday Apr 10

No change in the program do not feel well. Pain in top of head, mouth gets so clammy with mucus in night and throat full of phlegm. 2 gunboats started up river. Very rainy in night.

(At this point, George returns to his present – Friday, April 11, 1862)

Friday 11th

Rain all day verry hard. Ate my little breakfast. Drew rations for 3 of us. Silas Harrington still with us. Rain all night.

Saturday 12

Cleared up in morning and sun shines brightly. Some of the prisoners sent away by squads. No passage down stairs and the filth in the end of the room accumulating and verry offensive. 2 gunboats arrived this morning one was called a ram a long open narrow stern 3 large guns on its stern. One man cleaned out the filth & stopped the further deposit. The men who started in the morn did not get away on account of a bridge being washed away by the high waters. Drew crackers today. Rebels anxious to exchange scrip for Treasury notes. Guards mostly dutch I think many of them jews. Lots of bread sold to the prisoners

Sunday 13th

Very fine morning slightly cool. Got word we would leave for Jackson and from there to Mobile. Palmer got paper this morning. Men leaving, 40 in a squad at a time. We got on cars between 1 & 2 o'clock P.M. on Tennessee & Jackson R.R. Started about 2 o'clock. Country better down this road then on Memphis & Charleston. Found Hernando a very pretty town. Ran all night moonlight. Slept. Some got a tarpaulin before leaving Memphis.

Monday 14th

Running get stopped and got ration crackers & park at Canton a verry fine place. Reached Jackson about noon. Stopped in the suburbs. Verry warm. Cakes for sale verry high. Did not leave till dusk. Did not run verry much in night. Got a piece cornbread.

Tuesday 15th

Was awakened by Silas this morn. Got up and washed in a little stream. Cars had been standing a good while. Felt a little better. Got to Meridian about noon drew rations here. From here started down to mobile. Pine woods all the way. Got to mobile in night. About 2 or 3 o'clock got off cars and were marched to large open building where we staid. Slept a long time did not sleep on the cars so crowded.

Wednesday 16th

Fine morning ate nothing felt worse than before. Not so much head ache. Doctor in today he prescribed & said he would send me medicine. Sunny all day cool breeze continually. Drew crackers & meat the meat verry coarse & solid. Slept well felt better in eve. Did not get the medicine.

Thursday 17th

Drew rations in morn crackers meat & molasses. Got 3 crackers to a man instead of 2 as before. Rations of meat verry small. Issuing rations all day. We got kettles & pans. Got fresh beef. Harrington got us a kettle and went to cooking. Yesterday some rebel officers took each of our names and Co & Regt it was said with a view to exchange. Harrington made soup of meat broth & crackers. I ate a lot of it twas verry good. Joined with spare 3 men this making 6 in our mess. We got a kettle & pan.

Friday 18

Toothache all night. 100 plates 100 knives & forks were brought in also a lot of ovens. Got an oven plate knife & fork for our squad. Palmer was out today got tin cup & spoon paid 10 cts for spoon and 15 for cup. Had soup for dinner and enough left for supper. Today first operation since Sunday.

Saturday 19th

Drew corn meal & flour. Harrington baked cornbread which we ate about 9 o'clock. Had soup for breakfast. 2 days rations brought in. We were informed that we were to leave for cahaba on the Alabama river this eve. In eve got on boat and immediately started. Twas dark and we could not see out. Slept better this night than any since the battle

Sunday Apr 20th

Ate breakfast of cornbread & beef. River narrow but verry high. Country nearly all low. Name of boat St Charles. Rainy in PM. Harringtons canteen was taken in night.

Monday 21st

Arrived at Cahaba about 3 o'clock A.M. Went ashore by day light. Quartered in a verry large warehouse part of the roof not on. We got inside in P.M. Citizens brought cornbread and other things for us. Palmer had very sore neck. The ballance of the prisoners arrived during the night.

Tuesday 22nd

The prisoners brought the pots pans & ovens with them. Drew meal and had mush for dinner. In eve Palmer got some milk. Got a physical today.

Wednesday 23rd

Had soup and cornbread for breakfast mush for supper. Vomited mine up.

Wednesday 23rd

Negroes digging trench & laying trough for carrying water in to us.

Thursday 24th

Cornbread for breakfast Harrington had butter and gave me some. Felt better this morning. Verry smokey. A great many reports some say the federals took cornith & 30,000 prisoners others that peace will soon be others that the rebels can not keep us long and that we will be paroled out. These reports come from the guards. Palmer verry unwell.

Friday 25th

Palmer and Harrington went to the hospital. Rain in eve & night. Mush for supper.

Saturday 26th

Cool chilly day. Got paper of 1861 Christian Advocate .

Sunday 27th

Fine day felt well today. Had biscuit for breakfast & dinner mush for supper. Boat Senator went up.

Monday 28th

Cold mush for breakfast. Boat went up this morning.

27 - 30

Felt well helped to cook.

May 1st

Drew extra rations instructions to cook them as we will leave soon. Baked all forenoon. George sick. Dan Walmer unwell. Good news leaking into us all the time. N. Orleans taken (*New Orleans surrendered to Union forces on April 25, 1862.*) Rebels routed & corinth bear creek bridge burned 3 mile E Corinth. Harner bet us we would be in our lines one week from today. Women and children going up on every boat. 2 cannon went down today. Did not leave this eve.

Friday 2: Got aboard boat Reindeer for Montgomery Al. Got there about sunset. Some of the guards very insolent. Scenery mountainous. Did not get ashore till after freight was unloaded. Were then marched to fair ground. Got separated from Palmer on boat but found me when we got to fair ground. Slept well. Pain in bowels. Palmer slept a little and felt better in morning.

Sat 3rd : Got on train about hour after sunrise. Got in a 2nd class passenger car. Got seat near door. Verry pleasant. No guards in our car. Guards all in 2 cars. Had pleasant seat. Saw plenty black berries along the road. Small peaches loading the trees Pine forest plenty. More land cultivated on any rout we had traveled. Better country. Corn growing fin. Few swamps. Found Auburn a verry fine town. 3 Regiments encamped here. From here we took road to Columbus. Arrived about sunset. It is finly situated and it is a nice place. Changed cars here. I slept under seat awhile then gave Palmer my place. He slept some. He had not slept since he went to the hospital. In night we run to T. A. Valley.

Sun 4: At sunrise started to Macon. Arrived at 8 o'clock. Were marched to grounds east of town. Verry nice grounds. Pine and Oak grove. They brought us a load of light bread this was verry good. In eve brought us our provisions of flour meal Bacon rice soap & candles. Prospect for good treatment. Got wood in evening. Slept under tree. Twas cool. Had fried meat.

5: Light bread for breakfast the best meal we had for long time. Rain drove us in house in P.M. Formed in Cos of hundreds and rules read to us viz 2 roll calls a day, at 8 AM & 6 PM; inspection in AM = no communications allowed with citizens or guards either written or verbal; nothing to brought in for sale except by written permit from & inspected by Major.

Tuesday 6th: Up early verry fine day. = Arrangements made to exchange flour for bread. Got a small quantity meal made mush in eve to fry in morn. Verry severe pain in back & left shoulder not well at all. Arranged so as to cook in two squads: names Homer Nettles & Graft Mung & secrets F. rendman(?) & ?iers our squad spare Messecher Walmer Palmer and I. Confusion created by the sergeant major changing our position. Some coms drilled by the Major.

The Tuesday, May 6th 1862 entry is the last in George Grubb's journal. The Macon prison camp they were in was known as Camp Oglethorpe and had been hastily built to accommodate the Shiloh prisoners. The camp was on roughly 15 acres between the railroad tracks and the Ocmulgee River.

Government records show that Private George W. Grubb died in Macon, Georgia on May 14, 1862. Private Grubb is buried in the Andersonville, Georgia National Cemetery. In all likelihood, his friend Urias Palmer returned the journal to George's family in Ohio when he was paroled.