WAR PRISONER DIARY OF MAJOR HARRY WHITE

1863 - 1864

Libby Prison
Richmond, Va.

Dec. 15/63

Autobiography is not well written by every man. To give it interest the same style should be observed that is suitable for all biography. Few men possess the faculty to write thus of themselves, hence the rarity of successful autobiography. Too much egotism and too much modesty in writing of themselves are equally objectionable. Faults of style, however, should not prevent the presentation of facts in a man's life likely to be valuable either to the public or to his friends. This last reflection determines my mind to narrate briefly within these pages the campaign in which I was captured in connection with some incidents of interest previous and since my captivity of which I am cognizant. While I may thus entertain myself with an occasional hour of profitable reminiscence I may also preserve the recollection of some facts valuable, at least to my friends and family. That so many months have passed around without any effort from me to keep a daily record of events in this hated prison can only be apologized for by the statement that this confinement has made me so continually impotent that I have failed to find mental vision sufficient for the purpose. For a man of purpose and ambition in life to make this confession is humiliating. While I rigidly hold to the truth that it is every man's duty to make himself useful and contented when in circumstances
of misfortune beyond his power to control, yet I have recognized this more in theory than in practice. My patience and efforts at self improvement in Libby do not give me the most gratifying recollections of my experiences there. I will solace myself now, however, by letting "the dead past bury its dead and act, act in the living present."

Complimented by the good people of the Counties of Indiana and Armstrong in the State of Pennsylvania who elected me as their Senator in the State Legislature at the fall election of 1862, while I was absent in the military service of the Country, I left my regiment, 67th Regt. P.V., about the middle of December of that year and took my seat in the Senate at its organization in Jany. 1863. I left the regiment at Annapolis, Md. but it was ordered to the defenses of the Upper Potomac in Feb'y. 1863, and after much hard service and much marching it was finally ordered to Berryville, Clark County, Va., and with the force already there, organized into a Brigade under command of Col. McReynolds of 1st Regt. N. Y. Cav. Spending the winter at Harrisburg in the active discharge of my legislative duties after the adjournment of the Legislature, in April I rejoined my regiment at Berryville abt the 15th of May. I found we were in the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, commanded by Maj. Genl. R. H. Milroy, and in the 8th Army Corps commanded by Maj. Genl. Schenck.

Soon after my resumption of military duties, I was detailed as President of Court Martial then about to assemble at Berryville. From what I could gather from the Press, and other sources; I was convinced Genl. Lee contemplated the movement of his Army, then about
Fredericksburg, down the Shenandoah Valley and my mind was prepared for an active summer campaign. Subsequent events confirmed the accuracy of my judgment. While in my quarters in camp the evening of June 12 I received an order from Brig. H'd. Qurs directing me to take command of the Advance Guard of the Brigade on the evacuation of Berrysville, upon our march to reinforce Genl. Milroy at Winchester. The Advance Guard was to consist of two Squadrons of Cavalry from Companies of Inft. 67th Rem. and two guns of Alexander's Balt Battery. On Saturday morning, June 13, I took command as above designated. The order to move was given me about 10 o'clock a.m. The distance to Winchester by direct route was but 10 miles. The enemy, however, had cut off our retreat by this route and the selection of another became necessary. I was ordered to move out the Harper's Ferry road two miles and then take the road turning to the left until we reached Summit Point. This point after an industrious march of 2 3/4 hours we reached and halted for the approach of our main column. The weather being sultry and oppressive we detained here an hour, and upwards, in the meantime sending our baggage train to Martinsburg by way of Bunker Hill. We then moved in a westernly direction intending to strike the Martinsburg Pike some three miles from Winchester. Protecting well the Advance from a surprise attack, I moved on. Firing in the rear soon indicated the pursuit of the enemy. I moved on across the Opecquon Creek. Having crossed the stream and reached a hill of commanding position, I halted to wait the approach of the main column. But a few moments elapsed until the head of the main column came in view and the sound
of the enemy's guns in the rear gave indications of an approaching conflict of Arms. With much expedition our forces were thrown into position along the summit of the hill referred to above. With two companies, I moved to the hill on the right of our position and immediately threw them out as skirmishes in anticipation of a movement of the enemy in that direction to flank our main force. The cordial greeting our artillery gave the enemy made a persistence in their attack no longer desirable. After receiving considerable injury in the way of killed and wounded, the enemy retired and we again took up our line of march to Winchester. I again commanded the advance, marching with due caution, throwing out a company of flankers on either side of the road to protect against all probability of surprise. Before reaching the point of destination, night overtook us, and a heavy storm. We learned, however, in due season, that the enemy were in force around Winchester and we bivouacked in the mud in anticipation of bloody work in the morn. A few hours before daylight our Brigade moved into that part of the fortifications known as the "Star Fort". In moving to this position through the dark and rain, I met with an accident with the falling of my horse into a ditch which left me for some seconds insensible, and with my left leg and side painfully bruised.

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"C.S." Prison N. C. Dec. 28/63

Many months a prisoner of war, I thought I had drained to the dregs the cup of bitterness. The little gleam of light we occasion-
ally had in "Libby" on the Exchange question kept up hope for liberty & this hope bid avaunt the drooping spirit. For months my brother prisoners & myself lived on this hope. We hoped, often it seemed, only to be disappointed. Christmas came with its happy recollections & as if specially intended to make the inmates of "Libby" more jubilant, news of exchange came also. No man's spirit was more elated than mine at the early prospect of home and friends. The day was passing & hope & joy increased. "How vain are earthly hopes" - not more so, however, than the hopes of a Libbyite. My joy at happiness was soon turned to

When I was summoned by the grim looking sergeant "to get my things & go down." Special exchange & Home came quickly before me.

Jany. 12/64 The recurrence of another anniversary of my birth suggests many, many thoughts. The character of my situation gives them a tinge of sadness and solemnity. A retrospect of the past year and a prospect of the coming one may not be without entertain-ment and advantage to me - recalling in imagination my situation a year ago and a contemplation of my situation tonight. The contrast is palpable and striking. When but recently assured a position of honor and trust, I had started upon a career of public life with hope and promise of, at least, usefulness and respectability. Then I had respect, privileges, liberty and hope for the future. Today I have confinement, weary, irksome feelings and little hope for myself for the future. Of the early part of the past year I have little to regret - of the latter part, I have much to regret. Much history has been made to my Country during the past year and much to
my life. I recall the events of my first life with some pride, not so much for the importance of measures I suggested or aided to enact but on acct. of the capacity I satisfied myself of to resist the temptations to corruption so often besetting the public man at the opening of his career. I confess in all frankness to myself, the duties and engagements of forensic life are more congenial to my tastes and inclinations than the profession of arms and, if ever, in the good Providence of God, I again taste the sweets of liberty, while I shall shrink from no responsibility, I shall move in that sphere of life where I can render much service to my fellow man. I linger in memory with much pleasure over the brief months I spent in Libby. Friendships there formed have left their impress upon my heart but the great lessons I was taught in the school of human nature were indispensable to my education. For the future, my experience there would be of lasting service. To recur to the many incidents of interest and instruction occurring to me in my career at Harrisburg would probably transcend the design of this brief note. Yet their effect upon my future shall not be without good result. While drear and lone in this odious prison life, I congratulate myself, my entree into public life gave me assurances of capacity for usefulness gratifying to me indeed. My experience in the field the past year was brief and unsatisfactory. While I am not insensible to my military deficiencies I satisfy myself my attention to duty was constant and honest. Without indulging in any self laudations, I fail to discover where I came short of my duty in the unfortunate action that threw me into the hands of the
enemy. Were I to indulge criticism, I might readily reason myself
to believe my capture was to be laid to someone superior in command
to myself. I will, however, now and here forbear on the subject.
My captivity and imprisonment have taken up more than the half of
this year. To say my confinement has been harassing and irksome in
the extreme is but to echo my daily confessions and complaints to
myself. The many incidents and items of interest to others as well
as myself during my imprisonment I shall recount under other cir-
cumstances. This confinement tedious  , and oppressive as
it has been to me has not been without its good results. I think
I am a better man in all respects than ever I was before - I have
taught myself that patience and fortitude so necessary for the man -
the soldier - to possess. While hitherto, ambition has been my God,
I have been unaccustomed to disappointments of my cherished desires
- the experience of prison life has made this different. In the
virtue of moral courage I have become strengthened and now I mistrust
the disappointment of my cherished designs without a sigh. It seems
to me I have been specially selected for vindictive purposes. I
have endeavored to prepare myself accordingly. I have long since
bid goodbye to golden prospects for my earthly future. I have looked
aloft to Heaven where only true consolation can be found. How long
my imprisonment may last I cannot tell but I indulge myself in no
hope and consequently expect to suffer no disappointment. An other
birthday, I am satisfied, will not find me situated as I am. The
future alone can reveal its own acts.
Jany. 13  From the bright sunlight which greeted my eyes as I rose from my humble couch, the day soon changed to a cloudy and misty atmosphere. I confess the latter was more in harmony with my feelings. The gloomy, despondent feelings of yesterday left their impress upon my dreams last night and, as I awoke this morning, I felt as if some horrid nightmare had vexed my slumbers. As the day advanced my heart grew lighter, and tonight I feel strengthened for any fate awaiting me. No unusual incident has characterized the day. I have kept my mind engaged on light literature and in this way dispelled some gloomy forebodings of yesterday. I find intellectual entertainment difficult - my mind so chafes at my pent-up condition, and looks forward increasingly to the future. Ah, Liberty, blessed Liberty, when will I again breathe ahy sweet atmosphere. God speed the day, and give me contentment and patience in the meantime. A retrospect of the day gives me little to regret and less to rejoice at. With the help of my God, my prison life shall not pass without making some impression on the current of my mind and intellectual nature.

Jany. 14  Through all the clouds and mists of this somber day I have felt more cheerful than for several days gone by. I have driven away for the time gloomy anticipations, and entertain myself with hopeful pictures of the future, and greedily devour what reading material I have at hand. I finished today Lady Lee's Widowhood, a novel not without merit, published several years ago in Blackwood. Without possessing any special elegance of style, there is a gay,
flowing flippancy abt. it which gives it peculiar fascination. While the tale is well conceived, it attempts to illustrate no moral virtue of life but may be regarded as a creditable contribution to that literature which seeks to relieve the oppressive — of an hour. For this latter reason, it is an acceptable gift to the prisoner in his dull and monotonous life. Tonight I read King John. In John are to be found some of Shakespeare's happy and most eloquent expressions. From this play are taken some of the most popular quotations. While the plot and arrangement of this play are not the most entertaining and exciting, yet the eloquence of expression so frequent, and the variety of character so well sustained, make it one of the performances which evidences the genius of the great author. No striking incident has marked the day.

Mar. 13/64 Sunday Circumstances which it is not necessary here to relate have prevented me from keeping up a regular journal. Years hence, should I then be breathing the air of a free man, I shall not fail to remember the reason why I have spent so long a period of my life without any record. A week ago today my solitary confinement was changed to association with five other officers of U. S. A., viz Major W. R. Starling, 7th G.O., Captains E. F. Chase, 1st R. I. Cav. — Litchfield, 4th Maine Infantry, C. S. Kendall 1st Mary. Infantry, B. C. G. Read, 3rd O. V. R. C. — 10th Mary, Lt. W. C. Hollaman, 9th Vt. Infantry. All of these gentlemen,
except the last one, have been sent here as hostages. In many respects I prefer the change yet had I my own option in the matter I would again be in my old quarters. While the peculiarities of my transferment require Society yet the condition of a prisoner is such that where he has some privileges it is much preferable to be alone. I confess, however, my spirits during the past week have been more cheerful than for some time, attributable possibly to contact with those whose views more correspond with mine than those with whom I have recently been associated. I have spent much idle time during the past week.

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Ap. 2/64 Since my last record herein time has passed with the usual monotony — eating, sleeping. And the customary expressions of anxiety for home have made the regular daily for this miserable existence. On the night of Mar. 25 two of my fellow prisoners here, Capts. Read and Litchfield very adroitly made their escape from this detested thralldom. The prison authorities here displayed much vigilance in their pursuit, but as yet no tidings. The indications are they have made good their way to the Promised Land. Heaven attend them on their journey. Mortality among the prisoners seems on the increase. Almost daily some unfortunate pays the last debt of Nature and is borne, without funeral honors, to his narrow home. The pen and tongue have grown eloquent in depicting the horrors and the suffering of the battlefield. The anguish of prison life is yet to be described. Somebody says, "One half of the world does not know how the other half lives". Certain I am that
the outside world cannot know how we in prisons eke out our daily existence. In my boyhood dreams of such a future as I am now passing never rose before me. Better, possibly, it did not. It is quite probable I have not yet seen my worst day in prison life and, if so, I ask not to penetrate the future. Our diet just now is not of the most inviting quality - bread and bacon are issued every morning to us. Out of the quantity thus issued, we manage to make a breakfast. For dinner, we trust to the day to provide. More than two meals we cannot have. Surprising it is how little we can sustain life with. Some nights (sic) one of the Yankee deserters, quartered in filth below our room, attempted to get out of the room when the guard, without a challenge, shot him. It occurred to me the proceeding was rather cruel. A challenge would have prevented the death of the man as well as accomplished the desired result.

Today Lt. Col. Kent, who recently assumed command of the Post, died. I rather regret his death as I imagine we could have had a comparatively agreeable time with him as Commandant. His disposition appeared to be to minister to the wants of the prisoners. The exchange question remains without any new development, and I have little hope of relief through that source.

April 13/64 Since my last record herein no events of remarkable interest have occurred. The weather has been of a very changeable character. Wet, cold and gloomy - the very opposite to that we should look for in the Sunny South. Winter lingers in the lap of Spring. The indications for the opening of the Spring campaign
promises action operations. Both parties to this conflict seem to be making gigantic preparations for testing strength during the coming summer. To the prisoners there is little to cheer and support. Exchanges has recently grown dull. The prisoners here last evening were much surprised at the reappearance of Capts. Litchfield and Read who escaped Mar. 25. They were recaptured in Caldwell County near the Blue Ridge after making long and tedious marches. After having "many hair breadth escapes and imminent perils", they fell victims to the "Home Guard" on the 6th of April, having been on their way twelve days. A little more care and caution would have taken them to the Land of the Stars and Stripes.

Today the weather has been full of balm and sunshine, and more in consonance with my idea of Spring in this latitude. We had several visitors today. Our rations seemed to have excited the attention of the Commissariat department of this locality and the Commissary of this Post called to investigate the matter and promises an improvement in the quantity of our daily ration. We will see. We also had a visit from Col. Palmer of Asheville, N. C. and from Mr. Brown of Buncombe Co., who was formerly from Pennsylvania. With the latter I had interesting conversation about many mutual friends in my much loved State.

April 23 1864 Since my last record as above few incidents of interest in this gloomy, wearying prison endurance. The most notable incident to our little coterie of officer-prisoners has been the withdrawal of one of our number, Capt. F. E. Chase, of 1st Rhode Island Cav. to Richmond, for exchange, as we are informed. He left us Thursday April 14th. Good fortune has blessed him.
The question so often and so naturally arises, When will my turn come? Had I not long since adopted the philosophy of resignation and a trust in the protecting care of a good God, the unhappiness of despair would have made me miserable. To record here the anxious longings for home, friends, and liberty that come to me every hour of my weary existence, would be to preserve for the future unpleasant memories. It seems to me rather would I draw oblivion's dark train over them, and know them no more, for ever. Yesterday I read letters written many weeks ago by my wife and father. While I was cheered to hear of the good health of my loving friends, yet intelligence of those whose love I cannot doubt seems to increase the painful and irksome anxiety of my situation. These remembrances, however, tell me, though the world with its manifold selfishness may forget the suffering and afflicted, yet the home circle will be constant in its devotion. I bless God for the family organization. It is that of Earth which gives man a taste of Heaven. While I frankly myself confess, that to me, with my love of the world and its excitement, the sweet and quiet pleasures of a domestic hearth were not indispensable to happiness, yet I cannot but observe the change this harsh and unsympathetic prison life has made in my emotional nature. I wish now for something more than the accomplishment of worldly desires. Affection, sympathy, love seem to be necessary to fill the measure of happiness. Now, turning myself into myself, I have felt to the fullest that I am a husband and father. O, my God, can it be that that holy, absorbing affection I feel for my child can never be indulged in education and expanding her infant faculties. I will not dwell on the thought, but teach myself to
"bear and not repine." On the exchange question, I see but little to build up my hopes. Time hangs heavily. Our prison entertainments are not numerous or varied. Through the kindness of some friends I have made here, I have some books that are standard, and if I had the disposition to study and read, time might pass profitably. My philosophy to bear up and make the most of circumstances so often fails me that my greatest happiness seems to be to commune with my own gloomy thoughts. I have, however, made an attack on German, and should my prison life continue, I think I can make good progress. We will see.

April 28/64 The gloomy feelings of this day have been to me oppressive, almost beyond endurance. Recent circumstances have made the situation of a prisoner painfully anxious. I would be glad if my worst anticipations were not to be realized. I pray God for protection and strength to bear up under this trying situation. It is hard indeed to be cut off in the midst of life and hope. Earth, however, had no holier cause for me. Home, family, liberty, friends, are all dear but Country next to Religion, rises above all. I will not, however, anticipate ill until it come. Spring now opens brightly. Our prison yard, within the past few days, has grown green with leaves, and the whole face of nature begins to wear a cheering aspect. Would to God I felt as cheerful in spirit as Nature seems in appearance. No event in prison life out of the ordinary has occurred within the past few days. The event I allude to above has been all engrossing with us.
April 29/64  Today so beautiful, so bright in sunlight, so balmy in atmosphere is in painful contrast with my sad, gloomy feelings. Life just now has but little charm for me. Not having the consciousness of guilt of any criminal offense, possessing a home of cheer & comfort, kind & loving parents, a devoted, fond wife and an infant daughter of growing and increasing charms. Myself in the possession of youth, energy & ambition and a career at home & among friends of usefulness just opening before me. By the sad incidents of war cut off from all these things, immured for long months with the gloomy associations of prison life & recent events casting dense clouds of gloom over my immediate future, I am well nigh crushed in despondency. No dear, sympathetic friend near me, I feel an aching void the love of God and the sweet influences of Christianity alone can fill - Oh, what earnest, heartfelt prayers I have offered up to my God since I have endured this bondage - prayers I trust & think not prompted by sickly timidity or cowardly anxiety but coming from the earnestness of my heart, and indispensable to my "peace of mind". I find a consolation in communing with the sweet Spirit of Christ, the coldness of a material philosophy cannot give. Should the kind mercy of God have liberty once again in store for me, I know I will be better able to do my duty unto all men. What a priceless privilege it would be to me to see once more my family that they might know my solemn experiences in these matters. Heaven's will be done - Every hour of my life now is full of sadness & concern. To dwell upon the solemn realities of my eternal future is now my most agreeable occupation. This day I have spent in walking & meditation. To sit down now quietly & read seems to me impossible.
May 1 - 1864  "May day" dawned with a misty, murky atmosphere. The bright sunshine of happier years was not to be seen. The gloomy appearance of the day was in sympathy with the history of the times. The day awakens many pleasing memories of years gone bye. In the happy summer hours of my boyhood, May day was full of joy and gladness. The solemn circumstances of my present seem to forbid an indulgence in these memories - The present & the future engross all the little mental energy left me. I have spent the day in walking around in the prison quarters & in meditation. I am glad to say this isolated, dreary situation has not prevented me paying those devotions to the Great Author of all good gifts which are due Him, & which the creature should be ever ready to give. - Daily I grow more weary of life & gain my only comfort in hoping for & seeking closer relations with Heaven. Faith in the religion of the bible constantly increases. Whatever fate awaits me I feel consoled to believe the experiences of the present will make me strong for all good works. No event of special interest has taken place today.

May 3/64  No event of special interest occurred today save a temporary change of that heavy, gloomy feeling which has haunted me for days, to a more cheerful & hopeful one. I trust & believe I have been successful to man myself with the from resolve to bear up & not repine. With my change of feeling, the atmosphere has also changed. Instead of the close, sultry air & oppressive sun of a
few days since, we have the cooling wind which makes a fire com-
table during the day and an increase of blankets necessary to com-
fort during the night. This change in the Sunny South surprises me.
We had a call yesterday from my friend Mr. Jones, a lawyer & State
Reporter for N. C. He is socially a pleasant & agreeable gentleman.
Today the ordinary monotony of our Penitentiary life was intruded
upon. About 2 o'clock P. M. a general call was given to prisoners
to evacuate quarters & fall in line in the prison yard. From the
powerful array of guards and sworded officials the impression gained
ground we were to be transferred to some other prison locality. A
more rigorous system of punishment was to be administered to us all.
Our curiosity was not long unsatisfied. - The diving of hands into
the pockets of prisoners soon told us an exploring expedition was
organized & money was to be placed in safer hands than those of its
legal owners. How much was obtained I cannot say but certain I am
that I am not poorer by the operation. Many, to me, amusing incidents
occurred during the ceremony which & prudence forbid me
here to relate. I cannot omit to now recall to imagination the
picture of the search into the pockets of one of the prisoners,
called by many of us here *Capper* Hauser, by others Poor Jack.
This poor fellow has become monomaniacal on the subject of eating,
either from long starvation in prison life or from other causes. It
is notorious to all prisoners & prison officials here that this
helpless creature will feast upon refuse of any table, that he
would trade his shirt off of his back for a ration of bread - and
had he money bread would soon exhaust it - Yet the pockets of this
almost idiotic creature were searched for money. The picture of
his resignation to the ceremony & his own diligent search of his pockets (HERE SCRATCHED OUT THE WORDS, "AFTER THE HANDS OF THE OFFICIALS WERE") in hope that bread had been left therein by those who (HERE SCRATCHED OUT THE WORDS, "WANTED TO DEPRIVE HIM OF") had another purpose was amusing in the extreme. I shall recall the image hereafter. I have had some agreeable thoughts today. Daily I think I grow more calm. A portion of the morning I spent reading St. Matthew. Tonight I have revived my legal love by a chapter from Kent.

May 4/64 This has been a day of bright sun & cool atmosphere. No event of interest has transpired today. I have had access to some papers which indicate active operations at the Seat of War, in expectation I feel no little anxiety at the probable result - I pray daily for victory to the Union Arms. I have spent most of the day at rubbers of Whist. I have walked much but have been unable to be much alone. Tonight I read an article of Jeffrey's on Dr. Franklin. It is a review of the publication of the Life and Writings of the Pennsylvania philosopher. It is kind in spirit & generous in sentiment. As to Jeffrey's style I shall not here speak as I always admired him as an essayist.

May 5/64 No incident of special interest today. The atmosphere here is more rapidly assuming a character more suitable to this locality than we have had hitherto this season. The heat of the day has been oppressive. Spent the day mostly in walking & meditation. Mr. Blackmer visited us today & had news of fighting in Virginia.
Friday May 6  Nothing special today. Felt more cheerful than
for some days past. Heat increases. I have been obliged to throw
off my coat for comfort. Had more news of fighting between Grant
& Lee - Heard many prison rumors - among others that Genl. Longstreet
was wounded. My anxiety for the result of this battle is intense.
God prosper the Stars & Stripes is my constant prayer. Spent the
day much as usual.

Saty. May 7  The last day of a week full of history, probably
(sic) to the world but, as yet, unknown by me - Weary as the days
are yet the week seems short. Rumors of continued fighting abound,
doubtless with much foundation in fact, but so confused are the
rumors that I can illy judge of results. To describe my anxiety
in this critical conflict is impossible. I know no limits to my
concern for the result. How galling to be shut up amid the gloomy
associations of a prison while History is so rapidly accumulative.
Today I got the first glimpses at official announcement that the
battle had commenced. While the first stirring is not the most
cheering yet I am hopeful of the result. The day has been very
hot. I have felt a little gloomy during the day. I find it dif-
ficult to read much these days.

Sunday May 8  The day dawned very hotly & the following hours
fulfilled the promise of the early dawn. It grew hotter & hotter
as the day progressed. I felt the heat more oppressively than any
day of the season as yet. Shut off as I am from Church privileges,
I spent my devotions in long meditations of the love & mercy of God
& the passion of the blessed Saviour of Men. From these meditations
I receive much comfort and gain strength & disposition for good works.
The day did not pass without some profit to me. War news multiplied on us as we read a supply of Richmond papers. These enlightened us some little of the doings of the outside world. They speak of the coming conflict unmistakably. It has, however, already begun but of results we are ignorant. Rumor says Rail Road connections with Richmond is interrupted by the Yankees. If true, active operations are on foot. A few days will develop results. I have had heavy spirits today.

Monday May 9 This was a lovely morning & the day has been pleasant throughout - my mind has been engrossed almost continually about war news. Saw Genl. Lee's dispatch of the fighting of the 6 If. He claims to have driven our forces back into entrenchments. His dispatch is calm & free from boast. The indications are not favorable for victory to Genl. Grant - the movement on the James River seems confirmed & appears to be of formidable proportions. I await developments with restless impatience. I have had but little meditation today, enjoying myself after items of news.

May 10 Tuesday This had been a delightful day, clear sunshine with a gentle & agreeable breeze. More charming Spring weather could not be imagined. Much of the day I spent wandering around prison quarters in search of intelligence about the great conflict in Virginia which is now in progress. Many rumors but little definite names I learned. The epitome of all is that Lee & Grant
have had several encounters with varying advantages. The move-
ment, however, immediately against Richmond seems to be formidable
& promises much trouble to that historic city. I indulge much hope
of good results. I have done no reading today but walked &
communed much with my own thoughts.

May 11/64 I rose early to gain the pure morning air & hear what
news on what in prison parlance is the main question. My curiosity
was soon gratified by a sight of the "Raleigh papers". The intelli-
gencc recd. was not of the most cheering nature. I do not yet
despair of our success in the pending conflict - although no decisive
result is announced yet indications are not the most favorable -
I have been restless & impatient all day - Daily I learn more and
more my want of calmness & patience under all circumstances - My
trials have certainly been sufficient to supply me amply with
these commodities - If prayer to Almighty God & constant effort
to attain these now to me invaluable qualities can give them to
me, I will not long lament my (WORD SCRATCHED OUT HERE) want
of them. The day has been mild and pleasant with occasional showers
- tonight, however, a continuous & drenching rain is falling. I
fear it may interfere with Army operations to our prejudice.

May 12/64 A most pleasant morning soon changed into a showy one. Felt much anxiety for news which was not gratified. Army
operations in Virginia seem to be active yet we can gain but little intelligence. I am hopeful of results. No items of special interest in prison life today. Had a call tonight from Col. Godwin 57 N. C., a returned prisoner from Johnson Island. He complains of harsh treatment there. Sorry to hear it. Walked much today in the prison yard.

(HERE, HAVING FILLED LAST PAGES OF DIARY, MAJOR WHITE RETURNS TO CENTRAL SECTION OF HIS BOOK, WHERE HE HAD LEFT MANY PAGES BLANK AFTER HIS INITIAL ENTRY, AND USES UP MOST OF THESE BLANK PAGES.)

May 13/64 Friday    A bright, pleasant morning. The forenoon was spent in an inspection of prisoners preparatory to turning them over to Capt. Alexander, the new Commandant. This was followed by an exhibition for the benefit of the prisoners. Two Yankee deserters who had violated their parole, were tied up by the thumbs and lashed upon their bare backs. One received fifty-one lashes, the other twenty-five. I shall not soon forget this performance. War news today scarce. I am still hopeful the Yankee officers confined in the Libby went south today through Salisbury. Richmond seems to be a dangerous home for them just now. Spent much time in exercise today and have felt more physical vigor than I have had for weeks past. My mind and spirits have been rather cheerful today.
Saturday May 14-64  So little occurs here to make life valuable that I almost lose count of time. Another week has elapsed and I scarce know the end of it is here. While this, in our great conflict, has been a week full of history yet to me, shut off here from the world, this history is unknown. God grant it is a bright history for my country. This has been a showery day, alternate rain and sunshine in quick succession. No news from the Seat of War. This kind of news in this locality is good news. I am very, very hopeful for suspicious results. My mind and spirits continue comfortable cheerful.

May 15/64  Sunday, with its many solemn yet pleasant associations has come again and gone. I awakened on my pallet with a bright sunlight after a rainy night. The first intelligence I heard was Capt. Van Buren of the 6th N. Y. Cav. was in the guard house. I knew him in Libby. Inquiries soon confirmed the statement. Upon calling down to see him I learned he was among the officers sent from Libby to Danville, thence to some point in Ga. At High Pt., some 35 miles from here, he with Capt. Johnson of same regmt. jumped from the cars and attempted to make good their escape. Unfortunately for Van Buren he was recaptured. Johnson yet at liberty. From Van Buren I learned some interesting details of my old companions in the Libby. A tedious and gloomy time of it they had the past winter there. Learned but little today of military operations. The conflict seems to go steadily on. Spent but little time alone today. The Presbyterian Minister of this place preached in the prison today a plain, practical sermon. This evening Van Buren was sent on to Ga. handcuffed.
Monday May 16  This day alternately clear and cloudy, the atmosphere mild and pleasant. This far I have little to complain of in the climate of this latitude. No special event of interest today. Still anxious to learn the result of present military movements, little news that we do get indicates favorably to our cause. God bless our army in this critical struggle. This evening Capt. Johnson, mentioned yesterday as having escaped with Van Buren, came into prison. He looks much worn down and brought us no news of military operations. Walked and communed much with my own thoughts today.

Tuesday May 15  Read (recd?) this evening startling rumors abt. Grant's defeat. They aroused me somewhat, latter in the evening, however, I got Raleigh papers. These relieved uneasiness and gave me strong hope for final triumph. Walked much today, my health not very good.

Wednesday May 16  Delightful day - growing warmer rapidly. No event of special interest occurred today. Received but little news further than yesterday of Army operations. Many sensation Herrings floating through the prison today. I am still hopeful of favorable results to Grant's campaign. Capt. Johnson was today sent out to Ga. We had a call from several gentlemen today among them Mr. Sharp a member of N. C. Senate called.

May 17 Tuesday  Nothing new today save divers rumors about war operations. Nothing reliable or discouraging. Showery and warm. Spirits rather cheerful.
May 18 Wednesday  Nothing to vary my usual record occurred today. Showery and warm. News from Virginia military operations rather confused. News from Georgia campaign very encouraging. Spent much of the day alone walking through prison quarters.

May 19 Thursday  Spent much of the day in reading "French on Words" and 1st Vol. Kent. More calm and happy today than usual. Every day brings conflicting news of Army operations. I am hopeful of good results and keep up best spirits possible. God prosper my Country is my constant prayer.

Friday May 20th  Still anxious about our Army - can hear but little news. A lot of Yankee officers went through today on the train, among them Genls. Seymore and Shaler. Lylerly prison clerk told us of their reception at the depot. They are officers captured since Grant crossed the Rapidan. They are on their way to Georgia. The day has been warm. Walked much through prison quarters today.

May 21 Saturday  This has been rather an idle day to me in prison. Heard but little news of Army operations save in the evening, heard Butler was driven back in a fight yesterday. I fear more truth in it than in most flying reports. This report had the effect of giving me a gloomy evening. My trust and hope is in a good God to bless and prosper our cause. Although it seems to me I will never get out of this detested prison life to enjoy the good results of our success in this historic struggle, yet I have hopes those who
are near and dear to me may. Oh, that I could once more see the
dear faces of my friends at home. I bow however, in patience. We
got to bed early in our contracted quarters.

May 22 Sunday    Spent much of the day in reading and walking in
self-communion. What cheerless Sundays to me in this confinement.
I thank God my privilege of communion with Heaven cannot be denied
me. The prison wall cannot shut out the cheering influences of
God's holy promises. Some clergyman of the Presbyterian church of
Salisbury preached in the prison yard today. Heard some Army news
indicating more success for Grant than we had before heard of. Went
to bed early and with hopeful spirits for our cause.

May 23 Monday    I was awakened from sound sleeping by David, who
cooks for us, and given the announcement that the Richmond papers
mentioned the capture of my brother. Pained and surprised at the
intelligence, I was left in doubt as to which brother it was.
Inspection of the paper left but little doubt of its being my brother
Richard. My doubt of its being he arose from the impression that
he was still at Hilton Head. Recent movements caused his transfer,
probably to Va. How sad this intelligence makes me feel. I cannot
express suitably my concern for my dear father and mother in the new
cause of anxiety for them. Prayer has constantly ascended today to
"Him who temp[er] the wind to the shorn lamb" that He will remember,
abundantly, in mercy an old homestead. This event but increases my
anxieties for release from captivity. I must suffer it, however.
Wednesday May 25    Rumors abundant of Prisoners of War leaving here for the far south. I incline to believe it true. We got letters today from North. I rec'd one from father. His intelligence abt brother Richard enabled me at once to understand it was he that was captured and when. The letter was of the 3rd inst. It was hopeful of my early release. He seemed cheerful. How much Richard's capture will change this spirit, I fear. We had more exhibitions of whipping prisoners today.

Friday May 27/64    Left Salisbury M. Prison in company with all officers there and prisoners of War. Started under strong guard for Macon, Ga. Eight officers of us guarded in a box car by eight men and Serg. Bolton of Alab'a. Co., Arrived at Charlotte, N. C. about midnight and laid over until morning. The night was delightful. We slept in the car and were closely guarded.

May 28    We are on a hill above Charlotte at junction of Cha. and Statesville R. Roads and Wils and Lincolnton R. Road. We are awaiting cars to take us to Columbia, S. C. The day is pleasant, the heat of the sun moderated by passing clouds. We had a comparatively fair day's rations issued to us about noon and given the assurance that we would leave for Columbia, S. C. by 4 p. m. this evening. This evening came and with it a train of cars for our transportation. We had but gotten into the cars when a severe rainstorm began which promised to continue through the night. A little before dark we started on our way when suddenly the whistle blew down brakes. This halted our train for us to learn that one
of the wheels of the engine was broken. We then backed in to Charlotte some ten miles in our rear. We officer prisoners quartered in a log shanty - the men bivouacked in the rain. The night was wet and dark.

Sunday May 29. Sun rose clear and gave promise of a pleasant day. After morning rations, or rather cooking the remains of yesterday's, we were informed the train for starting was approaching and we started for the point we got in the train yesterday evening. I found there other prisoners captured out of Butler's Command on South Side. Saw a quantity of brother Dick's Command. Learned he was wounded while faithfully discharging his duties and is now a prisoner. What sorrow I feel, but no time to give way. God bless him. Got aboard train about 12 o'clock. We remained in until about 5 o'clock when we started on our way. Traveled at a rapid rate until we passed through Chester, S. C. About 10 miles from there, an opportunity appeared and 5 officers escaped from the cars and ran. Monday morning, as I write, 3 of us are concealed in woods from pursuit. The other two left us. God help us to freedom once more. Ah, how earnestly I have prayed this morning for Heaven's blessing upon our journey.

May 30th Monday. Day dawned with bright sky. This morning I feel rather jaded but well enough under the circumstances. How anxious I grow for the fate of my experiment. God help me. We spent the day in a corner of a wheat field, in a thicket of grapes
and white thorn. Heard or saw no signs of pursuit during the day. Started on our journey again about 9 1/2 o'clock p.m. Felt apprehensive, upon starting, of bad fortune. My fears were groundless, however. We travelled all night without molestation. Our route was rough, over fields, across ditches and brambles. We followed the north star. We begin to feel the effects of want of usual quantity of food. We made, I presume, but 8 miles during the night. (Word here?)

May 31 Tuesday This morning found us in the mow of a barn somewhere in S. C., where I cannot say. We are now spending the day concealed under corn stalks. We suffer much from hunger and thirst. My morsel of provisions is rapidly giving out. (Here 6 lines are heavily penciled out.) Chesterville and 18 for Y-kville. We were on this road when we put up here this morning. Abt. 5 o'clock we were discovered by a white man belonging to the house. He soon collected a crowd of the men of the neighborhood. One of the women of the house seized a gun and threatened to shoot in case we attempted to escape. I was much amused at this. After receiving a snack at the house we were marched to Chesterville, 3 miles distant, halted in what I presume to be the center of the town where a crowd of citizens gathered around us and opened some conversation with us. About dark we were put in charge of the Sheriff and safely lodged in the County jail. During the night the Sheriff came up and spent some time in conversation. The room in which we are confined is
such as is used for criminals - iron bars around every side. I lay down on the floor and, without covering, went to sleep.

June 1 Wednesday Not withstanding my uncomfortable quarters last night I slept soundly and woke up this morning refreshed. When I reflect upon my situation and gloomy future immediately before me I fail to give adequate descriptions of my feelings. I must suffer on and bear up manfully. God help me. We had a cold breakfast but of better materials than I have ever yet before recd. in the Confederacy. The day is clear and bright. Our dinner was an improvement on our breakfast. About dusk, the turning of the key in the dungeon lock gave evidence we were going to shift quarters. We were taken out and escorted to the depot and prepared for a trip to Columbia. We got aboard the cars and arrived at C. at dawn of day and lodged in Richland jail, where we found some 30 other officers - Naval and Army.

Thursday June 2 Spent most of the day inspecting our new lodge-
ment and making acquaintances among officers confined here. Found Maj. Filler here of brother Richard's regiment, captured July 18/63 at Fort Wagner. The other officers were captured about same time and in subsequent operations on the coast of S. C. I find them a courteous and genteel collection of officers. This prison compares well with Salisbury and is a vast improvement on "Libby". The quarters are rather close but the officials appear accommodating. My spirits are more cheerful than I could expect under the circum-
stances. Got some news of Army operations in Va. and Ga. Indica-
tions favorable to our cause.
Friday June 3 The day dawned in a shower and found me suffering from the effects of a Cholera morbus. I was taken suddenly during the night and suffered considerably. Surgeon of the Post waited on me. I have felt weak and fatigued all day. The day has been alternately showery and sunshine. Rather dull in prison today - some news from military operations. I am still in good cheer of results.

Saturday June 4 Awakened feeling much stronger this morning. During the night slept very sweetly on my hard bed on the floor. I indulged my propensity to delay getting up hoping growing oblivious of the lapse of time in this hated prison life. Found the morning showery. Spent much of the day in self communion. Nothing of special interest transpired in prison today. A moment's reflection calls to mind this has been a week full of adventure to me. Succeeding in escaping from this hated custody to which I have been subject for months, undergoing a few days of hard travel and exposure, suffering the misfortune of recapture, and passing through a variety of imprisonment. Am again stationary for a period behind iron bars and fixed bayonets. God grant an end of this weary life may soon come. While this has been a week of history, to me it has been no help to my Country. From all intelligence I can receive this week has been one of active operations and telling results.
June 5 Sunday  A dull day, alternate showers and sunshine. Nothing has occurred to change the monotony of prison life - no preaching - no service of any kind - no news. This is no new complaint, however, I am fast becoming a stoic and my indifference to my privations begins to surprise me. I wrote to father today and to Capt. Ives abt. my things left in the cars.

June 6 Monday  Another week of imprisonment has begun. The sun is bright without but prospects dull and dark to me in prison. This day reminds me much of my experience for the early part of last week. Escaping from my hated imprisonment for awhile I indulged happy hopes of home and liberty - then hopes, like the sunshine of today, was short lived. Hope came to me only to be disappointed. The sun shone brightly this morning only to be obscured by the heavy storm cloud which broke in full fury abt. noon. The rain came in torrents for several hours. Showers this season seem very frequent. Nothing of interest in prison has happened today. I spent the day in much idleness. My spirits have been comparatively cheerful since I came here.

June 7 Tuesday  This day begins with no promise of a change of the monotony of those which have preceded it. We have had showers and sunshine today. The climate is not as warm and oppressive as I expected to find in this latitude. I notice, however, an increase of heat as the season advances. Spent much of the day in reading
Kenilworth (Scott). Heard of Grant changing his base. Get but little reliable news from Army operations.

June 8 Wednesday The dreary, dull routine of prison life goes on. We rise but to eat and sleep again. How wearying to the restless spirit of youth and energy this monotonous round is. No event of special interest has occurred today save the recp. of $500 Conf. money by the officers in prison. This has made the prison market quite active. Pies, cakes, berries, and other articles than the usual rations have been in constant demand. I am reminded much of pay day in camp — of Christmas at school. The weather grows warm but not oppressive.

June 9 Thursday Nothing of special interest today. My spirits continue cheerful. Why I remain in so much more cheerful spirits here than in Salisbury I cannot say. Intelligence of a successful campaign by our armies may probably be the cause. I thank God, however, that I am in such spirits whatever may be the cause.

June 10 Friday Dull day. Occasional showers. Army news of a raid on Petersburg by Cavalry from Butler's Army. From our standpoint the report is somewhat confused. I am satisfied some military success was accomplished. The day has been quiet and monotonous in prison. Some rain today but warm.

June 11 Saturday The morning was bright but the evening has been very showery. Thought much of home today — have had heavy
spirits. Played whist to amuse a wary hour. Nothing of special interest new today. I fear I grow daily more and more stupid in this irksome kind of existence.