

Private David Stephey

Company "A"

Private David Stephey was only 16 when he enlisted in Company A of the 7th Maryland in August 1862. Born in Leitersburg, Maryland. David was a farmer when he joined Company "A" in Hagerstown.

In September 1863 he became sick and was admitted to Columbian College General Hospital in Washington, DC. On October 20, 1863, he wrote a letter to his friend James to tell him "I am very weak yet it goes hard with me to walk any distance." He also mentions that a "Minnie Burrows come to see me every other day and brought me things to eat." It's not clear if Minnie was a nurse or mutual friend in Washington.

David recovered from his sickness and returned to the 7th Maryland in January 1864. Unfortunately, he was not to see his friend James or caregiver Minnie again. On June 18, 1864, David was killed during an unsuccessful assault on Confederate works (the Dimmock Line) at Petersburg. Private James Dorrance, a fellow member of Company A, related in a letter to his sister Emma that "David Stephey of our company was killed yesterday ... a wild shot hit him in the shoulder as we were marching to the front and killed him instantly."

After the war David's remains were moved to Poplar Grove National Cemetery outside Petersburg, where he rests with several other members of the 7th Maryland.

Below, letter written by Pvt. David Stephey to his friend James, dated Oct. 20, 1863.



Washington, Oct. 20, 1863
Columbian College Hospital

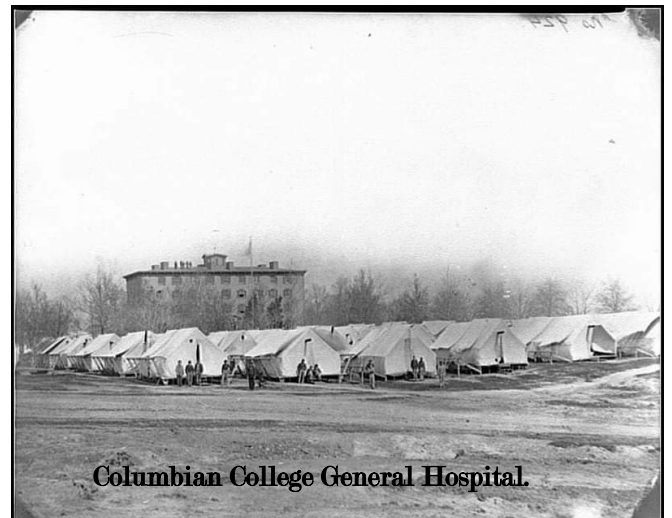
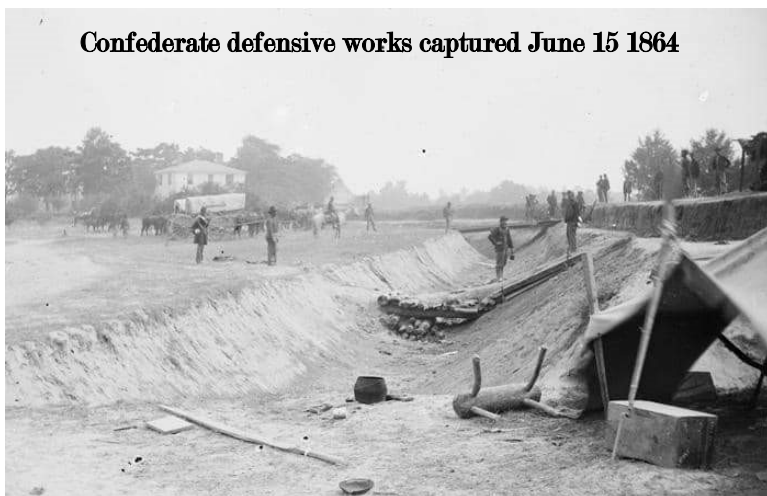
Friend James
I take this as a favorable opportunity
just coming to inform you that I am
well and hope that you will be
find you enjoying the same good
Blessing. I am very weak
yet it goes very hard with me to
walk any distance the best
I can get is a little peace from
the Hospital so you only give
me food and ride any place that
you want to go in Washington City
I should think ahead it going
to give the Rebs thunder before
long I think he had them where
he would have them. I hope you
been doing right well they had
been in a pretty tight place but
Minnie brought him way through

I think he is about a year
in England as we have got in
this service he has been doing
some ball fighting since he has
been in the United States Army
I don't know much more
to give you for this time but
I will tell you what when I first
got sick for two weeks in the
Hospital Minnie Burrows come
to see me every other day and
brought me things to eat. She
is a good woman as far
I know I go over to see her sometimes
now since I am able to get
around a little I guess you
know who I mean her name
is Minnie Burrows I guess
you know who it is now
don't you James I have not
heard or seen anything from
you for so long so it surprised
me that I thought about you so
I thought I would drop you a
few lines to see whether you can
answer this letter for me I am
anxious to hear from you just tell
Garnett, Lambert to write to me
you tell him to have the Direct it
to for I am anxious to hear
from you all your kind regards
Respects I believe this is all for
this time so no more

But remain your
Friend David Stephey

Direct your letter to Columbian
Hospital Washington D.C.
Don't forget and answer this soon

Confederate defensive works captured June 15 1864



Columbian College General Hospital.