

“Pen Lever”

The Civil War letters of Charles Edward Bliven of the Army Telegraph Corps

By Daniel A. Masters
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This article focuses on the Civil War era correspondence of military telegrapher Charles Edward Bliven (pen name “Pen Lever”) to the editor of the *Daily Toledo Blade* from late 1861 to the fall of 1862 as he followed the fortunes of the western Federal armies. While Bliven occasionally touches on his specific duties with the telegraph corps, the primary focus of his correspondence centers around his impressions of the communities in which he worked. Recruited into the nascent Army Telegraph Corps in late 1861 “by reason of his practical knowledge of telegraphy and high standing as an expert in that art,” Bliven initially worked as the chief operator in General Don Carlos Buell's headquarters in Louisville, then went south after the Battle of Shiloh and after some time in Nashville, headed west to work as the chief operator in Memphis. His travels took him into northern Alabama and western Tennessee, and he was in Jackson when that city was threatened by Armstrong's cavalry raid in late August 1862. The correspondence next finds Bliven engaged in Cincinnati where he describes the effect of the Confederate invasion of Kentucky upon the city.

These letters provide a fascinating insight into the Civil War as viewed from behind the lines. Bliven's stories focus on the impact of war on the local populace; how citizens responded to changing economic and war conditions, how loyalties shifted during the course of the conflict, even how citizens dealt with the carnage that the war left behind- cities filled with sick and wounded men, hillsides covered with shallow graves, mass destruction of basic infrastructure such as bridges and railroads. As a military telegrapher, Bliven had daily access to a great deal of sensitive inside information, as well as knowing of any developments from other parts of the western theater that were communicated via telegraph between military commanders. “In addition to his duties and service as an organizer and director, he was very often made the confidant and adviser of the highest civil and military actors in that critical period, and affairs of the most momentous importance were committed and entrusted to him” a comrade later wrote.

Born September 21, 1835 in Phelps, Ontario County, New York, Bliven moved with his family to Toledo, Ohio in the 1840s where Phelps soon took a job as a messenger boy for the railroad. He worked his way up the ranks and was working as superintendent of the railway department when the Civil War began in 1861. Bliven's efforts in the field were rewarded by his promotion to Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphic Communication for the southwest in 1863, based in Cincinnati. His efficiency in this role led to his transfer into the Quartermaster Department as a Captain in late 1864. Bliven served briefly with the Army of the Potomac, before transferring back to Cincinnati where he served as Inspector and Executive Officer in charge of Camp and Garrison Equipage, Transportation, Post Quartermaster, and Disbursing Officer. One measure of his efficiency in this role is a statement from a government auditor who found an error of only 33 cents in Bliven's accounts, extending over two years and millions of dollars of expenditures, a record unprecedented in the Quartermaster Corps. Bliven ended the war as a Brevet Major, and after declining an offer to remain in the Army, was honorably discharged on May 31, 1866. Following the war, Major Bliven returned home to Toledo where he entered into the practice of law for a few years before making his fortune in the insurance business. Major Bliven died on August 29, 1896 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in Toledo.¹

¹ Biographical notes and quotes drawn from two sources: *Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Memorials of Deceased Companions of the Commandery of the State of Illinois*, Chicago: 1901, pgs. 292-295 and *Freemasons, Scottish Rite, Supreme Council of the Northern Jurisdiction, Proceedings of the Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors of the 33rd and Last Degree*, 1896, pgs. 219-221.

Louisville, Kentucky²
December 23, 1861

The most absurd rumors prevail to such an extent here that it is hard to get at the truth with reference to passing events. The latest, and which occupy the attention now, are relative to the movements of Gen. Schoepf against Zollicoffer.³ Although a fight may occur between them at any time, no intelligence of its having taken place has been received here yet. It is not possible that they will have an engagement at present. They are both maneuvering against time and waiting for more important movements and work elsewhere.

It is said that General Buell will take the field in person at an early day by New Years at the farthest. Possibly he may, but to those who know the amount of work yet undone by the topographical department of his staff alone, in reducing surveys, preparing maps, sketches of the field of operation and plans of field works which are being thrown up wherever a point is to be had to fall back upon in case of a reverse, such report has little weight. The same is true of every other department of his staff as regards the labor to be done to enable him to take the field efficiently.

General Buell is a quiet, hardworking and energetic officer. He accomplishes an immense amount of business daily. He knows everything that is taking place in his department, and while he is ready to receive the Rebels at every point, he is not ready to act upon the offensive upon a large scale, and will not do so until he feels that he can with success. His headquarters are situated in a modest dwelling house on Fourth Street, about one mile south of the river. The rooms are plainly furnished with the least necessary of oak furniture, cocoa matting covering all the floors. A telegraph office occupies one room, which is connected or will be, with every camp in the department. A small and plainly lettered sign on the outside door with the words "Headquarters Department of the Cumberland" is all that indicates to the passer-by the place where are conducted the affairs of a work upon the success of which hangs the hopes of millions. All approach to the general is in due military form- a card with the name and statement of the business of a person desiring an interview, is handed to an orderly who returns and conducts the individual to the general or to the proper staff officer, according to the nature and urgency of the business.

Troops daily pass here going to their positions southward. Their appearance upon our streets has become so common as to excite but little notice or comment. Loomis' Coldwater (Mich.) battery went South last Saturday. The boys looked as if they had seen hard service in western Virginia and were ready for it in Kentucky or Tennessee. Rebel agents are yet busy among us, and find willing cooperators among resident secessionists. The military police extend order over every thoroughfare leading southward. Every person traveling thereon has to be provided with a proper pass, to obtain which costs strangers some time and trouble.

Louisville, Kentucky⁴
January 16, 1862

The bridge across Green River being finished and the increased energy and busy aspect of every department, together with movements that are fast developing themselves indicate a forward movement very soon. You need not be surprised any day to hear that General Buell has taken the field in person; when he does, and he and Gen. Halleck act in concert, the Rebels will have a mortality list along their whole line from the Mississippi eastward. The next month promises warm work in this state. Gen. Hindman's⁵ troops have destroyed Cave City and all the houses, barns, cattle not fit for beef, and everything else in the vicinity that might be useful to our troops as they advance, and are reported to be

2 "Kentucky Correspondence," *Daily Toledo Blade*, December 27, 1861, pg. 2

3 Union Brigadier General Albin Francisco Schoepf, a Hungarian emigre, and Confederate General Felix Zollicoffer

4 "Kentucky Correspondence," *Daily Toledo Blade*, January 18, 1862, pg. 2

5 Confederate Brigadier General Thomas C. Hindman of Arkansas

falling back on Bowling Green. This looks as if the Rebels expect an immediate advance and are not prepared to dispute it this side of their stronghold.

A few nights since there were indications of an attack by the Rebels upon our advance at Green River. Everything was in readiness for them. Gen. Buell went down on an extra train, and regiments were moved up to the front lively. It proved a false alarm, but it's showed the readiness and eagerness of our forces for a fight. The intelligence of the dispersal of Humphrey Marshall's Rebel horde in eastern Kentucky by the Federal forces under Col. Garfield gives intense satisfaction here, and which can be heightened only by the capture of the fat Humphrey himself by the cavalry sent in pursuit of his flying followers. This affair clears the Rebels from eastern Kentucky and a force will remain there to keep them out.

While here scarcely a day passed that some of the men were not engaged in a disturbance of some kind. A private shot and killed a private in a Pennsylvania regiment, encamped near them across the river. One of their own number was shot and killed in a row in front of a theater. About 200 were confined in Jeffersonville jail in one day for insubordination. Whiskey, which they got in spite of the rules of the Provost Marshal, was the prime cause of the trouble. Firearms and other dangerous weapons are so carelessly used by drunken soldiers and other that it is somewhat dangerous to be about. Several narrow escapes have occurred. The mate of a steamer at the levee was stabbed and killed Saturday.

A rampant secessionist on a spree got to hurraing for King Jeff while riding about in a hack a few nights since. Some Union men tried to quiet him with a leaden pill from his pistol- Mr. Secesh in getting out of the hack fell upon his drawn knife, severed an artery in the thigh, and now lies in a critical condition. "Niggers and mules" are staple productions of the state. It seems as if the whole crop is being brought to this city. New Year's Day market street was lined on both sides for several squares with Negroes of all sorts, shades, age, and sex to be hired for the ensuing year. Hired "niggers" to use a Kentucky phrase can be had mighty cheap since the rebellion.

It is amusing to see the antics of a team of unbroken mules hitched to an army wagon. It takes about three soldiers to manage one mule and hard work at that. Runaways are a daily occurrence. Wagons, men, and mules are mixed up promiscuously or scattered in every direction. Army wagons arrive in great numbers. One steamer brought one thousand at once last week. A heavy force is kept constantly busy on the levee, putting them together for service.

Louisville, Kentucky⁶ ***January 24, 1862***

The battle at Somerset or Mill Spring was the hardest fought and most decisive in results of the campaign. Together with Col. Garfield's late victory, it does not leave any Rebel forces east of Bowling Green in Kentucky. It opens the way to Cumberland Gap and east Tennessee, exposes Bowling Green to a flank movement, and opens 160 miles of Rebel frontier which will be occupied by the government forces before the Rebels can gather men enough to protect it. Gen. Thomas with a large force is said to be across the Cumberland and moving southward with all possible speed in pursuit of the Rebels and following up his late brilliant success.

Zollicoffer, anticipating a combined attack by Generals Thomas and Schoepf, moved out of his entrenchments Saturday night with about 10,000 men to defeat Thomas' inferior force before reinforcements could come up. Fortunately, Col. Manson by making a forced march of 25 miles with his brigade, consisting of the 10th Indiana, 4th Kentucky, 2nd Minnesota, and 18th U.S. Infantry, joined Thomas about three hours before the attack. The attack began at half past six on Sunday morning at the crossroads about five miles southwest of Somerset and continued until noon. The fight was afterwards renewed. It was an open field fight and close work, as evidenced by the fact that one of Zollicoffer's

6 "Kentucky Correspondence," *Daily Toledo Blade*, January 27, 1862, pg. 2

aides shot the horse of Col. Fry, 2nd Kentucky, who in turn shot and mortally wounded Zollicoffer in the left breast. It is aid that Gen. Z fired at Col. Fry twice.

The Rebel defeat now became an utter rout. They were hotly pursued to their entrenchments before which the government forces slept on their arms. During the night, the Rebels crossed the Cumberland by means of a steamer and some barges which were afterwards burned, abandoned everything and throwing away their arms as they ran. The last order, issued by the colonel commanding after Zollicoffer fell, was found in the entrenchments which directed the Rebels to disperse and save themselves as best they could.

A Rebel flag captured in the fight was exhibited at the Galt House last night. It was about three by six feet long made of silk. The outer corners had disappeared, the soldiers helping themselves to pieces as mementos.

Louisville, Kentucky⁷ ***February 13, 1862***

Blows for the Union are following in such quick succession that the prediction made in a former letter that this month would show warm and bloody work in this state is fast being verified. The three battles so lately fought in this state and resulting so gloriously for the government and having their full effect. The news of the complete success of the Burnside expedition following so rapidly the victory at Fort Henry makes Union men feel good, while the secessionists hereabouts take it hard.

The results of the battle at Fort Henry are even greater than those of Mill Spring, opening the most feasible route into middle Tennessee, gunboats having already gone up the river as far as Florence, Alabama. The destruction of the Memphis and Ohio R.R. bridge at Danville cuts off the Rebel line of communication between Memphis and Bowling Green and the line between Memphis and Columbus is seriously threatened by our troops. The capture of Fort Donelson on the Cumberland, nine miles from Fort Henry, of which you may have heard before this reaches you, will open that river to Nashville, force the evacuation of Bowling Green, and may transfer the advance of our forces from land to water. Troops are being crowded forward as fast as possible to secure these advantages. Several of the largest river steamers have already left here to be used as transports. The *Hazel Dell* and *Lebanon* passed yesterday with the 68th Ohio, Col. S.H. Steedman, six steamers arrived this morning with the 3rd Ohio Cavalry, Col. Zahm, and a battery of Ohio artillery; both have gone into camp at Jeffersonville on Jesse D. Bright's farm. Ten more steamers are expected today, with several regiments of infantry and batteries of artillery. Shot, shell, cannon, mortars of various kinds, and ordnance stores in large quantities arrive and pass here daily.

Gen. O.M. Mitchell moved forward from Bacon Creek and crossed Green River on the railroad bridge, 120 feet above the river, with his entire division, infantry, cavalry, artillery, and baggage and is now in the advance, south of Green River and looking towards Bowling Green. Gen. Thomas' division, or a part of it including the 14th Ohio, is returning to Lebanon from Somerset and Mill Spring and will probably go forward by another route, the bad state of the roads making an advance from there impossible, owing to the difficulty of getting supplies forward.

Hon. Thomas A. Scott, Assistant Secretary of War, has been here, ostensibly inspecting the condition of troops in this Department, as well as elsewhere. His presence here in connection with the rumor that he has engaged transportation for 50,000 troops from the Potomac to the West, may have a deeper meaning than is now apparent. General Buell is reported to have lately said to the colonel of a northwestern regiment, who thought that as such slow progress had been made that they might have remained at home a little longer last spring and planted their corn, that "he needn't be at all alarmed, they would get home in time next spring to do it." If the advantages gained so far this month are followed up, the last of March will see Kentucky clear of Rebel forces and show that the general was

7 "Letter from Louisville," *Daily Toledo Blade*, February 17, 1862, pg. 2

not far from right.

A large number of Rebel prisoners, including one lieutenant colonel and three lieutenants, taken at Mill Spring have arrived and are now confined here. The flags prepared by the ladies of Louisville to be presented to the four regiments engaged in the Battle of Mill Spring are finished and on exhibition here. They are splendid specimens of handiwork, and will confer credit upon the ladies as well as honor to the regiments.

Louisville, Kentucky⁸
March 21, 1862

Yesterday General Buell's late headquarters on Fourth Street were cleaned out and moved bag and baggage to Nashville. It seems that the general has decided to dwell with his new found Southern brethren awhile. Business here is increasing and the want of river transportation is severely felt, the government having taken every available steamer, including even ferry boats, to use on the lower Ohio and up the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers. But few of the large number of steamers that have gone below have returned and they only bring sick or wounded soldiers and prisoners taken in the late battles.

Railroad communication between here and Nashville is still interrupted and will be until the bridge across the Barren river at Bowling Green is rebuilt, which is being pushed as fast as the men and means can do it. Our forces will have to rebuild every bridge in the South as the Rebels destroy everything in the shape of a bridge as they retreat, causing great delay to our troops and transportation, especially the latter. This accounts for their seemingly slow progress southward, off the line of steamboat navigation. All of the material to rebuild these bridges has to be got North, and sent South, adding so much more to the already immense amount of transportation necessary.

Active movements in Tennessee are afoot and decisive results may be daily looked for- fresh evidence of a strong Union feeling is found wherever our troops have been. Hon. Andy Johnson has issued a temperate proclamation to the people of Tennessee defining the object of his return to the state and inviting the people to co-operate in reforming the state government. He will soon have this done and the state properly represented in Congress.

Louisville, Kentucky⁹
April 7, 1862

The municipal election on Saturday passed off very quietly and resulted in the election of the entire Union ticket, Unionism and fitness being the only requirements. Two very popular men, candidates for reelection as tax collector, were defeated because of suspected secession sympathy. A tax of three per cent for the support of families of volunteers was adopted. The vote polled very light. The weather is getting uncomfortably warm. Buds are starting on the forest trees, peach trees are in full bloom, beautiful flowers are starting to send their sweet fragrance throughout the many beautiful gardens of the city. New potatoes have already made their appearance in market.

The steamer *Glendale* arrived yesterday from Pittsburg, Tenn. with nearly two hundred bales of cotton shipped by planters to their brokers here. This cotton was shipped by the planters for their own account. Some of the planters from that vicinity are now here and say that large quantities of cotton have been burned, not by the planters, but by military authorities. Gen. Grant, on the application of the planters, has sent a force sufficiently large to protect the cotton and put it in a place of safety. The railroad bridge across Barren river at Bowling Green, which was destroyed by the Rebels in their retreat from that place, will be finished tomorrow when trains will again run through to Nashville without detention.

8 "Letter from Louisville," *Daily Toledo Blade*, March 25, 1862, pg. 2

9 "Letter from Louisville," *Daily Toledo Blade*, April 10, 1862, pg. 2

Corinth, Mississippi is just now the center of interest here. The tremendous force on each side makes one tremble at the thought of dreadful carnage and slaughter that must ensue when the collision takes place, which may happen any day, perhaps before this reaches you. General Buell's army has crossed the Tennessee river and formed a junction with Gen. Grant, whose pickets extend to the Rebel lines. The command of the two armies will be under Gen. Halleck, who will soon be, if he is not already, on the field in person-while there are exaggerated stories and various rumors afloat here as to the great strength of the Rebel force and causing some uneasiness among the Unionists, it is believed by those who are most likely to know that the Federal force is amply sufficient and so arranged as to accomplish the desired result with the least possible loss, perhaps without a battle.

There is much sickness here, not only among the soldiers in the hospitals but among the citizens. Four to six soldiers are buried daily. It is a sad sight to see them carted off and buried so unceremoniously as they are.

Steamer E.H. Fairchild, Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee¹⁰
April 13, 1862

I was fortunate enough to be one of the delegation sent here by the Louisville Sanitary Commission with this steamer and hospital stores for the wounded and suffering soldiers engaged in the late battle. We left Louisville at 12 o'clock Thursday night, having on board 23 ladies and 45 gentlemen including the surgeons and assistants sent from Lexington and Frankfort by the State Military Board, and M.C. Younglove of Cleveland. Additional supplies were received from the ladies of different places along the river. At Evansville, Mr. Younglove and I obtained a sewing machine from a former resident of Toledo, which enabled the ladies on board to prepare the bedding necessary, after being disappointed in not receiving the expected supply of cots at Evansville.

Friday afternoon we met the *Commodore Perry* from Pittsburg with about 300 wounded on board. The same evening we met the *Switzerland* with about the same number; she was hailed with stores and assistance tendered which were not needed. We learned enough to make us all anxious to reach the scene of suffering, and the boat was crowded along at the rate of twenty miles per hour. She made 40 miles in two hours and ten minutes. At Paducah, where we expected to receive more supplies and further instructions after some little detention we turned into the Tennessee river and hurried along as fast as possible against the strong current. We passed the *Empress* about daylight and the *Anglo Saxon* at Fort Henry, both bound up the river.

At Fort Henry, I received dispatches to deliver to Gen. Halleck at Pittsburg. Above the fort we met the *Woodford* and *War Eagle* bound down with more wounded. We saw but few people along the river; some of them had only lately returned as the pilot told me; their houses were vacant on the last trip. Those we did see manifested every satisfaction at our presence and saluted us with waving handkerchiefs, swinging hats, and cheers. At one place a white flag was prominently displayed; at another, several men, women, and children rushed down to the banks and cheered us; one of the men hailed and asked 'how the fight was going up yonder?' Standing by the pilothouse, I answered 'all right' at which all commenced cheering, swinging their hats, and crying out 'Good, glory to God!' We saw much desolation and in but a few places signs of returning prosperity. Several dead bodies were passed floating in the river, confirming the report that our troops were forced to the river on Sunday and many of them drowned. Why the bodies were not recovered I cannot say, unless it was thought best not to delay, but to hurry to a greater work.

We arrived at Savannah about 2 o'clock Sunday morning and at Pittsburg at 3. After delivering my dispatches immediately to General Halleck on board the *Continental*, I set about finding troops from Toledo and vicinity. The 14th Ohio was up river with General Sherman on an important expedition to destroy Rebel communication with the east, across the Tennessee river, which was successfully

10 Letter from C.E. Bliven, *Daily Toledo Blade*, April 22, 1862, pg. 2

accomplished by them. Three other expeditions had been sent to do this work and had failed. The 14th returned today, all right. Lt. Col. Este and Lt. Davis were sick on the steamer *White Cloud* across the river, and Col. Steedman was at headquarters; so I did not see them during my short visit to their camp. The boys are without tents, the baggage trains not having come up yet. They have made themselves as comfortable as possible with blankets, brush, and bark- almost every tree on the battlefield is stripped of its bark to make shelter for the troops that came up without tents. The 68th Ohio is at Crump's Landing, between here and Savannah, guarding Gen. Lew Wallace's camp. The 38th Ohio has not got here yet. The 3rd Ohio Cavalry is camped two miles east of Savannah from whence detachments are sent to guard the trains. A portion of the regiment is at Waynesboro. Company C under Captain Howland is about 15 miles east of Savannah. The 21st, 49th, and 72nd were in the battle and suffered more or less. The 72nd had not a field officer in command Sunday night, Col. Buckland acting Brigadier General, is highly spoken of, as is Col. W.H. Gibson of the 49th, also acting Brigadier General. I have not been able to find the 21st, but learn that they were in the thickest of the fight with General Nelson and behaved well.

It is reported that some Ohio troops behaved badly on the first day. The regiments particularly mentioned in this respect were the newest regiments in the field; all of them having left the state since the fall of Fort Donelson and occupied the worst advanced and exposed positions in Saturday's fight. They were not properly supported and one regiment had so lately arrived that it had not been supplied with ammunition. These same regiments did their whole duty on Monday when properly handled and supported by Gen. Buell. They were in the thickest of the fight, and it is conceded on all hands here that they were among the bravest troops on the field. If they lost any honor on Sunday, they regained it on Monday, as their lists of killed and wounded will show. Regiments from other states acted precisely the same under similar circumstances. A Wisconsin regiment arrived on Saturday afternoon, was sent to the front, and was attacked and driven back before their tents were pitched. A Michigan regiment was also sent to the front without a round of ammunition.

I wandered all over the field yesterday. The scene was a terrible one. The almost countless little hillocks of fresh turned earth told the cost of the victory. The great heaps here and there show how hard the Rebels fought and how great was their loss. Gen. Johnson's grave is on the brow of a ravine, and is surrounded by a neat fence. Whenever a body could be recognized, the grave was properly marked by a board placed at the head on which was roughly carved the name and number of the regiment of the dead sleeper. On a beech tree I found the name, number of regiment, and a Masonic emblem, neatly engraved, showing that a friend and brother had paid the last tribute due to the dead soldier whose body lay at its foot.

Before I started for the field, one of Gen. Halleck's aides assured me that a pass was not necessary. I, however, went to Gen. Buell and procured the following:

Headquarters, Army of the Ohio, April 19, 1862

Pass bearer, Mr. C.E. Bliven, to Gen. Wood's Head Quarters.

By order of Maj. Gen. Buell, Chas. L. Fitzhugh, A.D.C.

This bit of paper was all powerful wherever I chose to go. It passed me all over the field or if I had occasion to go on board the *Continental*, Gen. Halleck's headquarters, or on to the *Tigress*, those of Gen. Grant, or to Savannah and back where I went to find my friends. I was about to produce it once, when away out in front, about five miles from the river where I was stopped by the officer of the guard when a familiar voice was heard, 'let him pass.' Much astonished I looked up and found Lt. Col. William H. Graves of the 12th Michigan, advancing with a smiling face and extended hands. An invitation to visit his tent followed, which was indeed acceptable, I being much fatigued from constant

walking through mud and water up to my boot tops. Col. Graves was in command of the 12th Michigan, was in the thickest of the fight, and gained great credit for his coolness and bravery, and especially in extricating his command from the overwhelming force which took Gen. Prentiss and so many men prisoners. He was particularly observed by Gen. Buell and was among the first who attracted the general's attention Sunday afternoon. He was ably seconded by Maj. George Kimmell, who greatly distinguished himself throughout the day. The adjutant had three horses shot under him. The chaplain was particularly conspicuous for the daring courage exhibited while acting as aid to Gen. Prentiss in carrying his orders under the hottest fire.

Dr. Kedale of Blissfield, Michigan was taken prisoner early Sunday morning because he would not abandon his hospitals with sick and wounded. He was released and returned to his regiment on Thursday. To him I am indebted for much interesting information. He states that the Rebels were much elated with their success on Sunday and felt sure of Grant and his whole army on Monday morning. They said the reason they did not achieve it Sunday afternoon was the intoxication of Breckenridge, who caused five of his regiments to fire into three others, which was returned and kept up for 20 minutes causing great slaughter and confusion among them. He says this was the cause of the cessation of Rebel hostilities on Sunday afternoon, and during which the heavy battery was got into position at the landing and the gunboats sent up river to shell the ravines, and Gen. Nelson crossed over the river and advanced so as to protect Grant's scattered forces, checking the Rebel advance for the night. In the morning, Gen. Buell's arrangements were complete, and the result is well known.

The Rebels taken prisoners say they soon found out on Monday morning that they had a different foe to fight; that there was none of the vacillation of Sunday. Everything moved admirably and speedily like clockwork. Gen. Beauregard said in the presence of a lieutenant colonel now a prisoner that Buell's left wing was the best formed he ever saw. The way Nelson handled it on the field verified the assertion. Gen. Buell's headquarters have been in the field since his arrival here. His army is splendidly arranged and will not be surprised. Gen. Grant's headquarters have been on the *Tigress* but were moved into the field this P.M. Gen. Halleck has ordered his staff to move their baggage ashore, I suppose his headquarters will be in the field tomorrow or the next day. The telegraph line was completed to this point and the cable laid across the river today.

We commenced taking on board the wounded yesterday and shall leave this evening with about 230, some of whom are Rebels, most of whom say they were greatly deceived by their leaders. They appear to be agreeably disappointed at their kind treatment. They say that Beauregard had from 50-60,000 men in the battle and 30,000 in reserve in Corinth under Crittenden. His troops were enlisted for a short time- some for one year, some for 90 days, and a large number for this battle. Our force engaged on Sunday was about 30,000. In the afternoon before Buell came up, it was not over 20,000. One of Gen. Halleck's staff told me that our loss was about 1,500 killed, 4,000 wounded, and 3,000 prisoners. The Rebel loss in killed and wounded is one third greater, and about 1,000 prisoners.

I have been busy writing letters for wounded men to their friends. Among others, I wrote one today for a young Rebel prisoner, about 17, to his mother in Hickman, Kentucky. He said to me, 'Be sure and tell her that I was guarded five days after I was taken from home; that I was wounded while fighting in the Southern army but now I mean to live and die under the stars and stripes.'

The *E.H. Fairchild* left Pittsburg Landing that evening and arrived in Louisville on April 17, 1862, carrying Bliven along with 288 wounded soldiers, both Union and Confederate, who were delivered to the city's hospitals. Bliven soon left Louisville, repairing and setting up telegraph lines along the railroad line leading south from Louisville to Nashville.¹¹

11 "Sick and Wounded Soldiers," *Daily Toledo Blade*, April 22, 1862, pg. 2

Bowling Green, Kentucky¹²
April 25, 1862

Next to Columbus, this was the strongest fortified place occupied by the Rebels in Kentucky. The fortifications consist of detached earthworks, thirteen in number, situated within easy range of each other on the various hills surrounding the town, those on Webb's, Baker's, and College hills being the largest and strongest. The two former command the approach to the town from the north by way of the railroad, and were calculated to be garrisoned with about 200 men each, and mounting four to six guns. Both are open works on the slope of the hills on which they are situated, and shells could have easily entered them by our artillery from adjacent heights. The fort on Baker's hill is the strongest of the two, being built entirely of earth, well sodded all around. That on Webb's hill on three sides is nothing but a crib made of logs, the space between being filled with broken stone, forming at the base a bulwark about eight feet in thickness to the height of about three feet, above which it is only four feet thick leaving on the inside a shell or step on which infantry were to be placed. Our heavy artillery would have knocked the whole thing to pieces in an hour and sent the broken stone flying about the Rebels like hail. The fort on College hill commanded the town. It is a heavy stone wall, with a thick embankment of earth in front of it, but like the other two, it is on the hill side exposing the interior to the fire of an attacking force and could have been made untenable in a short time, as was proved by a few shells dropped into it by Gen. Mitchel from Fort Baker on his arrival here. Fort Buckner on the river bank could have been reduced by a single gun boat in less time than it took Com. Foote to shell out Fort Henry. It will not hold over 150-200 men. The balance of the fortifications are of inferior strength and after the reduction of those already named, could make but little or no resistance.

Beauregard when here pronounced the place indefensible and the fortifications 'traps and slaughter pens.' No provision being made for an attack from the river, as was Gen. Buell's plan, he intending to cross the river at the ferry three miles above, an evacuation was ordered, which followed immediately after the battle of Donelson. At no time did the Rebels ever have over 30,000 effective men here, and most of the time not half that number. Sickness prevailed to a great extent among them. Almost every house was a hospital. It is estimated that over 4,000 are buried within the city limits. Nearly 500 graves can be counted on the parapet of Fort Buckner alone. Commencing at the base of the embankment, the rows of grave extend from it down to the foot of the hill. This is but one of the smallest of the many burial places.

The destruction of private property here by the Rebels will exceed half a million dollars. The value of the railroad property destroyed is more than half this sum. An engine house capable for holding fifteen engines, eight being in it when it was burned, a large machine shop, passenger and freight house, the beautiful iron railroad bridge over the Barren river which cost \$100,000, the turnpike bridge below it, two pork houses, each costing over \$40,000 were totally destroyed by them. Private dwellings were destroyed or rendered useless; fences were burned without the least hesitancy. One Secesh got his rights to the tune of about 10,000 rails and 1,000 feet of plank fence, burned by his fellow Rebels. The pay he got was curses. One Union man has sued several prominent secessionists for damages done in cutting down the timber on about 100 acres of his land by their slaves voluntarily furnished so as to enable the guns of the fort on Webb's hill to sweep the railroad track.

Much anxiety is felt here as to the prospect of pestilence which is thought will arise from the decomposition of the great number of dead buried here, and from the decay of the immense amount of filth and vegetable matter which accumulated during the stay of the Rebel army. The rocky bed underneath the slight covering of earth prevented their burial to the proper depth. Efforts are now being made to counteract the anticipated evil.

Harriett Beecher Stowe's description of Rome in 'Agnes of Sorrento' slightly altered will almost

answer for this place as it now appears. She says, "We see a wide plain, miles and miles in extent, rolling in soft billows of green, girded on all sides, with its guardians so silent and lonely, in the midst thereof, we discern a city, somber, quaint, and old, a city of the living and the dead, mighty once in physical force, mightier now in physical decadence and weakness."

But what shall be said of the Unionists here, who have suffered everything almost but death? Deprived as they were of every luxury, yes, almost everything necessary to support life, compelled day by day for months to bear the taunts and insults of the secessionists. Watched and hunted if two or three gathered together, money valueless, mails stopped, and all intelligence from the North cut off, and from no quarter could help be heard from. Yet these brave people suffered on, hoping almost against help. Do you wonder that their hearts were glad when the news came of Zollicoffer's defeat and death? Then they knew that their help was nigh. Men and women leaped for joy at the sound of General Mitchel's cannon and the explosion of the shells he sent into their midst, even though carrying death and destruction as well as liberty with them. If these people suffered so much, what must be the condition of those sharing the same sentiments further South? Speed the day of their relief.

*Nashville, Tennessee*¹³
May 30, 1862

Early this morning Gen. Halleck telegraphed to Gov. Johnson the cheering news 'Corinth is in our possession. The enemy are retreating southward.' The *Union* soon had it flying around the streets in an extra. Unionists very plainly manifested their gratification, one with more force than elegance, though perhaps with some truth, read the dispatch as follows: 'Corinth is in our possession. The Rebels are retreating hell-wards!' A state official high in position said to your correspondent, 'Tennessee is free once more, and this war now goes where it belongs- to the doors of those who caused it.'

Corinth is ours and without a fight! How many anxious hearts in the great northwest will be relieved from the intensest anxiety by this intelligence! How the 'stay-at-homes,' those who are full of 'lip patriotism' will growl because none or but few lives, comparatively, were lost in accomplishing this great result!

The fall of Corinth is a death blow to secessionism in Tennessee. Its effect is already to be seen- Union men are not nor will hereafter be afraid to express their sentiments, and they will do it, even though threatened, as at the Union meeting at Shelbyville this week, by an armed force of Rebels. Ex-Gov. Campbell, President of the great Union meeting here, has appointed, as directed, a Union State Central Committee of which Hon. Allen A. Hall is chairman. This committee is to confer with the Unionists, and appoint Union meetings in all parts of the state; one is to be held at Columbia next Monday. Gov. Johnson, W.H. Polk, and other uncompromising Union men will be there to speak to the people. Meetings are to be held in rapid succession. Gov. Johnson will go into eastern Tennessee as soon as our army gets the least foothold there, and judging from intelligence already received from that part of the state, the rally around him will be a general uprising of the sterling Union people there. A Union ticket for the state officers will soon be placed before the people and triumphantly elected at the annual election in August next.

In consequence of the sake of large amounts of contraband goods, which eventually find their way into Rebel hands, Gen. Dumont has just issued a very stringent order prohibiting the sale of such articles except under certain restrictions, and has established a strong police guard to carry out the order, and prevent such goods from going further south. Cotton continues to come in very freely; every steamer or train takes more or less northward. Buyers are scattered all over the country wherever our lines extend, and many have gone beyond them, and buy the cotton from the Rebels themselves, who strange to say, will take nothing in exchange but gold and 'greenbacks.' The currency here is very unsettled. Notes of all Tennessee banks are held at a heavy discount for gold and Treasury notes. Silver

13 "Letter from Nashville," *Daily Toledo Blade*, June 4, 1862, pg. 2

change is becoming more plenty. Traders are very unwilling to take the 'change' shin plasters any longer, and require the buyer to make his own change, preferring to keep their goods to receiving irresponsible currency.

A good many deserters from the Rebel army are coming in and taking the oath, and joining our forces. Some thirty did so at the Union meeting in Shelbyville. A new regiment (the 2nd Tennessee) has just been started with good prospects for success, judging from the rapidity with which the first is filling up. The Louisville & Nashville railroad bridge across the Cumberland river at this place, which was burned by the Rebels when they run from here, is being rebuilt and will be finished next week Saturday, and trains will then run into the city again, thus abetting the ferry nuisance and enormous charges of omnibus and hack drivers.

The weather is very warm, yes hot! The thermometer shows 102 degrees above already. At this rate, the 'melting time' will come soon.

*Nashville, Tennessee*¹⁴

June 16, 1862

The half month just closed has been big with events of great interest and influence and given more victories in the Federal cause in Tennessee alone than has the same period of time since the rebellion broke out. These victories has followed each other in such rapid succession as to average one for nearly every two days.

First, we had the brilliant charge of General Negley's advance guard into the town of Winchester on the Nashville & Chattanooga railroad near the south line of the state, where they put to flight Starn's Rebel cavalry, a band similar to Morgan's but much larger in numbers; after which Gen. Negley occupied the town in force. Next, Gen. Negley attacked, defeated, and completely routed a considerable force of Rebels under Gen. Adams who was advancing to form a junction with Starn's force at Winchester, and then intended to attack and capture Gen. Mitchel's division train at Shelbyville loaded with forage and provisions for Huntsville. Rapidly following up his advantage, Gen. Negley with his whole force suddenly appeared before Chattanooga. Much to the astonishment of the secessionists and gratification of the Unionists, and after a severe artillery fight lasting part of two days completely silenced the Rebel batteries and drive their force from town. He captured a large drove of cattle intended for the Rebels and took a large number of prominent secessionists prisoners, to be held as hostages for the good treatment of Union men now in Rebel prisons- and after destroying the Rebel line of communication by railroad through southeastern Tennessee and having accomplished all he intended, Gen. Negley returned without serious loss to Shelbyville.

The demonstration against Chattanooga aided in forcing the Rebels to evacuate Cumberland Gap and fall back into Tennessee. The occupancy of this, the strongest positions by both nature and art, that the Rebels have been forced to abandon was immediately occupied by the Federal forces under Gen. Morgan and he is now in eastern Tennessee intending no doubt to follow up this great advantage and soon occupy Knoxville, and in conjunction with a large force advancing from another direction will free that part of the state from the Rebels forever. This intelligence had hardly reached here when it was followed by the news of the great naval battle and victory on the Mississippi and the occupation of Memphis by Federal forces.

Secesh have become unusually quiet- the handwriting on the wall is too plain to be mistaken- even 'grapevine' lies has ceased to give them any relief or comfort. Only twice during the month have they had even a grain of comfort from the 'grapevine,' one was when a party of our cavalry was surprised and taken prisoner by Starn's regiment near Readyville, but this was short lived for Negley soon scattered the Rebels in turn far and wide. The other was the report that Gov. Johnson had been captured by the Rebels while speaking at the Union meeting in Shelbyville. As the wish was the father

14 "Letter from Nashville," *Daily Toledo Blade*, June 18, 1862, pg. 2

of the thought and above all earthly things do they most earnestly wish for the removal in some of the, to them, stern and unbending man who is directing the development of Union sentiment in Tennessee. They gave way to the report and were for a short time jubilant. The appearance of the governor on the streets the next morning showing a bolder and more determined front than ever gave an emphatic lie to this report and so Secesh lost faith in the 'grapevine' and subsided.

We have had all sorts of rumors here lately, the principal one being that Nashville was to be retaken by a part of Beauregard's Corinth army who were said to be advancing in force across the mountains and the 'Lincolmites' were all to be captured or 'driven into the Cumberland river.' This driving into the river seems to be a favorite expression with the Rebels, but fails to work well for them. They didn't drive many into the Tennessee at Pittsburg Landing, nor McClellan into the Chickahominy, and yet judging by the preparations made here they won't have much better success on the banks of the Cumberland at Nashville.

Cairo, Illinois¹⁵
June 25, 1862

Chasing a man down the Ohio, up the Tennessee, and after being delayed by low water and compelled to tie up nights, expecting an attack hourly from roving guerilla bands now infesting the country on the upper Tennessee and finding upon arriving at your destination that the object of your search is in Memphis or elsewhere- obliging you to retrace your steps down the Tennessee and go in that direction, then upon reaching Cairo to learn that he is not at Memphis but near Jackson, Tennessee apparently further off than ever (from the just now lack of communication), is not calculated to render one as patient as Job. Nor considering that some 50 to 60 miles are to be traveled on a hand car, of which you are to be a part of the motive power- the thermometer indicating from 110-120 degrees above-will be expected that much coolness can be exercised while laboring under these difficulties.

Cairo just now is probably the busiest place on the western rivers. Nearly all the business houses are situated upon the levee, and all the steamers passing up and down the Ohio and Mississippi calling here, together with the immense amount of work being done by the government combine to give it great activity. Coming down the Ohio at Mound City is seen, nearly finished, the new gunboat *Eastport*, which was captured up the Tennessee river after the battle of Fort Henry. She is nearly ready for service and will be, it is said, the most serviceable boat of her class on the river. Just below her is the Rebel gunboat *Gen. Price*, lately captured at Memphis; farther down the river are some 20 mortar boats, their numbers painted in white on their jet black sides; and lining the northern bank of the river down to Cairo are the steamers, barges, and floats that belong to or are in the service of the government, having more or less repairs done upon them. The navy receiving ship, the steamer *Maria Deming*, lies anchored in the stream.

We landed close by the large naval depot, formerly the largest wharf boat on the river, along the side of which are captured Rebel gunboats *Sumpter* and *Gen. Bragg*. The *Bragg* is about the size of the U.S. steamer *Michigan* on the lakes. She has two short stumpy masts, one smokestack, and a beam engine, the latter protected by a bulkhead of compressed cotton some three feet thick. She carries two heavy pivot guns, one forward and the other after, and a small carronade on her spar deck. She appears to have sustained no injury, save that caused by our ram which is being rapidly repaired.

The *Sumter* was formerly a tow boat on the lower Mississippi. Her armament, like the *Bragg's*, was two heavy guns, but otherwise she is widely different. She appears to be a cross between a river and sea-going steamer. The hull is very strong and built like an ocean vessel; the bow covered with flat bar iron about an inch thick which extends back nearly to the wheel, above the hull she looks like a river steamer. She has two powerful horizontal engines and is said to be very fast. Her machinery is protected forward by a strong framework of timber extending toward the bow in a V shape, and rising

15 "Letter from Cairo," *Daily Toledo Blade*, June 30, 1862, pg. 2

from the deck at an angle of about 40 degrees. This is covered with planking to the thickness of 18 inches, and outside of this with railroad iron. One thickness of the iron is fastened on with spikes driven along the edges of the bars and the space between the bars is filled by putting another bar bottom side up and fastening with bolts, making a coating of iron three and a half or four inches thick. The *Price* is just like the *Sumter*.

All of these Rebel boats are painted a dirty brown, but as soon as they are repaired, will be painted black. They are nearly ready for service. It is difficult to see why they were surrendered by the Rebels without making a stronger resistance. They are certainly very powerful vessels and well-armed, and to all appearances sustained but little injury. The *Sumter* was struck by one ball which passed through the wheel house and went through the cabin toward the bow where it killed two men. Her pilothouse was riddled with bullets, aimed at the form of the pilot, the real pilot being below, protected by the armor. All of the Rebel boats had stuffed representations of pilots in the pilothouses to deceive our sharpshooters.

Com. Charles Ellett, commanding the ram fleet which did such great service in the naval battle at Memphis died here a few days since from the effects of the wound he received there, and a severe attack of measles which set in after he was brought here. The accident to the gunboat *Mound City* while engaged in the late attack upon the Rebel batteries on White river causes a profound sensation here, especially among naval men. The conduct of the Rebels in firing upon the scalded crew who had jumped overboard excites the deepest feeling of resentment among them, and the new crew for the *Mound City* who are to be sent from the receiving ship here express themselves determined to revenge their dead comrades and friends.

Gen. George C. Strong, the military commandant ay this district, is very vigorous in the administration of his duties, which is absolutely necessary at a point like this where there is such an ebb and flow of stragglng soldiers of all ranks, ages, and descriptions. The railroad from Columbus southward will soon be open and direct communication had with Gen. Halleck's army. This is fast becoming absolutely necessary on account of the low water in the Tennessee river, boats having almost ceased going up that river. Trade to Memphis is quite brisk. Telegraphic communication, just re-established, opens a new channel of intercourse and is much in use.

Memphis, Tennessee¹⁶
July 8, 1862

The heat and dust here are intolerable, compelling nearly everyone to keep indoors the greater portion of the day; consequently the streets of the city have a dull and somber appearance. The evenings being very cool and pleasant, a large portion of each day's business is transacted then. The levee is very well filled with steamers and an immense amount of freight is daily shipped northward. Every steamer has a good load, a fair proportion of which is cotton and sugar. There are several hundred bales of cotton now on the bluff awaiting shipment. Official figures show that since the government forces came here there have been 9,762 bales of cotton, 10,613 hogsheads of sugar, and 9,521 barrels of molasses shipped northward. These amounts are only what was stored in the city and its immediate vicinity, no opportunity having yet been offered to planters in the interior to bring in safely their crops.

The Union sentiment is gradually growing in strength. A great many have already taken the required oath and their example is daily followed by others. There are many here who will never take the oath, but die in rebellion (at least in spirit) against the government. Rebel flags, in consequence of the very stringent orders prohibiting them, have entirely disappeared though they can be found in private houses on every street. Your correspondent having occasion to call at the house of a certain high official, now in the south, saw the 'stars and bars' made of very nice material stored very snugly away

16 "Letter from Memphis," *Daily Toledo Blade*, July 14, 1862, pg. 2

in one corner. His fingers itched to get hold of and confiscate it and respect for the lady alone prevented it. The 'stars and stripes' float in every part of the city and the number of Union flags is daily increasing. Loud mouthed secessionists are summarily shut up, and sent out of town, most of them southward. They would a hundred times rather go northward. You can find plenty of such, who talk treason and would be glad to have themselves made martyrs of by being sent north, but to be sent south where they profess all of their sympathies are, is a bitter pill. You can't find one who goes south of his own accord. Mrs. Gallaway, wife of the former and runaway postmaster here, was bundled up and sent south yesterday on account of her treasonable practices and her house, which was built by the proceeds of box rents and postage stamps stolen from the U.S., was taken possession of and is now occupied by Col. William S. Hilyer, provost marshal general of the district of west Tennessee.

The fourth passed here very quietly. The gunboats fired a national salute and the 1st Nebraska regiment gave a dinner to Gen. Grant which was a very pleasant affair. Cotton buyers are very plenty. Over \$500,000 in gold has come here from the north within the past three weeks, to say nothing of the treasury notes. Change is made mostly by tickets and shin plasters. The Sunday collections in the churches are very apt to cause a Northerner to smile- a very small sum in reality makes a huge pile. Instead of reckoning the amount by numeration, it is done by dry measure; as for instance, at one church a peck was realized; at another, a half bushel and so on according to the size of the pile, though the size is not always indicative of the value.

Rebel pickets and scouting parties are within three to five miles of the city, and many fear an attack from them. One of Jackson's Rebel cavalry was in the city yesterday with a large number of letters for secessionists, the contents of which were said to be a warning to move their families from the city. The Union force in the place is small, but the gunboats *St. Louis* and *Mound City* are anchored abreast of town and the mortar boats are moored to the opposite shore, ready to open their guns at any moment. Prominent secessionists have been notified that if an attack is made, fire will be opened upon the town which will not cease until Memphis is destroyed. This is all that prevents an attack, and some assert that even it will not long prevent it. Railroad connection with the east is not yet open and it is very doubtful when it will be, guerilla parties are scattered along the Memphis & Charleston and the Memphis and Ohio railroads, which alternately burn cotton and bridges.

The Gayoso house here is a splendid hotel, is well kept, and has the Union flag flying from its staff. It must be well patronized as the head negro waiter sports a diamond cross worth several hundred dollars; but the blockade must be pretty tight; when they were compelled to print bills of fare on the backs of old handbills which reads 'Success to the Southern Enterprise!' The gunboat *Sumter*, lately captured from the Rebels here, passed down the river yesterday under a Union flag to join Com. Davis at Vicksburg. She has been thoroughly repaired and is a clipper to go. It is a great mortification to the Secesh here to see her sailing under the old flag and it will be increased when the *Bragg*, *Price*, and *Little Rebel* come down in a few days- all in tip-top condition, ready to do battle for the Union.

Accounts from Vicksburg continue to be favorable. Coms. David Farragut and Charles Davis, one below, and the other above the town, are having a splendid rifle practice there. Nine, ten, and eleven inch shells are used regularly and rapidly dropped into the enemy's works. Vicksburg being situated at the head of a big bend in the river, Com. Farragut has some two thousand contrabands cutting a canal about two and a half miles across the neck of land into which the waters of the river are to be turned and Vicksburg, or what is left of it after the bombardment is over, instead of being on the banks of the Mississippi, will be about seven miles distant and emphatically an inland city; while the river will be about 20 miles shorter, a fact which future geographers will please take notice.

Much anxiety is felt here for the safety of Gen. Curtis' command in Arkansas, which was known to have been on short allowance for some time owing to the difficulty of forwarding supplies to him. A large force of Rebels are threatening him and rumors are current that he has been cut off and obliged to surrender. It is believed by those in authority that Gen. Curtis will be able to fall back and meet the supplies now on the way to him, and also to successfully resist any force the Rebels may bring against

him. About 100 bales of cotton were burned by the Rebels at Fort Randolph last night. It was hauled there for our boat (the *Memphis*) to take. As we passed up, the Rebels tried to decoy us to the shore in order to capture us, but warned by the burning cotton, we kept on our way and escaped.

*Tuscumbia, Alabama*¹⁷

July 14, 1862

Between the irregularity of trains, Provost Marshal and the dirtiest hotels ever seen, those whose duties or inclinations call them hitherward find "Jordan a hard road to travel," and they are unusually fortunate, if they succeed in passing them all unscathed. Our train from Columbus, Kentucky to Corinth was an extra, consisting of an old engine that blowed like a horse with the heavens and a box car- with rough boards for seats- made up for the special accommodation of Gov. William Sprague of R.I. en route from Washington to Gen. Halleck. The party consisted of six gentlemen and four ladies and two children. All appeared to enjoy the ride under the circumstances. We stopped once for a supply of wood which was scattered around promiscuously being the remnants of a large pile. All the party got out- the ladies to pick blackberries from the abundance along the track and the men, including the governor, pulled off their coats to gather up and throw wood on the engine. We were detained several hours in the woods and reached Corinth about 5 o'clock on the morning, having been about 14 hours running 143 miles.

Corinth is now very quiet, nearly all the troops being out on the different railroads centering there. Capt. John G. Klink, of Toledo, is with Gen. McKean's division, which is occupying the entrenchments south of the town. At the Seminary hospital- a beautiful place on a hill some half mile from the depot- are ten of twelve of the 14th Ohio, sick. Martin Fuller from Columbus Grove of Company K died July 5th; George Ott of Defiance of Company E died July 9th; Herman Betts is getting well probably will be discharged from the service; John Waggoner of Toledo, Noah McCombs of Columbus Grove, Ezra Perry of Maumee, Franklin Reed of east Toledo, Wm. Plattner of Defiance and Mathew Morris of Napoleon are nearly well. William Smith of Antwerp is very sick with typhoid fever- his recovery very doubtful. S. Stirlen of Columbus Grove and David Boger of Antwerp were detailed by Colonel Steedman as nurses for those men.

In the office of Gen. James B. McPherson, superintendent of military railroads at Corinth is a 168 pound cannon ball with the following inscription "This ball, by permission of Gen. Halleck is to be sent to the city council of Toledo, Ohio." The Tishomingo House at Corinth can produce a greater number of flies, more filth, and higher charges with less accommodations, than anything that disgraces the name of a hotel in the world. There are no less than nine newly made graves in the hotel yard. The proprietors are a couple of sutlers who have evidently "struck a lead" and are determined to make a "big thing." Tuscumbia is a pleasant though just now a very dilapidated place. Quiet quietness prevails save when broken by the moving soldiery. Major Gen. Thomas has his headquarters here the present. His division scattered along the Memphis & Charleston railroad from Corinth to Decatur. The 14th Ohio, is, rather was, here- the regiment left yesterday morning with five days' rations, and has gone on an expedition about 25 miles east to a point where a culvert was destroyed and some cotton burned. Lt. Albert Moore is in command of the camp, with some 40 or 50 convalescents with the band as guard. The health of regiment is unusually good. They number more efficient men than any other in the division.

The departure of the regiment a few hours previous to my arrival unfortunately prevented a personal intercourse with many friends and acquaintances in it. Their camp is in a beautiful grove about a mile down town and everything is clean and nice. There is no fear of unusual sickness or any reason why the regiment should not, so long as it remains in northern Alabama, keep up its present healthy condition, and maintain the reputation it has in high places and throughout this department as one of the

17 "Letter from Tuscumbia," *Daily Toledo Blade*, July 18, 1862, pg. 2

most orderly and efficient in the service. Col. Steedman made a speech here on the evening of July 4th which judging from what is said of it, and to use a Mississippi river must have been 'lightning.'

An excursion several miles in the country today with a banker from Hartford, Conn gave us a fine view of the many beautiful rich and rich plantations and a chance to breathe some fresh air of northern Alabama. We saw considerable cotton- some piled up in the field ready to be burned, if the owners can't prevent it, by the Rebel cavalry. None could be bought, at any price, planters fearing to sell even though sorely pressed for the money it would bring at the present prices. The fear that the Federal troops may be driven or ordered away prevents a large proportion of the inhabitants hereabouts from declaring their Union sentiments. They know that in this as well as other sections of the South that have been occupied and abandoned by our troops, Union men who then declared their sentiments, afterwards suffered terribly in property, person, and family from depredations committed by the Rebels.

There has been considerable cotton planted and it is growing nicely; also more corn than ever before, some of which been put into the ground since Corinth was evacuated. One planter manifested such feeling as he told of how much feeling as he told how much he suffered, all caused by a war brought about by a few leaders and against the wishes of the people now held in terrible fear of both parties- a war, too he said which was to have been carried on north and had never once thought it would be brought to the very doors of its originators; and that the rich and beautiful country before him would be so desolate and unproductive from want of cultivation. Some of his Negroes had run away, others expected to go. He had no heart to look for them and was much too discouraged to try. He confessed that he had not and could not get tea, sugar, coffee, salt, clothing, money, shoes, leather, and many other things- nor money that was of any value now to buy of the sutlers who were bringing such articles here. Our darkey driver expressed the whole in a few words; 'They were so poor that those who went visiting were requested to come after breakfast, bring their own dinner, and go home before supper.'

*Memphis, Tennessee*¹⁸
July 23, 1862

Today is one of unusual excitement. On the 17th, Gen. Hovey, then commandant of this point, issued his already famous order No. 1 which requires Rebels and traitors who refuse to comply with the laws to support the Constitution of the United States, to place themselves beyond the line of the Government forces. Within six days after the date of the order, any person failing to comply will be deemed a spy, and upon conviction, treated as such. Many who had delayed complying in that when Gen. Sherman arrived he would change or modify it were startled when he assumed to command to find that he intended to respect and enforce his predecessor's orders. This being the last day, the streets are full of men gathered here and there debating whether they will go south or 'swallow the wedge' (as they term the oath) and remain. The day and hour has come when in Memphis, at last, men are to decide whether they will be citizens of the United States or not. If the former, they must renew their allegiance, and hold themselves ready to obey and assist in enforcing the laws and to perform just such duties as might be required of them if they lived in any loyal portion of the Union. If they decline so doing, and make their choice to go with the Rebel leaders, giving up the proud citizenship they have heretofore enjoyed, they must this day go beyond the lines of the army, or encounter the penalty if they remain. Many an anxious mind is at this moment striving hard to arrive at a decision that will either be for future good or evil. Many friends will this day part forever and many families today separated will never in this world be reunited. One cannot help pitying the troubled men, and hoping that the decision they arrive at be one that will cause no future regret.

Up to last evening but about two hundred passes south had been issued. Nearly treble that number of oaths had been administered. It is estimated that not over one thousand, perhaps fifteen hundred, will ask for passes. More than one half this number are young men less than 21 years of age.

18 "Letter from Memphis," *Daily Toledo Blade*, July 29, 1862, pg. 2

Some- those of means- will go north and wait for the war to cease. A large number will remain here and quietly pursue their usual avocations. A few will try to be made martyrs of, and no doubt under the present state of affairs, will succeed in this respect and so rid the country of as many pestilent traitors. Gen. Sherman seems determined to make Memphis a loyal city and will permit none but loyal citizens to stay in it. He says to all, as he did to Andrew Jackson Donelson, once a candidate for Vice President on the ticket with Mr. Fillmore, who came to him and asked a modification of or some exceptions to Gen. Hovey's order, 'that peace measures had been tried long enough- their trial had nearly ruined our country. Now the time had come when men had got to decide whether they should take their position as American citizens, and by their acts prove it, or be held as enemies and traitors. If they chose the latter, the sooner they get beyond my lines the better.' Mr. Donelson plead 'strong opposition to secession from its commencement- that he had already taken the oath twice; once when he entered into the army, again as foreign minister- that under the present circumstances he did not like to renew it.' Gen. Sherman replied, 'Having taken the oath twice, you certainly ought to have no objection to taking it again. You can do the country, which has so highly honored you with inestimable amount of good, by now honoring it. Your influence will be incalculable. The memory of Washington and Jackson ought to make you take this stand. I can make no exceptions to the rule. Gen. Hovey's order will be enforced.'

Memphis is to be fortified and rendered perfectly secure against any force the Rebels can bring against it. Sherman's and Hurlbut's divisions have, for the last three days, been coming into the city. Both of these divisions having been since the battle of Shiloh beyond the reach of transportation, no clothing could be got to them; consequently they made a ragged and dirty appearance. Some had on overalls for pants, others nothing but their drawers. A full supply of clothing is now here and will be issued as soon as they are permanently established in their camps. When all of Gen. Sherman's command had arrived, Gen. Hovey with Wallace's division broke up camp and are now going on board transports en route for – down the river. This, and the well-known fact that Gen. Curtis with his army is at Helena, well situated for active operations, naturally directs attention down the Mississippi with the expectation of important movements.

The gunboat *Tyler* and ram *Lancaster* have arrived here from Vicksburg where they have been both engaged and received considerable injury in the late fight with the Rebel gunboat *Arkansas*. The *Lancaster* was entirely disabled and had to be towed by the *Lioness*. She received several shots in her hull and had her larboard wheel entirely shot away. It is said that Com. Charles H. Davis feels that the good reputation of his fleet is compromised by the exploits of the *Arkansas* and he has determined to affect her capture at any risk. How he proposes to do it is unknown but it is known that the batteries under whose guns the *Arkansas* was lying can be silenced- perhaps they will be- and possibly the troops leaving here today may have something to do with the undertaking.

Uncle Sam has been engaged in many enterprises more or less successful and since this war has commenced has indulged himself in several side speculations. In Memphis, he has taken hold of religious matters earnestly and from the efforts made, sincerely. He has taken possession of one of the finest churches in the city, stationed guards around it, and furnishes ministers who hold forth every Sunday at the usual hours. The future must determine the success or failure of this scheme. If large and attentive congregations are any present test of future benefit to be derived, the final result cannot be very doubtful. Cotton continues to come in, notwithstanding all of the efforts of the Rebels to prevent it. The very high price paid is too great a temptation for even Secesh to resist. The steamer *Silver Moon* for Cincinnati today has several hundred bales on board.

While one of Gen. Hovey's regiments was waiting on the levee to go aboard one of the transports, the boys stacked their arms and were soon having a heap of fun. Some thirty large coops of chickens were close by, awaiting removal, and very soon after the ranks has been broken, the chickens began to escape from the coops. The boys, of course, tried to catch them and did, but somehow or the other, very few chickens were recovered by the owner. A negro with a wagon load of peaches next occupied their attention. He soon found out he had come to a poor paying market and was quickly

cleaned out and let go. To cap the climax, a black girl with a basket or trinkets came down on the levee. The boys immediately surrounded her, bought the entire stock and paid for it. But as compensation for this piece of honesty more fun must be had; so a box was got and the girl mounted upon it. A soldier glib of tongue got up beside her and proceeded with 'the sale.' Then there was fun- the girl, half frightened with her eyes and mouth wide open, scarcely knowing what was going on- the crowd swaying to and fro, yelling and bidding, while far above the confusion could be heard the voice of the auctioneer ringing out in clear tones, alternately describing the various good qualities of the "property" and asking for higher bids, which had started at a dime. And quicker than it can be told, had run into tens, hundreds, thousands, and millions of dollars. Finally a bid of twelve million dollars, Confederate notes, was made. The auctioneer no doubt thinking this pile represented the biggest pile of the least value he could get, suddenly brought down the hammer and closed the sale. The next moment, under unearthly yells, the box was overturned, auctioneer and "property" rolled together in the dust. Before the last bidder could seize the purchase, she was traveling up the hill, making the fastest time on record.

*Memphis, Tennessee*¹⁹
August 6, 1862

A series of Union meetings has been started here and are greeted with unlooked for success. The first on Saturday evening was an impromptu affair but promising such good results, it was resolved to have it followed weekly by others of a similar character. That on Monday evening, filling Court Square, and the people while gathered around the statue of Andrew Jackson re-echoed the sentiment that 'the Federal Union must be preserved.' Patriotic speeches were made and a committee was appointed to ask Gov. Johnson to come here and address the people. The meeting adjourned to meet Monday night. It is intended that each succeeding meeting shall be larger and have greater influence than any of its predecessors.

Business continues quite brisk and the streets present a lively appearance. The scarcity of small change is severely felt. Fifteen and twenty per cent is charged for the silver. Cotton continues to come in daily in small quantities. Some six hundred bales came up from Helena yesterday on the *City of Alton*. Every steamer going north takes more or less. The recent order prohibiting the payment of gold for it may check its sale for a while, but the good effects of the order are already manifest.²⁰ Communication with the country by the recent order of Gen. Sherman, abolishing the pass system, is quite unobstructed though all passing through the lines are liable to examination and search by the guard.

The city council has passed an ordinance, which has been approved by Gen. Sherman, increasing the police force from 32 to 100 men, and to provide for their payment, a heavy tax upon liquor, beer, and billiard saloons, livery stables, merchants, carriages, hacks, and a poll tax of two dollars per year upon every male person in the city over 21 years of age. The necessity for this increase of the police was caused by the great influx of thieves, burglars, and other bad characters from the northern cities, whose operations have been of daily and nightly occurrence. Guerilla bands and cotton burners continue to scour the country and commit their depredations. Stringent measures are being adopted to punish with the utmost severity all that are taken. Two were hung on board a steamer last week. They belonged to a party that fired into the boat having troops on board. A force was immediately landed which succeeded in capturing them. A bridge burner was hung by the order of Gen. Logan. This seems to be only the beginning of the policy to treat without mercy all connected with

19 "Letter from Memphis," *Daily Toledo Blade*, August 9, 1862, pg. 2

20 General Order No. 64, *OR*, Ser. I, Vol. 17, pt. II, p. 123. General Grant issued the order in response to speculators paying Rebels in gold for cotton thus "indirectly affording aid and comfort to the enemy." Violators of the order would either be arrested or sent out of the Department of West Tennessee.

those prowling band of robbers who are not in any way connected with the Rebel army.

A severe skirmish took place at Nonconah seven miles south of the city last Sunday afternoon between about 1,500 Rebels under the notorious Jeff Thompson and a Federal force of about 4,000. The Rebels dispersed with considerable loss.²¹ The siege of Vicksburg has been abandoned and the fleet returned to Helena, 90 miles below here, where Gen. Curtis' army is stationed. Com. Davis and General Curtis passed up the river on the *Victoria* on Sunday morning. The rebel ram *Arkansas* is reported at the mouth of the White River. Captain Cholps, who commands in Com. Davis' absence, sent here in great haste for a supply of coal, and it is thought that he will renew the attempt to capture her. The withdrawal of the force from Vicksburg may prove a serious matter. It leaves the Rebels nearly free to get their fleet of transports and rams out of the Yazoo river, and to send their land forces to reinforce Bragg who is marching against Buell. The Rebels have 42 steamers up the Yazoo, including three Gulf steamers (one of them the *Star of the West*) that are being converted into gunboats, to be armed with the heaviest kind of guns. The others are lower Mississippi steamers-and among them the *Quitman* and *Natchez*, the longest and fastest boats on the river, which are being made into rams.

Important operations may be looked for along the southern Tennessee line. General Bragg, who is now in command of Beauregard's army, is moving with his whole army in four different columns against General Buell. The late operations of detached bands and of guerilla parties in western Tennessee have only been feints to cover the real movement. These columns are under Breckenridge, Polk, Hardee, and Bragg. The first has been looking towards Memphis; the second toward Grand Junction (which a small portion occupied after its evacuation by Gen. Sherman); the third will try to cross the Tennessee near Tusculumbia, while the fourth is moving along the old Indian road through the mountains and will strike a point further east; and all four are to concentrate of General Buell, or make a push for Nashville and Kentucky. Whether they succeed in carrying out this plan remains to be seen. They certainly have succeeded in part of it- that of dividing the Federal army and getting different divisions beyond cooperating distance. The Rebel army, when united, will be very large. They have, by means of the conscript law, increased it in greater numbers than it had at Corinth and the abandonment of the siege of Vicksburg left a large force there, free to join it or to threaten some other points.

Jackson, Tennessee²² ***September 1, 1862***

The inhabitants of this place have been for the past three days under a great state of excitement in consequence of the near approach of a large force of Rebels under Gen. Price to this vicinity. On Saturday morning about 7,000 Rebels under Gen. Villepigue attacked our forces at Bolivar, a place about 30 miles south of here, where a body of about 3,000 Federal troops were stationed under the command of Col. Crocker of the 13th Iowa. The engagement began about 9 o'clock in the morning and lasted with varying success for three or four hours when the rebels were repulsed with a loss variously estimated at 100-300 killed, wounded, and prisoners. Our loss was about 50 killed and wounded, among the former Lt. Col. Hogg of the 2nd Illinois Cavalry, which regiment suffered severely in the brilliant charge they made driving the Rebel mounted force back two miles to the woods- it was in this charge that Col. Hogg fell at the head of his regiment.²³

The Rebels remain in force in front of Bolivar and at last accounts our forces had retired to their

21 This August 3, 1862 engagement became known as the skirmish at Nonconah Creek, but no details of this engagement exist in the OR, or in substantive lists of engagements of the war published by the War Department.

22 "Letter from Jackson," *Daily Toledo Blade*, September 6, 1862, pg. 2

23 Bliven was mistaken as to the identity of the colonel in command at Bolivar. This skirmish was fought August 30, 1862 between the forces of the First Brigade under Union Colonel Mortimer Leggett and Colonel Frank Armstrong's Confederate cavalymen. Lieutenant Colonel Harvey Hogg led a charge of four companies of the 2nd Illinois Cavalry and fell dead, pierced by nine musket balls. See Leggett's after action report, *OR*, Ser. I, Vol. 17, pt. I, pp. 46-49.

entrenchments, removing to them all their stores and public property. Col. Crocker sent word here that he could hold his position until reinforcements could reach him. These reinforcements are now moving toward Bolivar from Corinth and here. Those from here, under Col. Elias S. Dennis, consisting of some Illinois regiments were partly drawn into ambush about six miles below Medon, and suffered a considerable loss in men besides two pieces of cannon. Col. Dennis succeeded in getting his force into a strong position, saving the caissons and ammunition of his cannon, so the Rebels were unable to make them effective against him, and sent back to Jackson for reinforcements which were sent. Meanwhile, the Rebels under Gen. Armstrong attacked him and endeavored to get his caissons so as to use the artillery in their hands. Col. Dennis succeeding in repulsing them before his reinforcements came up, and recovered his two pieces of cannon after which he totally routed them with great slaughter, 121 dead Rebels being counted on the field. Their loss in wounded and prisoners amount to several hundred. Col. Dennis, after receiving his reinforcements, probably pushed on to Bolivar to relieve Col. Crocker. Our loss is not very large owing to the very favorable position the troops occupied- it is estimated from 25-30. ²⁴

The Rebel force after the repulse at Bolivar seems to have divided into three or four divisions, one of which is moving northward intending probably to attack Humboldt or the railroad north of here and destroy communication with Columbus and Cairo. Active preparations are being made to prevent this. Another detachment of the Rebels, said to consist of three regiments, attacked the guard consisting of two companies, about 150 men, of the 45th Illinois at Mendon Station, some 10 miles from here on the road to Bolivar. The guard formed breastworks of cotton bales, completely surrounding the station house and fought the Rebels for six hours. The 7th Missouri regiment was sent down from here to reinforce them. Col. Stevenson arrived near the station, formed his command in line and charged bayonets, scattering the Rebel force in all directions, capturing over 50 prisoners who were brought here. Two other regiments made an attack on Rouse's station, between Medon and Bolivar, which was successfully repulsed by the guard alone. The Rebels have succeeded in destroying the railroad bridges and the telegraph line between here and Bolivar. So we are without very late intelligence. A lieutenant disguised himself and passed through the Rebel lines bringing news from them. He represents the Rebels there in strong force, but that Colonel Crocker would hold out to the last. Heavy firing is heard in that direction at Medon today which, it is hoped, is our reinforcements attacking the Rebels. The 68th Ohio and 12th Michigan were at Bolivar at last accounts and have probably had an opportunity to show what they are made of. This chance is not needed by the 12th- they gave a good account of themselves at Shiloh.

Gen. Leonard F. Ross in command here has made preparations to give the Rebels a warm reception if they make an attack upon the town. The troops have slept on their arms for the past two nights. (Your correspondent has done likewise.) All the cotton near here has been seized and the Negroes taken to build fortifications, and the night before last the rolling of the cotton bales sounded like a continuous firing of musketry which alarmed the town- men, women, and children rushed to the streets, supposing of course, that a battle was going on and such a squalling, screaming, and yelling was never before heard in Jackson. It was some time before their fears quieted. The Negroes work with a will and seem to be very glad to get a chance to do it.

Last night about 7,000 mounted Rebel infantry encamped within six miles of the town and the excitement was intense. Fires, caused by burning buildings it is supposed, were seen in every direction. Orderlies were dashing through the streets and troops seen moving about- the hospitals run up their

24 Colonel Elias S. Dennis force marched his 1,500 man brigade consisting of the 20th and 30th Illinois infantry regiments, the 4th Ohio Independent Cavalry Company, and two guns of Battery E, 2nd Illinois Light Artillery 25 miles from Estenaula Landing to reinforce Jackson, Tennessee. 3,300 cavalrymen under Col. Armstrong attacked him in what became known as the Battle of Britton Lane which was fought September 1, 1862. Bliven's account of this drawn battle is substantially correct. See http://www.brittonlane1862.madison.tn.us/battle_history.htm

yellow flags and all the convalescents able to bear arms were equipped. Everything looked promising for a fight before morning, but for some reason the attack was not made. Probably one of the Secesh here kept the Rebels too well posted as to the reception they would meet with. This morning the railroad ticket office is swarmed with people- cotton buyers and others- bound north and be somewhat safer than here. If the Rebels do make an attack, one of the prettiest towns of west Tennessee will be among the things that ceased to exist, and it is reported on good authority that the entire town will be destroyed by our forces.

Cincinnati, Ohio²⁵
September 29, 1862

Is Cincinnati safe from an attack by the Rebels or not? Is a question not yet definitely settled to the satisfaction of this community. Judging by the general appearance of the city and actions of the people, no further danger from the Rebel army may be apprehended but judging from the active preparations and watchfulness on the part of the officers in command, and who are supposed to know what they are about, the danger from that source has not passed but on the contrary is even now more imminent than ever before. Thursday night 36 of the 18th Michigan regiment and 7 of the 10th Kentucky Cavalry were 'gobbled up' by some 400 Rebel cavalry that made a dash into a little town about 15 miles from here where our men were stationed as pickets. Our pickets now are unusually strong and the troops here are well in hand, ready for any emergency.

Gen. Quincy A. Gillmore of Fort Pulaski fame is in command of a considerable force some miles advanced in the country. He has manifested great energy since he came here. In less than 48 hours after he reported here, he was in command of his present force and on his way to a point 30 odd miles in the advance. Gen. Wallace has left, and there is much less 'noise and confusion' but quite as much work accomplished. Affairs are now conducted quietly but vigorously and without jealousy or collision. Since Gen. Buell's arrival in Louisville, Gen. Wright has been here most of the time and probably a plan is being matured where the commands of these generals will work together to accomplish all that is desired by the most ardent lover of the Union, and the success of its armies.

The 100th Ohio regiment is here, encamped at Fort Mitchell. The regiment shows well in comparison with others. Col. Groom is winning the good opinion of his superior officers. The boys are all well and in good spirits. They have about half their compliment of tents and will be thankful for the balance when they get here. The 111th have gone to Louisville. They had a march last week on an expedition into the country. Quite a number were badly used up and those who had fallen behind were picked up and taken prisoners by a squad of Rebel cavalry that was following them. The 14th Ohio are at Louisville, resting after their long march from Dixie. The citizens' drill on Saturday afternoon in accordance with Gen. Wright's order was very well attended. Business was suspended at 2 o'clock and 3,500 men turned out. They made a very creditable appearance as they marched through the streets. In Newport and Covington across the river, Gen. Smith reviewed the troops on Newport commons.

Quite a competition has sprung up between the three theaters here and the prices are cut down to war figures, and as a natural consequence the houses are nightly crowded. Over a half million dollars of Confederate notes, or counterfeits as they turned out to be, were seized at the Adams Express office yesterday by the authorities. Rebel money or something that looks very much like it and probably of as much value is quite plenty here now.

Cincinnati, Ohio²⁶
October 13, 1862

Fort Mitchell stands where it did, in front of Porter's house when the Squirrel Hunters were

25 "Letter from Cincinnati," *Daily Toledo Blade*, September 30, 1862, pg. 2

26 "Letter from Cincinnati," *Daily Toledo Blade*, October 14, 1862, pg. 2

here, notwithstanding Gen. Brown ordered it 'put on wheels and moved on after the retreating Rebels.' But though it is yet there, it is 'solitary and alone,' as all of the troops that occupied it and were encamped around it have gone forward and the place is lonely and desolate indeed. The damage done to the property is now fully seen. It will take a great many thousands of dollars to make the place as attractive as it once was. No money can ever replace the magnificent trees that were cut down to form an abatis to prevent the approach of the Rebels.

Gen. Gordon Granger has assumed command of the Army of Kentucky and has his headquarters at present at Covington. The troops have all gone forward and are under the immediate command of Brig. Gen. A.J. Smith. One division of this army is under command of Brig. Gen. Stephen G. Burbridge and is now in Williamsport, Grant County. The 100th Ohio is in Col. Peter T. Swayne's brigade of this division. The Kentucky Central railroad has been repaired to Falmouth and the telegraph line is working to that point. Gen. Smith's forces will probably cooperate with forces from Louisville against the Rebels around Frankfort and Lexington. Frankfort has been occupied by our forces under Gen. Ebenezer Dumont but it is now reported that it has been evacuated.

The battle last Wednesday at Perryville resulted favorably to our forces although with considerable loss. Only a portion of Gen. Buell's army and indeed only a part of Gen. McCook's corps was engaged. None of Gen. Thomas' troops were in the battle as far as can be heard from. The 111th Ohio is in Buell's army but I do not know in whose corps, or whether they were in the fight or not. No general engagement has taken place since Wednesday, although heavy skirmishing is constantly going on. All accounts seem to favor the idea that Bragg is being hard pushed and is falling back to Camp Dick Robinson. Buell seems to be trying to get him into a position where he can effectually crush him and movements now being made warrant the belief that he will be successful. Events in Tennessee and Kentucky prove the truth of the statement made from Memphis in July last as to Bragg's movements and intentions in nearly every particular. Has he not followed the course there marked out? And has there not been stirring times in those two states as was predicted in your presence that there would be?

The Democrats are making great exertions to elect their ticket in this county tomorrow and are confident of success. Their greatest efforts are directed to defeat John A. Gurley and elect Alexander Long to Congress. It looks as though Clement Vallandigham would be re-elected in the Third District although Gen. Robert Schenk's friends have worked hard to reduce the heavy majorities against them at the last election and defeat Vallandigham. The river continues very low and boats run irregular, consequently business is very light. The coal question is agitating the people hereabouts, the dealers taking advantage of the low stage of water in the river, and the reported low stocks on hand, have advanced the price to fancy figures, and will be likely to keep it up until the river rises and a new supply can be had. Theatrical attractions here are huge, and the different houses are crowded nightly. 'Culdock and Daughter' have just closed at Wood's where the 'Chimney Corner' has had a successful run. Mrs. Waller makes her first appearance tonight. Adah Isaacs Menken commences at the National tonight with the 'French Spy.' The original Campbell Minstrels are having a very successful season at Smith and Dixon's Hall. Pike's Opera House, under the management of Mr. Pike himself, is *the* place of attraction. 'Three Stars' the bills say appear every night. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and the 'Idiot of the Mountain' alternately draw crowded houses.